



Risk Assessment for Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) Performing Child Changing Duties

1. Introduction

This risk assessment aims to identify potential hazards and risks associated with Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) who are required to change a child as part of their duties. The assessment will focus on the health and safety of both the SNAs and the children, ensuring that all procedures are in line with best practices and legal requirements.

2. Activity Description

SNAs may need to change a child's clothing or assist with toileting for children who are unable to manage this independently. This may involve lifting, manual handling, exposure to bodily fluids, and working in confined spaces.

3. Identified Hazards and Risks

Hazard	Risk	Potential Impact	Risk Rating (Likelihood x Severity)	Control Measures
Manual Handling	Lifting or moving the child during changing	Musculoskeletal injuries	Medium	- Manual handling training for SNAs - Appropriate lifting, bending knees based on training - where appropriate - Two-person lift for larger children
Exposure to Bodily Fluids	Contact with urine, faeces, vomit, etc.	Risk of infection, cross-contamination	Medium	- Provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves and aprons

Hazard	Risk	Potential Impact	Risk Rating (Likelihood x Severity)	Control Measures
				- Proper hygiene practices (handwashing, sanitizing)
Slips, Trips, and Falls	Wet floors from spills during changing	Physical injury from slipping	Low	- Use of non-slip mats - Immediate clean-up of spills - Adequate space and clear pathways
Inadequate Facilities	Poorly designed changing area (e.g., inadequate space, lighting)	Increased risk of accidents, poor ergonomics	Medium	- Ensure changing areas are well-lit and spacious - Regular maintenance of facilities
Psychological Stress	Stress from handling challenging behaviour or dealing with bodily fluids	Mental health impact, burnout	Low	- Access to mental health support - Regular breaks and rotation of duties - Training on managing challenging behaviour
Child Protection	Inappropriate contact or allegations of misconduct	Legal issues, reputational damage	High	- Adherence to child protection policies - Two staff members present during changing where possible - Proper documentation and reporting procedures

4. Risk Mitigation Measures

- **Training and Education:** Provide regular training for SNAs on manual handling, infection control, child protection, and managing challenging behaviours.
- **Use of PPE:** Ensure that PPE such as gloves, aprons, and sanitizers are readily available and used appropriately.
- **Design of Changing Areas:** Review and, if necessary, redesign changing areas to ensure they meet safety standards, including space, lighting, and availability of lifting aids.

- **Policies and Procedures:** Develop and implement clear policies for changing children, including protocols for situations involving challenging behaviour or children who are non-compliant.
 - **Mental Health Support:** Provide access to counselling and mental health support for SNAs to prevent stress and burnout.
 - **Documentation:** Keep detailed records of any incidents, including steps taken and outcomes, to ensure transparency and accountability.
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5. Monitoring and Review

- **Regular Inspections:** Conduct periodic inspections of changing areas to ensure they are safe and meet all required standards.
 - **Incident Reporting:** Implement a system for reporting and reviewing any incidents that occur during changing to identify trends and areas for improvement.
 - **Ongoing Training:** Schedule regular refresher courses for SNAs to keep them updated on best practices and safety procedures.
 - **Feedback Mechanism:** Establish a feedback loop for SNAs to report concerns or suggest improvements to procedures and facilities.
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6. Conclusion

This risk assessment outlines the potential hazards and risks associated with SNAs changing children, along with control measures to mitigate these risks. Regular monitoring, training, and adherence to safety protocols are essential to ensure the well-being of both staff and children.

This document should be reviewed and updated regularly or whenever there are significant changes to the work environment or procedures.