Welcome

Welcome to South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, we do hope that you enjoy your time working at the trust.

The health and wellbeing of our staff is important to the trust, this has been demonstrated by the trust’s commitment to achieving ‘health promoting hospital’ status.

Health promoting hospitals ‘Extra Life’ aims to improve the health and wellbeing of its patients, their relatives, visitors, staff, contractors, and the wider community.

South Tees Occupational Health Department want to help you to improve your health and work life balance so that you stay fitter, happier and healthier for longer!

If there are any aspects of your health that you are concerned about in relation to your work, then please feel free to contact our team of occupational health professionals to discuss this further. We would be happy to arrange an appointment for you to see the most appropriate member of our team to respond to your enquiry.

We do hope that you read all aspects of this booklet and take a proactive approach to safeguarding your health and improving your wellbeing.

What is occupational health?

Occupational health is about the effect of work on health, and the effect of health on work. It plays a vital role in helping employers care for and understand the needs of their employees.

The role of the occupational health service is to provide impartial, independent advice to both employees and managers on all matters relating to workplace health. The aims of the service are to prevent work related illness and injury and promote and maintain health within the workplace. Confidentiality is assured for all users of the service.

The occupational health team

The occupational health team are based at South Lodge at The James Cook University Hospital’s site in Middlesbrough and at the Friarage Hospital near the postgraduate centre in Northallerton.

Our team consists of occupational health professionals including:

- The occupational health manager
- Consultant in occupational health
- Occupational health physician
- Occupational health specialist nurses
- Occupational health advisors and screening nurses
- Physiotherapists and manual handling advisors
- Staff counsellors
- Administrative and reception staff
The services provided include:
• Advice on health at work issues
• Work place health assessments
• Advice on attendance management
• Health surveillance
• Work related vaccination programmes and related blood tests
• Follow-up of accidental inoculation injuries (needlestick / splash injuries)
• Confidential counselling service
• Physiotherapy advice and support / treatments
• Manual handling training
• Health education and promotion

Your may be invited to attend the occupational health department for:
• Work health assessments / health screening
  • Health surveillance
  • Work related vaccination and related blood tests
  • Return to work assessments
  • Rehabilitation support
  • Support for work health adjustments

Accidents at work
• Please report all accidents to your manager and complete a Datix form
• Report to accident and emergency department if necessary

Feeling ill at work
• Please inform your manager or supervisor
• There is no requirement for you to report general ill health to the occupational health department
• If you are unable to see your own GP, there is an NHS walk-in service available to staff working in Middlesbrough 8am to 8pm, seven days a week at:
  Resolution Health Centre, 11 Trinity Mews, North Ormesby, Telephone 0330 123 9501

If you have diarrhoea and vomiting
• Inform your line manager
• Refrain from work
• Submit a stool specimen to the pathology laboratory or your own GP surgery
• Inform us at occupational health and comply with any advice given
Prevention of contact with blood and other body fluids

- Following a risk assessment, wear the appropriate gloves, aprons, eye protection or masks to avoid splashes to eyes and mouth
- Take a sharps bin to the point of use and promptly dispose of the needle / sharp instrument into a designated sharps bin
- It is your responsibility to dispose of any sharps you have used
- Do not re-sheath used needles
- Never leave a used sharp lying around
- Never dispose of used sharps in clinical waste bags
- Always protect yourself and your colleagues

In the event of an accident with blood/other body fluids, follow the trust policy HIC 04:

- Carry out first aid measures – in the event of a needle stick or sharps injury; encourage the area to bleed, wash the area with soap and running water and cover the puncture site with a waterproof plaster
- A splash to eyes or mucus membranes should be washed with copious amounts of water
- Report the incident to your line manager so that a risk assessment on the patient source (if known), can be carried out

- Attend occupational health as soon as possible after the incident
- If incident occurs outside of office hours, attend A&E and report the incident to occupational health the next working day
- Complete a Datix form
- Comply with occupational health advice regarding any follow up required

Immunisations

As health care professionals we have a duty to protect ourselves against those diseases we know we will be in contact with during the course of our work. Care settings invariably have higher rates of infection in our patient group and therefore the likelihood of getting and passing infection is greater.

You have to make an informed choice about being vaccinated and the occupational health service will provide you with as much information as you need to feel confident about being vaccinated.
What vaccines do I need to have to protect me in my work?

This will vary depending on your role but as a general rule, the following are provided.

All staff working with patients or handling clinical specimens are screened for:

- Tuberculosis (TB) status and vaccinated if they have no immunity
- Chickenpox (varicella) immunity and are vaccinated if they have no immunity
- MMR vaccination x 2 history or checked for immunity to measles and rubella and vaccinated if not immune

All staff potentially having contact with blood and/or bodily fluids, are protected against Hepatitis B with a vaccination programme provided by the occupational health department.

Other vaccinations may be offered to staff depending on a risk assessment of their potential exposure to pathogens.

Hand care

Our hands are exposed to a variety of irritants throughout the normal day, both at home and at work. Staff are advised to follow the trust’s infection prevention and control policy to maintain good hand hygiene and skin protection.

Seasonal flu vaccine

Seasonal flu is a very infectious condition and can be dangerous to those individuals whose health is already compromised. All staff are asked to be vaccinated against the flu to protection themselves, their patients and the community. This is offered every year to staff from October onwards.

Reporting problems to occupational health – rashes on the skin or hands

If you experience any problems with your hands you must contact occupational health so that an assessment can occur and a record kept in your notes. You may be advised to use a soap substitute to prevent the drying effects of soap on your skin and you will be advised about the need for future review appointments. If you continue to have problems with your skin we may advise further assessment from your own GP or a dermatologist.
Confidentiality

All information held by the occupational health service about you is entirely private and confidential within the service with the exception of:

- Status of immunity against infection diseases, for example tuberculosis, rubella
- Illness potentially dangerous to patients and colleagues, for example diarrhoea and vomiting
- Details of accidents at work, which have by law to be recorded by the employing authority
- Disclosure may be necessary in the public interest where failure to do so may expose patients or others to unacceptable risk
- Disclosure is necessary for the prevention of a serious crime

Any information that you disclose remains confidential to the occupational health service and will not be disclosed to anyone else without your explicit consent. It will be stored both electronically and manually by the occupational health service in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.