HLTWHS003
Maintain work health and safety

Updated
for revised
NQS

Learner guide

One World for Children Pty Ltd

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Maintain work health and safety

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All websites referred to in this unit were accessed and deemed appropriate at time of publication.

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Contents

Before you begin

This learner guide is based on the unit of competency *HLTWHS003 Maintain work health and safety,* Release 3. Your trainer or training organisation must give you information about this unit of competency as part of your training program. You can access the unit of competency and assessment requirements at: www.training.gov.au.

How to work through this learner guide

This learner guide contains a number of features that will assist you in your learning. Your trainer will advise which parts of the learner guide you need to read, and which practice tasks and learning checkpoints you need to complete.

Feature of the learner guide	How you can use each feature
Learning content	▶ Read each topic in this learner guide. If you come across content that is confusing, make a note and discuss it with your trainer. Your trainer is in the best position to offer assistance. It is very important that you take on some of the responsibility for the learning you will undertake.
Examples	▶ These highlight learning points and provide realistic examples of workplace situations.
Practice tasks	▶ Practice tasks give you the opportunity to put your skills and knowledge into practice. Your trainer will tell you which practice tasks to complete.
Video clips	▶ Where QR codes appear, you can use smartphones and other devices to access video clips relating to the content. For information about how to download a QR reader app or accessing video on your device, please visit our website: www.aspirelr.com.au/help.
Summaries	▶ Key learning points are provided at the end of each topic.
Learning checkpoints	▶ There are learning checkpoints at the end of each topic. Your trainer will tell you which learning checkpoints to complete. These checkpoints give you an opportunity to check your progress and apply the skills and knowledge you have learnt.

Topic 1

In this topic you will learn about:

1A **Understanding the legislative framework**

1B **Identifying and recording hazards**

1C **Implementing risk controls**

1D **Reporting risk control issues**

Identifying hazards and controlling risks

To ensure a safe and effective working environment for yourself and others, make sure you understand the legislative frameworks used in your service. This includes understanding the National Quality Framework (NQF), the National Quality Standard (NQS) and your relevant state or territory health and safety legislation. These legislative guidelines provide a clear legal framework for employers and employees to work within.

Identifying and recording hazards and risks in the education and care industry is of high importance. Methods used to record identified hazards should be based on guidelines and standards set out by your state or territory's health and safety regulators.

Risk control strategies such as substitution, isolation and removal processes may also be implemented to minimise accidents and injuries resulting from identified hazards and/or risks. Implementing risk control procedures helps you to minimise risk in an effective and precise manner.

Watch this video for information about hazards and risks.

v0075

The following table maps this topic to the National Quality Standard and both national learning frameworks.

National Quality Standard	
	Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice
✓	Quality Area 2: Children's health and safety
✓	Quality Area 3: Physical environment
	Quality Area 4: Staffing arrangements
	Quality Area 5: Relationships with children
	Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
✓	Quality Area 7: Governance and leadership

Early Years Learning Framework	My Time, Our Place
Principles	
Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships	
Partnerships	
High expectations and equity	
Respect for diversity	
Ongoing learning and reflective practice	
Practice	
Holistic approaches	Holistic approaches
Responsiveness to children	Collaboration with children
Learning through play	Learning through play
Intentional teaching	Intentionality
Learning environments	Environments
Cultural competence	Cultural competence
Continuity of learning and transitions	Continuity and transitions
Assessment for learning	Evaluation for wellbeing and learning
Outcomes	
Children have a strong sense of identity	
Children are connected to and contribute to their world	
Children have a strong sense of wellbeing	
Children are confident and involved learners	
Children are effective communicators	

1A Understanding the legislative framework

You must understand the legislative framework for conducting and providing a safe working environment for everyone in the workplace. Regardless of what state or territory you live in, it is vital that you have a deep understanding of and recognise the reasoning behind the framework. Health and safety policies and procedures are part of a framework for effective health and safety management.

In the education and care industry, the NQF operates under an applied law system comprised of the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. The NQF is relevant to all regulated services in Australia, including long day care, family day care, outside school hours care and preschools/kindergartens.

Regulations 168 and 169 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations specify the policies and procedures that must be provided by your service, which include those relating to health and safety, incident, injury, trauma and illness, and providing a safe environment.

To work effectively and safely in your workplace, you must work in accordance with:

▶ health and safety legislation

▶ Commonwealth, state and territory health and safety authorities

▶ regulations and standards

▶ codes of practice

▶ policies and procedures

▶ rights and responsibilities

▶ participative arrangements.

Health and safety legislation

Successful management of health and safety in the workplace relies on commitment, consultation and cooperation. Everyone in the workplace needs to understand the importance of health and safety, what their role is in making the workplace safe, and how they can fulfil their responsibilities and obligations under health and safety legislation.

The *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (Cth) is a federal Act, which is part of the Australian Government's plan to harmonise health and safety laws so that workers are provided with the same rights and protection regardless of where their work is carried out in Australia. All states and territories continue to operate under state-specific health and safety laws. Victoria and Western Australia are the only states that have not adopted the harmonised legislation.

Understanding and applying health and safety legislation helps your service:

▶ prevent workplace injury and illness

▶ control the spread of infection

▶ avoid unnecessary costs

▶ avoid damage to its reputation.

Your service must also comply with health and safety legislation related to record-keeping, and reporting health and safety issues and incidents. For example, you are legally required to report and record the following.

Requirement	Details
Incident and injury reporting	Any incidents and injuries that occur in the workplace must be reported using an approved incident, injury, trauma and illness record. There may be a different form for adults and children at your service.
	You can find an example form at: http://aspirelr.link/acecqa-injury-report
	Serious incidents and injuries must be reported to your state/territory health and safety authority and the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). A serious incident or injury is one requiring medical treatment.
Hazardous substances and dangerous goods	Chemicals used in your workplace must be accompanied by a safety data sheet (SDS). Remember that natural products may also have harmful effects, and require safety precautions and first-aid measures.
	You can find an example of an SDS for sodium bicarbonate (also known as bicarb soda) at: http://aspirelr.link/safety-data-sheet-example
Environmental monitoring	Environmental monitoring involves identifying and monitoring hazards and risks, and seeking advice to reduce or eliminate any hazards or risks identified. This may include completing hazard checklists, risk assessments, training records and maintenance reports.
Health monitoring	Illness or infection must be reported using an approved incident, injury, trauma and illness record.
	Some infectious diseases, labelled 'notifiable', must be reported to your state/territory public health unit and ACECQA. Notifiable diseases vary depending on your state or territory, but include measles, meningococcal, hepatitis A, whooping cough and outbreaks of gastroenteritis.
	Immunisation records must be maintained for staff and children. Guidelines for immunisation can be found at the Immunisation Australia Program website: http://aspirelr.link/immunise-australia

Health and safety authorities

Safe Work Australia is a national policy-making body that attempts to improve health and safety, and workers' compensation across the country. Safe Work Australia does not regulate or enforce health and safety laws. Instead, each jurisdiction has its own authority responsible for administering workers' compensation, enforcing jurisdictional laws and taking actions to improve health and safety.

