**First Aid Procedures**

**First Aid Needs Assessment**

The HSE cannot tell you what provision you should make for first aid. You, as an employer/organisation, are best placed to understand the exact nature of your workplace and decide what you need to provide.

First aid provision must be ‘adequate and appropriate in the circumstances’. This means that you must provide sufficient first aid equipment (first aid kit), facilities and personnel at all times.

In order to decide what provision you need to make you should undertake a first-aid needs assessment. This assessment should consider the circumstances of your workplace, workforce and the hazards and risks that may be present. The findings will help you decide what first-aid arrangements you need to put in place.

In assessing your first-aid needs, you should consider:

* the nature of the work you do
* workplace hazards and risks (including specific hazards requiring special arrangements)
* the nature and size of your workforce
* the work patterns of your staff
* holiday and other absences of those who will be first-aiders and appointed persons
* your organisation’s history of accidents

You may also need to consider:

* the needs of travelling, remote and lone workers
* the distribution of your workforce
* the remoteness of any of your sites from emergency medical services
* whether your employees work on shared or multi-occupancy sites
* first-aid provision for non-employees (e.g. members of the public).

HSE has published guidance on all the factors above that will help you carry out your first-aid needs assessment and this can be found on their website.

**First Aid Kits**

First aid kits are a legal requirement for every workplace. They must also be clearly marked in a green box with a white cross on it. The staff/volunteers should all be made aware of where their nearest first aid box is located; it should be easily accessible for people and the contents should be checked regularly to make sure all items are in stock and in date. The number and contents of first aid boxes depends upon several factors, e.g. number and distribution of staff, remoteness and the type of work undertaken. First aid boxes **must not** contain tablets, medication or pharmaceutical preparations. First aid kits, should be in easily accessible places, preferably in a clean area or room, and should be protected from dust and damp.

First aid boxes will need to be replenished periodically. A member of staff/volunteer should be given responsibility for ensuring that the contents are complete at all times. Staff/volunteers should be asked to inform the responsible person whenever an item is removed. It is best practise to conduct a recorded monthly inspection of your first aid box.

Contents of a first aid kit should be relevant to the risks and needs of the area where the kit is likely to be used. For example, if burns are a possibility, then burn relief products should be part of your first aid measures.

**Contents of First Aid Box**

The HSE does not specify what should be in the first aid box and the list below is only a **suggested contents list**. You may wish to refer to British Standard BS 8599 which provides further information on the contents of workplace first-aid kits. The contents should reflect the outcome of the first-aid needs assessment.

In most cases first-aid boxes should contain the following items:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Qty** |
| Guidance card or leaflet; | 1 |
| Individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressings (assorted sizes)  | 20 |
| Sterile eye pads, with attachment | 2 |
| Individually wrapped triangular bandages | 6 |
| Safety pins | 6 |
| Medium sized individually wrapped sterile wound dressings (approx 10cm x 8 cm) | 6 |
| Large sterile individually wrapped wound dressings (approx 13cm x 9cm) | 2 |
| Extra-large sterile individually wrapped wound dressings (approx 28cm x 17.5cm) | 3 |
| Recommended: Disposable gloves and disposable mouth-to-mouth resuscitation masks |  |

**Travelling first aid kits**

Where staff/volunteers work away from the normal workplace, travelling kit may need to be provided. In some instances this may also apply to those who routinely use their own or hired transport for work activities.