



COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) Policy

For: Staff / Clients / Service Users

1. Identification of Hazardous Substances

Hazardous substances come in a variety of forms such as:

- Chemicals
- Fumes
- Dusts
- Vapours
- Biological Agents (bacteria, viruses, body fluids)
- Gases (mists)

Sarah Urwin Therapy Services (SUTS) tries hard to **minimise the use of harmful chemicals wherever possible as well as exposure to harmful environments**, however from time to time handling some substances may create a risk and the use of some hazardous products may be unavoidable.

By assessing the risks, implementing appropriate control measures and ensuring that good advice and training is given to users, the risks of Exposure to Hazardous Substances **can either be avoided altogether or significantly reduced**.

Staff at SUTS need to be authorised to work with hazardous substances of any kind and this authorisation needs to be sought from the Senior Practitioner, Sarah Urwin, who is also the Health and Safety lead on site.

The safety information on labels needs to be checked along with the information provided by suppliers for the substances we purchase. Look for the red diamond-shaped hazard symbols.

For any substances produced on site including mixtures; fumes and dust need to be clearly identified.



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2. Assessment of Hazardous Substances

A COSHH assessment and record sheet needs to be completed for all substances used. This is filed in the COSHH Register and updated as appropriate.

3. Controlling Exposure

Wherever possible substances used are substituted with lower-risk alternatives, or eliminated altogether, and protection measures such as engineering controls, ventilation systems and personal protective equipment (in practice usually a combination of control measures) are put in place.

4. Safe Handling & Storage

SUTS considers the hazards that each substance presents e.g. corrosive, flammable, harmful to the environment or toxic.

Arrangements are then made for the safe handling, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous substances, including:

- Effective ventilation in all storage barns and animal housing areas
- The use of good quality hay and bedding (i.e. dust/mould free)
- Safe storage of all hazardous items; use of a locked cupboard and designated storage area away from clients/service users and animals
- Hazardous substances are handled mostly by senior staff and only by clients/service users under the direct supervision of a senior practitioner
- Substances are used only as directed by the manufacturers and are stored in their original containers
- Disposals are made according to manufacturers instructions and local authority guidelines
- Management procedures for all substances are recorded on the individual COSHH record sheet
- PPE is available for staff to use as appropriate (gloves, masks, overalls) ○ COSHH training is provided to all staff



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5. Plan for Emergencies

The COSHH record sheets include general and emergency procedures for each substance in the event of spillage, exposure, ignition, etc. This includes First Aid guidance and where needed steps to mitigate the effects, with details of the hazards present and warning systems to enable an appropriate response.

6. COSHH Register

The COSHH Register including assessment sheets is readily available in the main office. Records will be kept up to date and regularly reviewed.

7. Monitoring

COSHH applies to substances hazardous to health. Unlike safety hazards, health hazards can take time to become noticeable and we might not know immediately if our health is being damaged, or if exposure levels have been exceeded.

Managers at SUTS will regularly monitor this type of hazard to ensure workplace exposure limits are not exceeded and controls are maintained.

8. Information

During induction/prior to use or handling of substances hazardous to health, SUTS will supply staff, and clients/service users where applicable, with suitable and sufficient information and instruction with regards to COSHH. Appropriate notices will also be displayed.

9. Provide Training

SUTS will provide online COSHH training for staff and regular safety briefings for all.