The following table lists the health and safety authorities for each jurisdiction and their websites. You will find plenty of information online, including forms, fact sheets, contacts and guidelines for injuries, claims, safety and risk prevention. Your service should also have many health and safety resources you can refer to.

Jurisdiction	Name of authority	Website
Commonwealth	Comcare	http://aspirelr.link/comcare
ACT	WorkSafe ACT	http://aspirelr.link/worksafe-act
New South Wales	SafeWork NSW	http://aspirelr.link/safework-nsw
Northern Territory	NT WorkSafe	http://aspirelr.link/worksafe-nt
Queensland	Workplace Health and Safety Queensland	http://aspirelr.link/worksafe-qld
South Australia	SafeWork SA	http://aspirelr.link/safework-sa
Tasmania	WorkSafe Tasmania	http://aspirelr.link/worksafe-tas
Victoria	WorkSafe Victoria	http://aspirelr.link/worksafe-vic
Western Australia	WorkSafe WA	http://aspirelr.link/worksafe-wa

Regulations and standards

Regulations are rules that support the general requirements of legislation. They are mandatory, which means employers and workers must abide by them. Standards set out details and procedures to ensure the safety of products and services, and provide guidance for those working in various areas, such as children's services.

Each state and territory has its own health and safety regulations and standards.

However, the regulations and standards for your service are guided by relevant industry requirements. The NQF applies Australia-wide health and safety guidelines through the Education and Care Services Regulations and the NQS.

Standards are only legally binding when they are included in legislation, as they are with the NQF. However, most services choose to implement standards that achieve high-quality care, as it is recommended that health and safety standards be followed for your own protection and the protection of those you work with.

Your organisation should have a copy of the relevant regulations and standards for you to access at all times.

Regulations and standards may relate to:

▶ hazard management, such as manual handling, hazardous chemicals, hazard identification and hazard removal

▶ incident notification

▶ record-keeping

▶ first-aid requirements

▶ personal protective equipment (PPE)

▶ consultation with workers

▶ health and safety committees (HSCs)

▶ appointing health and safety representatives (HSRs)

▶ competency requirements for operating particular equipment or undertaking certain types of work.

Your organisation must check before purchasing children's products to ensure they meet Australian Standards. Failure to do so could result in serious injury of a child or adult.

Standards Australia (http://aspirelr.link/standards-australia) set standards for services, products and the environment based on experience. These standards are constantly reviewed.

You may see standards as codes on items you use every day, such as highchairs, car seats and change tables. The code means the item meets the Australian standard as set by the government. Here is an example of a code for a cot: AS/NZS 2130:1998.

Codes of practice

Codes of practice or compliance codes are industry guidelines to help manage a service, based on existing regulations or best practice. A code of practice is not a law, but should be followed unless there is an alternative course of action that achieves the same or better results. Codes of practice can also be used where no legislation exists. Refer to How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks Code of Practice for more information.

An important code of practice for education and care services relates to hazardous manual tasks. It provides:

▶ an introduction to identifying hazardous manual tasks

▶ risk assessment guidelines

▶ methods for controlling risks

▶ measures for reviewing the risk controls.

Policies and procedures

Your service's health and safety policies and procedures will be based on your state or territory's health and safety legislation, and associated regulations.

A policy is a guide to determine present and future decisions. Policies provide an overall plan with general goals. A procedure prescribes actions that need to be executed as a sequence of activities, tasks, steps and processes that, when undertaken, produce the desired result or outcome. Policies and procedures therefore inform workers how to apply legal requirements to their daily work.

Common policies and procedures include those for:

- ▶ dealing with infectious diseases
- ▶ hazard identification and reporting
- ▶ nutrition, food and beverages, and dietary requirements
- ▶ sun protection
- ▶ water safety
- ▶ first-aid incident and injury reporting
- ▶ dealing with medical conditions
- ▶ emergency evacuation.

Watch this video about following health and safety procedures.

The following is an example of a policy.

v0014

Example

Illness and infectious diseases policy

One World for Children's Centre will respond to an ill child immediately to ensure the child's health, safety and wellbeing. First aid will be applied as appropriate to each situation. In the case of infectious diseases, the period of exclusion will be in accordance with the 'Recommended Minimum Periods of Exclusion from School, Pre-school and Child Care Centres for Cases of and Contact with Infectious Diseases' (*Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services,* 5th Edition, National Health and Medical Research Council).

Relevant legislation

- ▶ Education and Care Services National Regulations – Regulation 85, 86, 87, 88, 168
- ▶ National Quality Standard – Quality Area 2

Sources

- ▶ Parent Handbook
- ▶ *Staying healthy: preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services,* 5th Edition, National Health and Medical Research Council

Infection control

Although our environment cannot be made germ-free, we can lessen the harmful effects of germs by keeping their numbers low. Germs can be most effectively controlled by frequent:

- ▶ cleaning and disinfecting of objects that come into contact with children
- ▶ hand-washing.

In addition, proper handling and disposal of contaminated items is necessary to prevent the spread of infection.

Hand-washing is the most important procedure you and the children can follow to prevent the spread of infection.

How to wash your hands:

- ▶ Rub your hands together vigorously for at least 20 seconds using warm running water and soap.
- ▶ Wash your fingernails, between fingers, backs of hands and wrists.
- ▶ Rinse your hands well under running water.
- ▶ Dry your hands with a single cloth or hot blow dryer.

Rights and responsibilities

Under health and safety legislation, the term 'person conducting a business or undertaking' (PCBU) is used to describe a range of individuals, including an employer, a principal contractor or a person with management or control of a workplace. Both the PCBU and workers have health and safety rights and responsibilities, based on the concept of duty of care. Duty of care is a legal obligation to ensure that the PCBU and others are not harmed by their actions or omissions.

Watch this video about duty of care.

As a PCBU, an employer has a primary duty of care and workers have a duty to take reasonable care. These duties are explained in the following table.

Employers must:	Workers must:
▶ provide and maintain a safe and healthy workplace ▶ provide and maintain safe plant and structures ▶ provide and maintain safe systems of work ▶ ensure safe use, handling and storage of plant, structures and substances ▶ provide adequate facilities for welfare of workers ▶ provide information, instruction and supervision ▶ monitor the health of workers and workplace conditions.	▶ take reasonable care for their own health and safety ▶ take reasonable care of others ▶ comply with any reasonable instruction given by the PCBU ▶ cooperate with the PCBU in matters of health and safety.

Participative arrangements

A participative arrangement refers to all workers being involved in health and safety to ensure they understand legislation, codes of practice, industry standards, and service policies and procedures. These aspects may be shared through:

▶ HSCs
▶ HSRs
▶ formal and/or informal meetings – these may be arranged by the HSR or be part of another meeting's agenda
▶ induction and training
▶ issue resolution
▶ regular information sessions on existing or new health and safety issues
▶ planning, consultation or purchasing committees
▶ management discussions where requests and concerns are raised, suggestions are contributed and reports are provided
▶ providing written workplace information.

Every workplace should have personnel onsite who are trained in dealing with health and safety issues. They are the people you can report an existing or potential hazard to. They are trained to know what to do if a health and safety issue or emergency occurs.

