

Work Procedure / Instruction

Procedure number: QMS003

First Aid

Objectives:

Providing immediate and effective first aid to workers or others who have been injured or become ill at the workplace may reduce the severity of the injury or illness and promote recovery. In some cases it could mean the difference between life and death.

The Bunbury Harvey Regional Council (BHRC) has a duty under the *Occupational Safety & Health Act 1984* to provide a safe working environment and to ensure that workers and other persons are not exposed to health and safety risks arising from the business operations.

We recognise that continual improvements must be made to improve our working environment and safety performance.

The BHRC shall, so far as is reasonably practicable provide appropriate first aid facilities and persons trained in first aid to ensure that all employees work in a safe environment.

Guidelines:

First Aid Facilities:

Each BHRC work location will be provided with a First Aid Kit. The kit will be suitable to the associated hazards and risks of the work being carried out and the site it services.

It will be the responsibility of the Supervisor/Manager/Leading Hand to ensure the first aid boxes are adequately stocked at all times and to ensure the expiry dates are current on all items.

Each council vehicle and Mobile Plant will contain a fully stocked first aid kit and it will be the responsibility of the employee allocated to the vehicle to ensure that the first aid supplies are maintained.

Medication, including analgesics such as paracetamol and aspirin, are **not** to be included in first aid kits because of their potential to cause adverse health effects in some people including asthmatics, pregnant women and people with medical conditions. The supply of these medications may also be controlled by drugs and poisons laws. Workers requiring prescribed and over-the-counter medications should carry their own medication for their personal use as necessary.

Providing first aid safely:

Before providing first aid to an injured or ill person, first aiders should assume they could be exposed to infection. First aiders should wash their hands with soap and water or apply alcohol-based hand rub before and after administering first aid. First aiders

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should also wear personal protective equipment to prevent contact with blood and body substances, including disposable gloves. Eye protection, a mask and protective clothing may also be necessary if splashes of blood or body substances are likely to occur.

You should follow hygiene best practice to avoid becoming ill and / or exposing others to illness when handling blood or body substances. Such practices should include:

- proper hand hygiene practices
- knowledge of how to clean surfaces and reusable equipment
- how to manage spills and handle and clean soiled laundry
- how to handle and dispose of waste
- how to dispose of sharps safely
- when to use personal protective equipment, for example, using resuscitation masks for cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

First aiders should be aware of what to do if they have accidental contact with blood or body substances, a sharps injury or contact with a person known to have a contagious illness.

Any part of the body that comes in contact with blood or body substances should be washed with soap and water immediately. Prompt medical advice should be obtained.

Contaminated items:

All items that are soiled with blood or body substances should be placed in plastic bags and tied securely. Waste disposal should comply with all state and local government requirements.

Sharps:

Sharps, including scissors and tweezers, that have become contaminated with blood or body substances should be disposed of in a rigid-walled, puncture-resistant sharps container by the person that used them. The materials, design, construction, colour and markings of sharps containers should comply with AS 4031-1992 - *Non-reusable containers for the collection of sharp medical items used in health care areas*.

If a first aider sustains a sharps injury or thinks they are at risk of infection from blood or bodily fluid contamination, they should seek prompt medical advice.

Cleaning spills:

Cleaning should commence as soon as possible after an incident involving blood or body substances has occurred. First aiders should wear disposable gloves when cleaning spills and if splashes of blood or body substances may occur, additional protective equipment such as eye protection, plastic aprons and masks should be worn. Surfaces that have been contaminated with blood or body substances should be wiped with paper towelling and cleaned with warm soapy water.

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First aid signs:

All First Aid equipment will have well-recognised, standardised first aid signs to assist in easily locating first aid equipment and facilities.

First aid signs may be constructed to suit individual requirements but should comply with AS 1319: 1994 – *Safety Signs for the Occupational Environment*.

First Aid Officers:

All First Aid Officers will be appointed at the discretion of the Managers in each work area.

A person suitably qualified will hold a Senior First Aid Certificate obtainable from a registered first aid training provider.

If in the event no employee wishes to participate as a First Aid Officer then it will be the responsibility of a Supervisor / Manager to obtain the relevant qualifications to undertake the role.

If a first aid officer believes that they are at risk or in danger of harming themselves or the victim then they are not required to administer assistance.

In becoming a first aid officer of the BHRC, the employee is acknowledging that they are required to assist those employees in need.

Emergency Contacts:

In the event of a medical emergency involving medical attention or hospitalisation, the supervisor / manager shall notify the employee's emergency contact as soon as practicable after the event.

Medical Conditions or Allergies:

It is the responsibility of the employee who has an allergy or medical condition to notify their Supervisor / Manager of the condition and any other medical issued that may be of relevance including prescribed medication in case of an emergency.

It is also the responsibility of the employee to carry any necessary medication at all times. Under no circumstances are employees or first aid officers permitted to administer medicine in the event of an emergency but they are able to assist a victim in administering the medicine themselves.

Eye wash and shower equipment:

Emergency eye wash and shower equipment, permanently fixed or portable, may be located at the worksite depending on the workplace.

Eye wash equipment will be provided where there is a risk of hazardous chemicals or infectious substances causing eye injuries.

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Access will be provided to shower equipment in workplaces where there is a risk of:

- exposure to hazardous chemicals resulting in skin absorption or contamination from infectious substances
- serious burns to a large area of the face or body (including chemical or electrical burns)

Procedure:

First Aid is the initial care provided to a casualty. A person administering first aid is often not a qualified health care professional and is not expected to perform the duties of one.

Any attempt at providing first aid is better than no first aid at all

A person should:

- Assess the situation quickly – check for danger
- Identify the nature of the injury or illness as far as possible
- Arrange for emergency services to attend if required
- Manage the casualty appropriately and promptly
- Stay with the casualty until able to hand over to a health care professional
- Give further help if necessary or as directed

Notification and Reporting of Injuries and Illnesses:

First Aid Officers are to keep a log of all treatment provided and first aid equipment dispensed. (QMS F-002 First Aid Treatment Register)

Any First Aid Officer who provides any first aid to a casualty must advise them that an Incident / Accident form (QMS F-001 Incident/Accident Report) will need to be completed and given to their relevant supervisor.

First Aid Officers should endeavour to record as much information as possible for each injury. This information is vital when handing-over the casualty to a health care professional.

This assists the BHRC in meeting its legal obligation to retain first aid records.

First aid treatment records are subject to requirements under Health Records legislation.

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Supporting Information

Emergency Management Plan
Occupational Health and Safety Policy
Incident / Accident Investigation (QMS-005)
Incident / Accident Form (QMS F-001)
First Aid Treatment Register (QMS F-002)
Hazard Reporting Procedure (QMS004)
Hazard Report form (QMS F-006)

Further Information

Occupational Safety & Health Act 1984
AS 1319: 1994 – Safety Signs for the Occupational Environment
AS 4775 – Emergency eyewash and shower equipment
AS 4031-1992 – Non-reusable containers for the collection of sharp medical items used in health care areas
Safe work Australia First Aid in the Workplace – Code of Practice

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