

	<h1 style="margin: 0;">SAFETY ALERT</h1>		
Ref: SA:008:05	RE: Management of health and safety for Display Screen Equipment Users		
Issue date:	April 2017	Revised date:	March 2024
Author(s):	National Health and Safety Function, Workplace Health and Wellbeing Unit, Human Resources Directorate.		
Distribution:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each Member of the Directorate and National Director HSE Each Assistant National Director, HR Each Hospital Group CEO and Community Health Organisation CO Senior Managers Service Managers /Local Managers <p>Please ensure that this Safety Alert is brought to the attention of all relevant persons in the workplace.</p>		
S	<p>SITUATION:</p> <p>The purpose of this Safety Alert is to highlight the importance of ensuring all Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Users are risk assessed at their workstation, to promote their safety and health and to comply with relevant legislative¹ requirements.</p>		
B	<p>BACKGROUND:</p> <p>A variety of ill-health symptoms have been associated with work at DSE including musculoskeletal disorders, mental stress and visual fatigue. An international study of DSE users (bankers) conducted in 2021 (Demissie B., et al. 2022) found:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 61.1% were reported to have suffered work-related musculoskeletal disorders in the 12 months previous. The four highest reported musculoskeletal disorders were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neck (45%) Lower back (38%) Upper back (32%) Shoulders (24%) These office workers had a high prevalence of MSDs due to prolonged sitting, computer work, repetitive tasks and static postures. <p>Legislation places duties on the Organisation to manage the potential risks. That is, Regulation 72(1)(b) of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007 (as amended) requires the employer/manager to¹:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perform a risk assessment of employees at their workstation(s), and Take appropriate measures to remedy any risks found <p>Facilitation of these requirements in the HSE:</p> <p>All DSE users including managers must complete DSE user awareness module on HSeLanD.</p>		

¹ This is a non-exhaustive summary - please refer to SI 299: 2007 Part 2 (Workplace and Work Equipment), Chapter 5 (Display Screen Equipment) for full legal requirements

Line Mangers Must:

- Identify “employees” to whom the regulations apply; commonly known as DSE Users². Employees are deemed to be DSE users if they:
 - Have no choice but to use the DSE to carry out your work
 - Normally use DSE for continuous periods of more than 1 hour per day
 - Generally use DSE on a daily basis
- Ensure a DSE risk assessment is completed by a competent person for their employees’ workstation(s), taking account of multiple workstations and blended working arrangements
- Ensure a DSE new risk assessment is completed when an employee transfers to a new workstation, or there is new work equipment or technology at an employee's workstation

DSE Assessors Must:

- In addition to the above training, complete appropriate training available on [HSeLanD](#) i.e:
 - managing health and safety in the healthcare setting
 - DSE assessors module

DSE assessments may be completed by all line, service and department managers (clerical admin grade V and above and Clinical CNM1/ CNM11 and above) on completion of this training

- Complete individual DSE risk assessments **in conjunction with** the employee using the Display Screen Equipment Workstation Risk Assessment Form (CF:008:08) which is available on the [National Health and Safety Function webpages](#). When conducting the risk assessment:
 - Observe the employee working at their workstation having regard to the employee’s posture and nature of work completed
 - Take into account the individual characteristics including body height
 - Observe the general environment at the workstation
 - Talk to the employee in order to understand the nature of their work, to raise issues, as well as to seek feedback on other issues in the context of display screen equipment that they may have
 - Identify and document any actions that need to be taken to reduce risks (e.g. use a monitor stand to raise height of monitor) and ensure that the actions are completed

The above places the user at the centre of the assessment and allows appropriate risk control measures to be identified and implemented where necessary

Additional guidance is available on our webpage [Office Safety and Display Screen Equipment](#). It is acknowledged that there may be situations where more in-depth/specialist advice/expertise is required. The National Health and Safety Function can be contacted through the [Health and Safety Helpdesk](#) for further information on specialist ergonomists.

² “Employee” in this context: “means an employee who habitually uses display screen equipment as a significant part of his or her normal work” SI 299:2007, Regulation 70

	<p>ASSESSMENT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Data on the uptake of training on DSE use, the findings of audits undertaken nationally and Health and Safety Authority correspondence would indicate that the HSE's compliance strategy is not being fully implemented in all areas• This may result in individual and organisational exposure to risk• Managers and staff must take immediate action as outlined below in order to ensure compliance• Failure to comply may lead to enforcement action by the Health and Safety Authority up to and including prosecution at manager level and above
R	<p>RECOMMENDATIONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure that all line managers within your area of responsibility are aware of and have acknowledged and implemented the recommendations in this Safety Alert• Display this Safety Alert in a prominent location within each workplace• Undertake and ensure all line managers within your area of responsibility have undertaken the HSeLanD DSE modules "Managing health and safety in the healthcare setting" and "DSE assessor module" on HSeLanD and records of completion retained.• Identify DSE Users within your area of responsibility and ensure that they have completed DSE user awareness module on HSeLanD and that records are retained• Undertake a risk assessment (manager/designate and identified DSE User) of the DSE workstation using the Display Screen Equipment Workstation Risk Assessment Form (CF:008:08) which is available on the National Health and Safety Function web-pages• Implement controls to remedy any remedial actions identified• Should further information or support be required please contact the National Health and Safety Function through the Helpdesk or go to www.hse.ie/safetyandwellbeing• See flowchart below for more details

	<p style="text-align: center;">Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Workstation Risk Assessment Process</p> <p>Note: Employees are deemed to be DSE users if they: 1. Have no choice but to use the DSE to carry out their work 2. Normally use DSE for continuous periods of more than 1 hour per day 3. Generally use DSE on a daily basis 4. Display screen equipment includes PCs and visual display screen equipment</p> <p>Note: Competency for DSE workstation assessors requires completion of the following training modules on HSeLanD: 1. Managing health and safety in the healthcare setting 2. DSE user awareness module 3. DSE assessor module</p>
	<p>References: Demissie B., et al. 2022. Environmental Health Insights - Volume 16 “Magnitude of Work-Related Musculoskeletal Disorders and its Associated Factors Among Computer User Bankers”.</p>
<p>Addendum to Safety Alert:</p>	<p>The Safety Alert clearly places responsibility on the relevant line managers to undertake the DSE analysis/risk assessment as the manager is best placed to determine and agree any necessary controls. In order for the manager to undertake this assessment, it is essential that they achieve the necessary level of competence by way of undertaking the HSeLanD programmes on “Managing Health and Safety in the Healthcare Setting” and “DSE Assessor Module”.</p> <p>However, there may be situations where the line manager is not in a position to undertake these assessments and it may be considered acceptable in such cases for a competent person to undertake these assessments on their behalf. In all instances the line manager retains full responsibility for the appropriate implementation of any control measures identified.</p>
<p>Resources: Contact the NHSF Health & Safety Helpdesk at:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Log your health & safety request at: http://www.hse.ie/safetyandwellbeing or go to: http://pndchssdweb02.healthirl.net/HealthWebAccess/ss Alternatively contact the National Health & Safety Helpdesk on 1800 420 420 between 10:30-12:00 and 14:00 – 15.30 Hrs Monday to Friday.</p>