> **Designated health and safety personnel may include:**
>
> ▶ a team leader, supervisor or director – in most services, these individuals are the first people to approach with any health and safety concerns; generally, supervisors and directors are involved in the HSC or discussion group as they are the first to step in when dealing with an issue
> ▶ a HSC member, HSR or employee representative – they consult with staff members about health and safety issues or concerns and help find possible solutions to problems
> ▶ a first-aid officer – these individuals provide initial first aid and care until medical help arrives; they may also be responsible for stocking first-aid kits and maintaining first-aid records
> ▶ other personnel with health and safety responsibilities.

Each of these roles may have different responsibilities, depending on the service, including being responsible for:

▶ a specific area

▶ a work group

▶ a task group

▶ a particular role, such as a secretary (documenting meeting discussions), reporting officer or liaison officer (communicating between work groups and management).

A large organisation or service may have different people in each of these positions; a small service may just have one or two people who fulfil all of these roles.

Each service and workplace is different, so ensure you know who is responsible for health and safety issues at your service. Identify the designated health and safety personnel during your induction, or speak with your supervisor or manager for more information.

Practice task 1

1. Briefly explain why it is important for workers to understand the legislative requirements of their job role.

2. What are **two** ways health and safety information could be communicated to workers?

3. How might workers be informed of their legal obligations and rights?

1B Identifying and recording hazards

A hazard is a source or situation with the potential for harm in terms of injury or illness, damage to property or the environment, or a combination of these. Hazard identification involves identifying both existing and potential hazards.

Hazard identification must be applied as part of your day-to-day work activities and may be required:

▶ before planning or commencing new tasks

▶ before changes are made to a workplace, work process, work arrangement or equipment

▶ as part of planning major tasks or activities, such as equipment shutdowns

▶ following an incident report

▶ when new knowledge becomes available

▶ at regular intervals during normal operations

▶ prior to disposing of equipment or materials.

Existing and potential hazards

Safe Work Australia includes the following as potential workplace hazards in its code of practice, How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks. The following table outlines different hazards and how these may occur in your workplace.

Hazard	Possible outcomes	How this might occur in your workplace
Manual-handling tasks	Overexertion or repetitive movement, which can cause muscular strain	▶ Lifting children onto a change mat or into a cot ▶ Moving heavy equipment
Gravity	Falling objects, falls, slips and trips that can cause fractures, bruises, lacerations, dislocations, concussion, permanent injuries or death	▶ Equipment not being stored correctly ▶ Sand not being swept, leaving a slippery surface
Electricity	Potential ignition source; exposure to live electrical wires can cause shock, burns or death from electrocution	▶ Using electrical equipment with wet hands ▶ Overloading power points
Machinery and equipment	Being hit by moving vehicles or being caught by moving parts of machinery can cause fractures, bruises, lacerations, dislocations, permanent injuries or death	▶ Road accident while on an excursion ▶ Putting hands in a washing machine while it is operating

Hazard	Possible outcomes	How this might occur in your workplace
Hazardous chemicals	Chemicals (such as acids, hydrocarbons or heavy metals) and dusts (such as asbestos and silica) can cause respiratory illnesses, cancers or dermatitis	▶ Cleaning products used to disinfect ▶ Not labelling containers adequately
Extreme temperatures	Heat can cause burns, heat stroke or fatigue; cold can cause hypothermia or frostbite	▶ Not wearing a hat and sunscreen ▶ Lack of shade ▶ Insufficient clothing in cold weather
Noise	Exposure to loud or frequent noise can cause permanent hearing damage	▶ Having music too loud ▶ Too many people in a small space
Radiation	Ultraviolet, welding-arc flashes, microwaves and lasers can cause burns, cancer or blindness	▶ Using old or damaged appliances
Biological hazards	Microorganisms can cause hepatitis, legionnaire's disease, Q fever, HIV/AIDS or allergies	▶ Not washing hands or not wearing gloves when cleaning body fluids ▶ Spraying cleaning chemicals close by those with a respiratory or skin allergy
Psychosocial hazards	Effects of work-related stress, bullying, violence and work-related fatigue	▶ Not taking required breaks ▶ Inadequate child-to-staff ratios

Potential hazards can be identified through:

▶ workplace inspections

▶ consulting HSRs and other workers

▶ regular examination of incident records

▶ keeping up to date with the latest information regarding relevant products or processes

▶ safety audits.

Scanning for safety

Scanning to ensure safety is a simple strategy that can help you develop hazard recognition skills. The aim is to have staff readily alert to potential hazards, which can be done by following these steps:

1. **Scan** – for potential hazards when walking through your service. Keep your eyes moving, taking in what is in the area. While scanning, identify each item that could be a potential hazard.

2. **Predict** – what could happen if the hazard is not rectified.

3. **Decide** – what action should be taken to eliminate or minimise the hazard as much as possible.

4. **Execute** – the required action; you need to be willing to act to prevent possible incidents from occurring.

The following is an example of putting these steps into action:

1. **Scan** – You see a wet floor surface.

2. **Predict** – You predict that someone could slip over.

3. **Decide** – You determine that someone needs to mop the area.

4. **Execute** – You mop the area.

Another good method of scanning for safety is to conduct a safety inspection to effectively record and report hazards. Most services have a checklist for each area to confirm what needs to be considered and where.

Services may include different content and layout according to their workplace setting.

Example

Hazard identification checklist

Hazard identification checklist	
Type of hazard (tick the relevant hazard)	**Comment/action taken and who is responsible**
☐ Inadequate lighting	
☐ Inappropriate household cleaning equipment	
☐ Manual handling (for example, lifting loads)	
☐ Limited ventilation	
☐ Infectious diseases	
☐ Open wounds/cuts	
☐ Chemicals or medications	
☐ Faulty electrical equipment	
☐ Overloaded power points	
☐ Pets	
☐ Bathroom equipment and supplies	
☐ Loose floor coverings	
☐ Client behaviour (for example, any behaviours of concern)	

Hazard identification process

Hazard identification is about looking at how you operate, noticing possible hazards, and identifying risks to health and safety that hazards create. The goal is to recognise any hazards so they can be eliminated in a risk management process.

Hazards can be identified through:

▶ workplace inspections, either completed as part of your daily activities or through formal external audits

▶ consultation with workers, where they share their concerns and together you identify issues and actions

▶ incident, injury, trauma and illness reporting, and maintenance reports in particular, as they give you an overall picture and provide aggregate information and data of what is happening in the service.

Example

Using aggregate data on incidents

Nicolas, the service director, views aggregate data collected from staff incident reports. He notes that there have been seven incidents in May, yet there were only two in the previous month. From this aggregate information, Nicolas decides to investigate what happened in May to cause this increase. He also considers whether specific data can help him identify whether a high number of incidents is likely to occur again in June.

Nicolas creates a data grid (like an event sample) to identify what caused the incidents.

May staff	Jammed fingers in the new change table steps	Fall due to slippery floor in bathroom	Fall due to sand on path	Bump to head from open overhead cupboard
Jenny (casual)	1			
Henry (casual)	1			
Raelene		1		
Hewwitt				1
Costa	1			
Tanya (casual)			1	
Leah (casual)	1			

Nicolas identifies that casual staff have a higher number of incidents than full-time staff. He also identifies that the new change table steps are a hazard and the most common cause of incidents. This information shows Nicolas where greater risk controls are needed.

Reporting and recording hazards

Remember, all hazards should be assessed and reported, and the level of risk attached to them can be highlighted, to determine the priority in which they are controlled. The manner in which you report hazards is determined by your service's policies and procedures.

Once identified, hazards need to be documented via service standards so that the information can be accurately reported. This may include completing detailed incident, injury, trauma and illness records, or using a checklist or form to show that a hazard has been found.

Watch this video on recording information about children.

ACECQA incident, injury, trauma and illness record

The following is the approved record provided by ACECQA. It is the document that all registered services must use to record child-related incidents, injuries, trauma and illnesses.

Incident, injury, trauma and illness record
(Circle relevant type of record)
Child details

Surname:	Given names:
Date of birth:	Age:
Room/group:	

Incident/injury/trauma/illness details

Incident/injury/trauma

Circumstances leading to the incident/injury/trauma:

Products or structures involved:

Location:

Time:	AM/PM	Date:
Name of witness:		
Signature:		Date:

Nature of injury sustained:	☐ Abrasion, scrape	☐ Cut
	☐ Bite	☐ Rash
	☐ Broken bone/ fracture	☐ Sprain
	☐ Bruise	☐ Swelling
	☐ Burn	☐ Concussion
	☐ Other (please specify):	

Illness

Circumstances surrounding child becoming ill, including apparent symptoms:

Time of illness: AM/PM

Date of illness:

Action taken

Details of action taken, including first aid administration of medication:

Medical personnel contacted: Yes / No

If yes, provide details:

Details of person completing this record	
Name:	Signature:
Time record was made: AM/PM	
Date record was made:	

Notifications (including attempted notifications)	
Parent/guardian:	
Time: AM/PM	Date:
Director/teacher/coordinator:	
Time: AM/PM	Date:

Regulatory authority (if applicable):		
Time:	AM/PM	**Date:**
Parental acknowledgement:		
I ………………………………………………………… (name of parent/guardian) **have been notified of my child's incident/injury/trauma/illness. (Please circle)**		
Signature:		**Date:**
Additional notes/follow-up:		

Incident involving an adult

If an incident involves an adult, the form used may alter depending on the service policy, the state/territory requirements for reporting and the severity of the incident.

This information may be used to investigate the incident further and to lodge a workers' compensation claim if a worker is injured during or due to their employment. Workers' compensation authorities in each state and territory can provide advice, assistance and funding for:

▶ medical treatment

▶ rehabilitation

▶ weekly payments in place of wages

▶ damages if the injury was due to a lack of duty of care

▶ lump sums and pensions for permanent impairment

▶ lump sums and pensions if a worker dies due to a workplace incident.

The health and safety authority in your state or territory should be notified of any workplace injury as soon as possible after the incident occurs so that a claim can be lodged and dealt with in a timely manner.

Safety checks

To avoid situations where workers and children may be injured, your service may require staff to complete safety checks by using hazard identification checklists at specific times during the day. Safety checks may be completed:

▶ by the first staff member arriving in the morning

▶ prior to people entering the building

▶ prior to children entering a play space

▶ prior to children going into outdoor environments.

Here are some examples of safety/hazard checklists that may be used in your service.

Playroom/equipment safety checklist		
Weekly check: **Date:**	**Notes**	**Initial when complete**
All power points have safety plugs		
Safety locks on all doors are in good working order		
Safety door covers are in good working order		
All relevant doors have a foam door stopper		
Equipment is stored neatly and safely on shelves		
Cots and beds are in good working order		
Dangerous items and broken equipment is removed		
Fridge temperature is taken and documented		
Floors are clear of unnecessary objects		
All potentially dangerous goods are stored in a locked cupboard with clear warning signs		
Cleaning products are clearly labelled and in a locked cupboard when not being used		

Playroom/equipment safety checklist					
Week beginning:	**Mon**	**Tues**	**Wed**	**Thurs**	**Fri**
Daily check	**Initial**	**Initial**	**Initial**	**Initial**	**Initial**
Fence line and playground are checked to ensure they are free from dangerous objects					
The fence line is free from any items/equipment					

Week beginning:	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
Daily check	Initial	Initial	Initial	Initial	Initial
Softfall is not built up along the fence line (rake away if built up)					
Drinking taps are in good working order and free from sand					
Climbing equipment is stable and in good order – free from splinters, loose screws, etc.					
Softfall is evenly spread					
Equipment is removed if broken or dangerous					
Water is emptied when the water play area is not in use					
The water play area is clean					
Playground is checked for poisonous or hazardous plants (including sandpits)					

Practice task 2

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

Case study

Sam, three years, slips as he is climbing up the A-frame and falls onto the concrete, grazing his right elbow and bumping his head. He has a large, round bump on his head, which his educator applies an ice pack to. His grazed elbow requires first-aid treatment. The affected area is cleaned and a bandage is applied. Sam's parents are notified of the incident according to the service's policy, which specifies that parents must be contacted immediately if a child incurs a head injury.

After some consideration, Tom, an educator, determines the following:

▶ The hazard identified in this incident was related to the A-frame being too close to the concreted area.

▶ Risks associated with this include minor to severe injuries.

▶ This hazard can be controlled by situating the A-frame on a softfall area or by placing protective mats underneath, reducing the probability of risk occurring.

▶ An incident, injury, trauma or illness record must be completed in relation to an incident such as this, and the information must remain confidential.

1. Complete an incident, injury, trauma and illness report based on the template available on the ACECQA website: http://aspirelr.link/sample-forms-and-templates

2. Use the following checklist to carry out a safety/hazard check for the service.

Weekly check: Date:	Notes	Initial when complete
Softfall is adequate		
Sand is adequate		
Branches are at a safe height (not at children's eye level)		
Sun shades are in good working order		
Paths are in good order		
Buildings are in good order		
Fences are in good order		

1C Implementing risk controls

A risk is the likelihood that exposure to a hazard will result in injury, illness or harm. Once a hazard is identified, the risks associated with each hazard need to be assessed to determine the likelihood of injury or illness being caused by that hazard.

All hazards pose a risk. Risk controls are measures and elimination techniques implemented to isolate, substitute or remove a hazard from the environment. Ideally, these are implemented prior to any harm resulting from a potential hazard.

When assessing the risk associated with a hazard, it is necessary to ask the following questions:

▶ Who is exposed to the hazard?

▶ How often are people near the hazard?

▶ Has the hazard already caused any problems?

▶ How easily could someone be hurt by the hazard?

▶ How common is it for this hazard to cause problems in the workplace?

▶ Which factors or specific aspects of the work are increasing the likelihood of injury or illness?

There are four steps to risk management:

You will take on some responsibility for risk management by taking the following steps:

1. Identifying hazards: Check for hazards constantly throughout the day.

2. Assessing the amount of risk from the hazard: Identify what the impact will or could be.

3. Controlling hazards and removing risks if possible: You may introduce a system or implement a strategy to overcome the hazard or reduce the risk.

4. Reviewing risk assessments and finding safer ways to complete tasks, develop checklists, allocate roles and responsibilities or provide additional training.

Risk assessment

Risk assessments in a workplace involve inspecting all equipment, materials and resources, identifying potential hazards and evaluating the likelihood or risk of harm. The process of risk assessment needs to be conducted regularly, as changes to the environment, weather conditions and use of materials can cause new hazards.

A risk assessment should be carried out whenever:

▶ there is uncertainty about how dangerous a hazard may be

▶ there are a number of hazards that, together, may cause serious harm

▶ changes occur that may impact on current hazards or create new hazards.

Risk assessments are usually undertaken as required, such as when hazards are identified or when incidents or near misses occur. A near miss is when an incident occurs that did not result in harm or damage to the environment, but had the potential to.

Some regulations and standards specify when risk assessments should be carried out. For example, the Education and Care Services National Regulations state that the following risk assessments are mandatory:

▶ Regulation 97: A risk assessment must be conducted to identify potential emergencies that are relevant to the service every three months (this will be included in your service emergency management plan).

▶ Regulation 100: A risk assessment is carried out before authorisation is sought for an excursion, unless the excursion is a regular outing and a risk assessment has been carried out for this regular outing/excursion.

▶ Regulation 101: A risk assessment for an excursion must identify and assess risks that may be imposed to the safety, health or wellbeing of any child attending the excursion, and the risk assessment must specify how the identified risks will be managed and minimised.

▶ Regulation 116: A family day care service must conduct a risk assessment of each residence and approved family day care venue.

The NQS also guides services to provide a risk assessment. You can find the following cases explained in detail in the *Guide to the National Quality Framework*: http://aspirelr.link/nqf-guide-pdf

NQS area	Descriptor	Where this element links to risk assessment
Quality Area 2	Children's health and safety	▶ Excursions ▶ Preventing harm and hazards ▶ Identifying potential emergencies relevant to the service ▶ Ratios of children to adults ▶ Matters that must be considered in a risk assessment
Element 2.1.2	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented	▶ Injury management
Element 2.1.3	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child	▶ Management of risk in general
Element 2.2.1	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard	▶ Regulation 100: Risk assessment must be conducted before excursion ▶ Regulation 101: Conduct of risk assessment for excursion ▶ Risk assessment must be written
Quality Area 3	Physical environment	▶ Approved provider responsibility for risk assessment (family day care)
Element 3.1.2	Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained	▶ Risk assessments of the physical environment will be sighted by assessors
Quality Area 4	Staffing arrangements	▶ Ratios and responsibilities of family day care educators
Quality Area 7	Leadership and service management	▶ Risk assessment in family day care

Steps to identify the risks

To complete a risk assessment, you need to identify the consequences of the risk and the likelihood of it occurring to determine the potential for harm. This helps you make decisions on how to control the hazards and minimise the risk.

Follow these steps to effectively identify risks:

▶ Assess the likelihood and consequences of the risk, such as:
  – how often people are exposed to the hazard and for what period of time
  – how effective current strategies are
  – whether changes could occur to make this hazard more dangerous
  – whether the actions of people make this hazard more harmful.

▶ Classify the risk by finding out about how the hazard may cause harm. Hazards are not always isolated issues; people impact on the environment and resources or materials, and this is often how harm occurs. For example, chemicals stored on a shelf do not pose a high risk if left there; it is their incorrect use or mishandling that makes them hazards and poses a risk to health.

▶ Grade the risk to determine how severe the harm may be. Grading considers the:
  – type of harm
  – severity of the harm
  – possible injury or health outcome.

These gradings help you to determine what action to take.

Risk matrix

To complete the risk assessment, you can use a risk matrix to collate all the information.

Grading – severity of impact			
		Minor	Moderate	High
Likelihood risk will occur	**Likely**			
	Possible			
	Unlikely			

Key:	
	Acceptable risk – monitor and reduce as much as possible
	Concerning risk – must be reduced as much as possible
	Intolerable risk – must be acted on and reduced immediately

This grading helps you identify which risks are most dangerous and are therefore your highest priority to deal with.

Example

Managing risk

The softfall at the bottom of the slide is thin. The likelihood that harm will occur is high, as children play on the slide every day when outside. The severity of an injury happening because of this hazard is high. For example, a child may injure their bottom or spine, or fall and knock their head. When this information is placed into the risk matrix, it is rated as an 'intolerable risk', which must be dealt with immediately to reduce or eliminate risk of harm or injury.

You may manage the risk by:

▶ reporting the situation as an immediate concern

▶ closing off the slide area

▶ spreading softfall from another area to the bottom of the slide

▶ placing a fall mat at the bottom of the slide.

Minimising risks

When you manage risks, you take actions to eliminate or reduce the likelihood that exposure to a hazard will result in injury or disease. That is, you control the hazard to minimise the risk. Each hazard requires its own method of control, and each fits into a different risk level, so a different level of control is required.

Implementing the hierarchy of control

There are six methods of control that you can use to manage risk:

1. Elimination
2. Substitution
3. Isolation
4. Engineering controls
5. Administrative controls
6. Personal protective equipment (PPE)

These methods are listed in order to demonstrate the most preferred to least preferred methods: Level 1 methods aim to eliminate or remove the hazard (this is the most preferred). Level 2 methods aim to reduce the risk of harm as much as possible. Level 3 methods aim to provide protection for people to increase their level of safety.

Due to these different levels, the strategy is called the 'hierarchy of control'. The hierarchy can be seen in the following diagram.

HIGHEST	**Level 1**	▶ Eliminate hazards	**MOST**
Level of health and safety protection	**Level 2**	▶ Substitute the hazard with something safer	
		▶ Isolate the hazard from people	
		▶ Use engineering controls	
	Level 3	▶ Use administrative controls	
LOWEST		▶ Use personal protective equipment	**LEAST**

The following table is a breakdown of the components of the control strategy.

Level	Control strategy	Description	Example
1	**Elimination**	Eliminating or removing the hazardous item, substance or process if it is not necessary to a system of work	A rug in the hallway that is slippery is taken away
2	**Substitution**	Substituting the hazardous item, substance or process with one known to be less harmful to health	Changing from chemical to natural, non-toxic cleaning materials
2	**Isolation**	Enclosing or isolating the hazard to eliminate or reduce the risk of injury or illness	Separating a child or adult with an infectious disease from others to reduce the risk of disease spreading
2	**Engineering controls**	Changing processes, equipment or tools	Adding steps to the change table so children can walk up instead of needing to be lifted
3	**Administrative controls**	Changing work procedures to reduce exposure to existing hazards	Using the outdoor washing line to dry sheets rather than the dryer
3	**Personal protective equipment (PPE)**	Wearing devices and clothing that provide individual protection from hazards; an effective PPE system requires considerable effort by the employer to ensure that: ▶ proper protective equipment is selected ▶ workers are individually fitted ▶ proper instruction on the need for and use of PPE is provided ▶ standards are enforced ▶ an effective system of cleaning and maintenance is devised	Providing gloves to protect workers from germs since the need to change soiled nappies cannot be eliminated

Elimination and substitution are the preferred methods to remove risks from the workplace. If they are implemented, other controls are not required.

Administrative controls and PPE (Level 3 controls) are not preferred control measures, but they may provide interim solutions to eliminating or reducing a particular risk, and they may be used in addition to other control methods.

Example

Using the hierarchy of control

Educators are often required to change children's soiled nappies and can contract infectious diseases through contact with urine and faeces, which may cause serious illness. This is a common hazard in education and care services, as the likelihood of infection is relatively high and the severity of the infection is also high. According to the risk matrix, the level of risk is classified as a concerning or intolerable risk.

The hierarchy of control can help you choose the most effective methods to minimise the risk:

▶ Elimination: it is not practical to eliminate infants or their nappies from the service.

▶ Substitution: it is not possible, as nappy changing cannot be avoided.

▶ Isolation: it is not always practical to only have selected workers change nappies. Most services do have specific nappy-change areas, so this is isolating the hazard to some degree.

▶ Engineering controls: equipment and tools can be changed to ensure adequate protection is provided to educators changing nappies. For example, steps can be added to nappy change tables to reduce the need to lift toddlers, which is a manual-handling risk.

▶ Administrative controls: policies and procedures relating to nappy changing include washing hands before and after nappy changes, and cleaning equipment and disposing of nappies as hygienically as possible. However, educators are still in contact with the hazard.

▶ Personal protective equipment (PPE): gloves can be worn by educators to reduce the risk of exposure to germs and bacteria.

Practice task 3

1. Regulation 101 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations outlines that risk assessment must be completed prior to an excursion. What considerations are listed?

2. Review a service's risk assessment process in their emergency management plan. List **five** risks that are identified, including the risk levels.

1D Reporting risk control issues

When you implement control measures to control hazards and/or minimise risks, you may encounter issues that can cause further injury or disease. The control measure may only be a short-term solution to a long-term recurring issue.

Check risk control methods and procedures for effectiveness soon after their introduction, as they may create new hazards or may be ineffective.

A change in one procedure can have an impact on how staff carry out other procedures, and may put them at risk in other areas.

To successfully identify issues associated with control methods, you must continually monitor potential hazards and the control methods implemented. Regular discussions and meetings can identify and rectify problems with current risk control issues. Staff meetings with documented minutes can help ensure all workers have a clear understanding of the risks being discussed.

Not all risks can be controlled in a workplace, but by implementing control measures and ensuring adequate and extensive supervision, you can make a difference to the outcome of potential risk. For example, you should:

▶ make sure everyone knows their responsibilities in relation to identifying hazards and assessing risk

▶ regularly check resources, equipment and materials for hazards

▶ keep up to date with information about hazards and legislative requirements

▶ complete and provide adequate training

▶ regularly review WHS literature, organisational procedures and risk management strategies

▶ consult with others.

Example

Minimising a hazard

The hazard is a wet bathroom floor and the risk is that children or educators may slip, causing injury. The control measure you use is to isolate the area by placing a 'wet floor' sign near the slippery floor. You then eliminate this risk by drying the floor. These control measures manage the hazard and risk at this point in time. However, this hazard is common in the work setting and occurs at least five times a day, particularly when children are washing hands at transition times.

The control method is an immediate solution to the hazard, but the hazard and risk will recur unless other control measures are put in place. New risk management procedures are implemented so that an educator is always present in the bathroom when children are washing their hands. This reduces the frequency and severity of the hazard, and ensures it can be dealt with immediately.

Reporting issues

Always report issues regarding hazard and risk control procedures to appropriate personnel in your service. This may include your service director, owner, supervisor, area manager or a member of a management committee. These people should include the PCBU and/or an officer.

Timely and effective reporting helps ensure safety issues are quickly identified, managed and rectified, thereby ensuring the continued safety of children and staff at the service.

Your service may have a maintenance record that is used to document broken equipment, toys or safety hazards. These records may also contain contact details for appropriate tradespeople qualified to fix equipment to eliminate a hazard.

A hazard identification form may also be used as part of a risk management procedure. Your service will provide guidelines and methods of communication to share safety information to effectively manage hazards and risks in your work environment.

Residual risk

Residual risk refers to any risk that remains after other risks have been identified, considered, and managed or eliminated.

You can calculate the residual risk by considering the following:

▶ Inherent risk: the risk that exists if no controls or risk management strategies are applied.
▶ Control risk: the ability you have to reduce risk; this might be using controls such as devices or methods to eliminate a hazard, or reduce the risk associated with a hazard.

The residual risk is the outcome of these two; for example, if you subtract the 'control risk' from the 'inherent risk', you get the 'residual risk'. This is illustrated in the following example.

Toys are on the floor. The inherent risk is that you or others might trip on the toys. You control the risk by making sure there is a clear pathway, but the residual risk remains: the toys are still on parts of the floor and the child's play may cause the toys to move onto the pathway again.

Some residual risks will occur regularly, including:

▶ children's bodily fluids will be distributed onto equipment, materials, other children and educators
▶ water will be spilt
▶ toys will create tripping hazards
▶ equipment may injure children.

Residual risks will be identified during your ongoing risk assessment and control measures, but may also be identified when you are monitoring new control measures.

Sometimes residual risk may not be identified until you look back at past incident records, maintenance records or meeting minutes. These documents allow you to clarify how often issues occur and whether these are of a similar nature. Supervision strategies and safety checklists also provide information regarding ongoing risks in the work environment.

Practice task 4

1. Access a document used to report hazards in an education and care service, and list any policies and procedures relating to the report.

2. Identify a hazard in your work or learning environment (or use the residual risk example in this section). Use the report from question 1 to record the issues.

3. Check the policy to find out who you should report issues to. Discuss your completed report with this person or a colleague and ask how you could improve the way you completed this type of form. Document any suggestions.

Summary

▶ You must understand the legislative framework for conducting and providing a safe working environment for everyone in the workplace, which will be based on the health and safety legislation in your state or territory, related regulations and codes of practice.

▶ Policies and procedures provide guidelines for meeting the specific duties, laws and responsibilities you must adhere to in your daily work practices.

▶ Hazard management involves identifying hazards in the workplace, assessing the risks to health and safety that those hazards create, and implementing suitable measures to control the risks.

▶ By identifying and eliminating hazards in the workplace, you are lowering the risk of an incident occurring.

▶ Risk assessments involve inspecting all equipment, materials and resources, identifying potential hazards, and evaluating the likelihood or risk of harm.

▶ Risk control involves taking actions to eliminate or reduce the likelihood that exposure to a hazard will result in injury or disease.

▶ You should always report issues regarding hazard and risk control procedures to appropriate personnel in your service.

▶ Identify hazards by calculating the residual risk; that is, the risks that remain after controls have been implemented.

Learning checkpoint 1
Identifying hazards and controlling risks

Part A

Tasks that educators often carry out when working with infants and toddlers are:

- lifting and carrying an infant or toddler on their hip
- changing nappies.

1. For each of these tasks, identify and record the existing and potential hazards.

2. For each of the hazards, identify the inherent risk, the risk controls and the residual risk.

3. What are your rights and responsibilities in relation to these hazards?

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4. For each hazard, apply the hierarchy of control, and record your strategies to eliminate the hazard and manage the risk.

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Part B

Research and prepare a report that shows how you would complete a risk assessment when planning an excursion with children.

Write a brief summary describing the excursion; for example, the venue or destination, transport, excursion activities, and the age and number of children involved. Develop your risk assessment based on this information.

Use a service's policies and procedure documents, and blank copies of service documents to record as much information as possible.

Include the following in your report:

▶ All existing and potential hazards you can identify, including hazards you are required to consider as outlined in Regulation 101 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations

▶ A risk grid or matrix for each hazard you identified, explaining how the hazards fit into the grid or matrix, and how you measure the potential harm

▶ How you plan to control each hazard and manage the risk using the hierarchy of control

Topic 2

In this topic you will learn about:

2A **Informing the work team**

2B **Monitoring housekeeping practices**

2C **Maintaining health and safety incident records**

Implementing policies and procedures into work team processes

When incidents occur, your role is to ensure prompt attention is given to the situation at hand. This may include isolating an area of the indoor or outdoor play space, or applying first aid to an injured person. You need to document information about the incident by completing appropriate records used by your service.

It is also vital to undertake daily housekeeping practices and maintain safety in the workplace. Housekeeping practices help to reduce the likelihood of risks caused by hazards. Using a checklist can ensure all areas have been checked, and all hazards are identified, eliminated or managed promptly.

The following table maps this topic to the National Quality Standard and both national learning frameworks.

National Quality Standard	
	Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice
✓	Quality Area 2: Children's health and safety
	Quality Area 3: Physical environment
✓	Quality Area 4: Staffing arrangements
	Quality Area 5: Relationships with children
	Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
✓	Quality Area 7: Governance and leadership

Early Years Learning Framework	My Time, Our Place
Principles	
Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships	
Partnerships	
High expectations and equity	
Respect for diversity	
Ongoing learning and reflective practice	
Practice	
Holistic approaches	Holistic approaches
Responsiveness to children	Collaboration with children
Learning through play	Learning through play
Intentional teaching	Intentionality
Learning environments	Environments
Cultural competence	Cultural competence
Continuity of learning and transitions	Continuity and transitions
Assessment for learning	Evaluation for wellbeing and learning
Outcomes	
Children have a strong sense of identity	
Children are connected to and contribute to their world	
Children have a strong sense of wellbeing	
Children are confident and involved learners	
Children are effective communicators	

2A Informing the work team

Providing work health and safety (WHS) information to others in the workplace is a key responsibility of your job role. This is usually achieved by implementing policies and procedures set out by your organisation and by following relevant legislation. Modelling correct work practices and ensuring the workplace is adequately monitored help to reduce the risk of incidents occurring.

Watch this video about working in accordance with relevant policies and procedures.

WHS policies and procedures

It is imperative to have sound knowledge of your service policies and procedures related to health and safety. These are based on legislation and regulations, and are written to ensure a safe service for everyone in the workplace.

There are specific times when you need to communicate health and safety information to staff, including:

▶ during an induction process – new staff must be made aware of legal requirements and service-specific expectations for health and safety

▶ in a meeting – this may be a general staff meeting, a health and safety meeting or a meeting about a specific issue.

There may also be spontaneous occasions when you notice a WHS issue or when staff ask for assistance.

Policies and procedures must provide clear written direction or instruction about work tasks. Instructions may also be given to staff verbally. All information must be suited to the work group, and you may need to provide information in English or in other languages. You may find that videos, symbols and other pictorial presentations are useful for communicating information.

When providing information to staff, you should also:

▶ add definitions to policy handbooks or individual policies and procedures

▶ clearly explain and/or limit the use of abbreviations or acronyms such as reps, WHS or PPE

▶ use correct terms with others so they become familiar with their use

▶ provide a glossary of terminology used in your service.

Linking policies and procedures to specific tasks or job roles can help staff extend their knowledge and skills into new areas, and ensure they understand and comply with legislation. The following table shows how WHS management areas can link to specific policies and procedures.

WHS management area	Policy/procedure
Hazard, incident and injury reporting and investigation	▶ Emergency procedures ▶ Infectious diseases policy ▶ Accident and illness policy and procedures
Hazard identification, risk assessment and control	▶ Infection control procedures ▶ Manual-handling policies ▶ Dangerous goods procedures
Consultation and participation	▶ Staff induction procedures ▶ Policy development and review procedure ▶ Quality assurance materials

As a workplace leader, you are responsible for ensuring staff are aware of policies and procedures, and for any changes made to these documents. Workers may need you to discuss safe work practices with them, but they will benefit most from watching you model these practices.

The following table outlines how your leadership role can foster and reinforce key WHS information to ensure best practice in the workplace.

Your role (best practice)	Information provided	Example
▶ Be aware of content. ▶ Comply with legislation, standards, codes and guidelines. ▶ Inform staff of details and changes. ▶ Model safe work practices at all times. ▶ Ensure copies of WHS documents are easily accessible and that staff know where they are located. ▶ Use content to inform/update policies and procedures. ▶ Inform others of details through policies and procedures. ▶ Provide access to copies when relevant. ▶ Use documents as reference material.	Health and safety legislation	*Work Health and Safety Act 2012* (SA)
	Standards	*AS ISO 22000-2005: Food safety management systems – Requirements for any organization in the food chain*
	Codes of practice/compliance codes	How to Manage Work Health and Safety Risks Code of Practice
	Guidance material	*Risk management prompt for hazardous manual tasks*, Comcare (2015)

Example

Communicating WHS policies and procedures to staff

Happy Gardens Child Care Centre focuses on a new policy or procedure each week. It uses a range of methods to share information and help each staff member to understand their role.

This week the centre is focusing on the sun safety policy and procedures. It has:

▶ put a copy of the policy in the staffroom

▶ placed a SunSmart poster in each bathroom (both adult and child bathrooms)

▶ included an article in the staff and parent newsletter

▶ encouraged each staff group to talk about their routine and how sun safety is carried out

▶ placed a forum posting on the intranet

▶ invited a guest speaker from the Cancer Council for older children and parents

▶ placed SunSmart brochures from the Cancer Council in each staff member's locker and left a pile of these in the foyer for families to access.

Information and instructions may need to be provided verbally, in written form or in other languages depending on the intended audience. You may also provide information via videos, signs, symbols and other pictorial presentations.

Providing information about hazards, risk assessment and controls

Report hazards, risks and control measures to appropriate personnel, such as your supervisor, centre director, area manager or management committee. You should also use the service's standard documents and communication processes to share information.

To ensure all staff understand the impact of incidents, hazards and risks, provide discussion and details about the following.

Area of discussion	Details
Specific safety hazards	These may include: ▶ chemicals ▶ bodily fluids ▶ needles and sharps ▶ manual handling and work posture ▶ burnout, fatigue and stress ▶ underfoot hazards ▶ trips and falls ▶ noise ▶ airborne contaminants ▶ entryways ▶ violent, threatening or bullying behaviour ▶ computer use ▶ rostering ▶ moving parts of machinery ▶ medicines and waste that are cytotoxic (damaging to the skin).

Area of discussion	Details
Hazard management	Identify hazards, assess the risks to health and safety they create, and implement suitable measures to control the risks.
	Hazards can be identified through:
	▶ consulting health and safety representatives and workers
	▶ workplace inspections
	▶ examining records of incidents and near misses in the workplace
	▶ keeping up to date with the latest available information released about relevant products or processes.
	Once hazards are identified, a risk assessment for each hazard determines the likelihood of injury or illness being caused by that hazard. When assessing the risk associated with any hazard, it is necessary to ask the following questions:
	▶ Who is exposed to the hazard?
	▶ How often are people near the hazard?
	▶ Has the hazard already caused any problems?
	▶ How easily could someone be hurt?
	▶ How common is it for this hazard to cause problems in other workplaces?
	▶ Which factors or specific aspects of work are increasing the likelihood of injury or illness?
	Record the identified hazards and classify them according to the type of potential injury or illness; for example:
	▶ hazards that may cause injury or illness resulting in a worker requiring first aid
	▶ hazards that may cause injury or illness resulting in a worker being off work for several days
	▶ hazards that cause serious injury or illness, permanent disability or death.

The goal of any strategy for sharing health and safety information is to eliminate or reduce all workplace hazards and risks as much as practicable. This can be achieved by:

▶ setting standards in accordance with current health and safety legislation, and supporting all workers to follow these standards

▶ providing ongoing training and professional development to ensure all workers understand their obligations

▶ monitoring to ensure obligations are understood, implemented and maintained

▶ having a program of regular health and safety review and improvement.

Emergency procedures

Information about workplace emergency procedures should be regularly communicated. The Education and Care Services National Regulations require drills to be conducted every three months, so this practice time is perfect for supporting staff members and providing information as required.

Responses to emergencies vary considerably; however, understanding and practising emergency and evacuation procedures gives everyone a greater chance of being reliable and supportive to others should an emergency occur.

Watch this video about following emergency procedures.

During an emergency and an emergency drill, staff members will look to you for advice and direction. You may need to:

▶ update staff knowledge

▶ give staff feedback

▶ involve staff in procedures and updates

▶ schedule drills relating to a variety of events.

Staff must be trained and informed about the use of emergency materials and equipment, including:

▶ first-aid equipment

▶ an eye wash shower or portable eye washes

▶ communication equipment

▶ fire extinguishers and equipment

▶ evacuation alarms

▶ evacuation equipment, especially for those with disabilities and/or impairments

▶ torches

▶ items of clothing, such as coloured hats and vests.

To help staff to remember their roles and tasks, many services place emergency management plans in the staffrooms and bathrooms, so that staff can read through and see the information regularly. Other ideas include:

▶ attaching a copy just inside the exit door

▶ putting a copy in the attendance record

▶ reviewing the plan as part of a staff meeting

▶ reviewing the plan as part of staff induction and/or a performance review

▶ reviewing the plan as part of a hazard checklist

▶ using 'remember to take me in an emergency' signs; for example, next to the attendance book.

Evacuation drills are the most effective way to ensure that every staff member is aware of their role. These drills should be held at different times of the day and should be based on different situations that may occur. To ensure they are most effective, drills should also be reviewed after each occurrence.

Communicating correct use of PPE

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is equipment worn by a person to provide protection from hazards. It provides a physical barrier between the person and the hazard. Some PPE that might be used in your service includes:

▶ face and eye protection, such as sunglasses and hats

▶ hand protection, such as disposable gloves

▶ clothing and footwear, such as aprons and flat-soled, closed-toe shoes

▶ head protection, such as helmets and hats.

PPE that is less common in education and care settings includes:

▶ respiratory protection, such as face masks to protect against airborne infection, chemicals or smells

▶ hearing protection, such as ear plugs.

Your service policies and procedures should include details of PPE use, explaining when, how and why it should be used. This information should also provide clear guidelines for actions to take when PPE is not available or is not working as it should, as demonstrated in the following examples.

Example 1

Shelley, an educator, has forgotten to bring her hat and the group is going outside. The service policy says that staff and children must wear a hat when outside. The policy also says that if a staff member or child does not have their own hat, they must wear a hat provided by the service in the 'spare hats' box. Shelley uses a spare hat.

Example 2

Gordon prepares to change a child's nappy, but finds that there are no gloves left in the change room. He goes to the storeroom to get another box of gloves and notices there is only one box left. After changing the child's nappy, Gordon checks each change area to ensure there are enough gloves to last until the next delivery. There are not enough, so he organises for some to be purchased immediately using petty cash.

Example 3

The service provides aprons for staff to wear when they are involved in meal times and other messy activities. Hannah finds that the aprons are very thin and often the food or moisture goes through the apron and dirties her clothing. Hannah brings this up at a staff meeting as she feels the aprons are not suitable for the tasks they are used for.

It is essential that controls are put in place to ensure PPE is available and functioning as needed. Each service will have its own way of doing this, such as:

▶ trialling equipment prior to purchasing

▶ gaining feedback on a regular basis; for example, by surveying staff about the effectiveness of the PPE in use

▶ keeping stock records that indicate when items need to be replaced

▶ allocating a staff member to monitor PPE

▶ asking other services what their experience is of a particular PPE item.

Practice task 5

1. Choose one item of PPE used in a service and answer the following questions.

    a. List the item of PPE.

    b. Which policy and/or procedure refers to this item of PPE?

    c. How might you let other educators know about the importance of this item of PPE, and about the risks and controls that relate to this PPE?

2. Are there any PPE items listed in the emergency procedures or emergency management plan? Provide details.

2B Monitoring housekeeping practices

Effective housekeeping can eliminate some workplace hazards and help to ensure tasks are completed safely. Poor housekeeping, on the other hand, contributes to incidents by masking hazards that cause injuries.

Housekeeping practices

All staff have responsibility for carrying out health and safety housekeeping practices. This includes tasks such as ensuring:

▶ all workplace areas are clean and tidy

▶ walkways and emergency exits are kept clear from obstructions

▶ floors and walkways are suitable and safe

▶ equipment is clean, functioning, and correctly stored and maintained

▶ the work space around equipment and machinery is clear, clean and safe

▶ utilities are functioning correctly, including lighting, airflow and ventilation

▶ storage areas are clean, safe and suitable

▶ PPE is easily accessible and in good working order

▶ signage is current, clearly visible and understood by all staff.

Many incidents are caused by poor housekeeping practices. Monitoring housekeeping practices through observation, cleaning routines and maintenance throughout the day can help to lower the impact and costs associated with injuries and incidents.

Implementing WHS policies and procedures ensures adequate housekeeping is maintained, and that hazards and risks are identified and managed promptly and effectively.

Consider the 'scan, predict, decide and execute' method from Topic 1:

1. Scan for potential hazards and risks when walking through your service. Keep your eyes moving around, looking for what is in the area. While scanning, identify each item that could be a potential hazard.

2. Predict what could happen. Briefly review in your mind what could go wrong if the hazard is not rectified.

3. Decide what action should be taken.

4. Execute the required action. Be willing to act to prevent incidents from occurring.

Housekeeping questions to consider include:

▶ Can we work in this environment without risk to our health and safety?

▶ Do we have the tools and equipment for the tasks we need to do?

▶ Are the tools and equipment in good working order?

▶ Have there been any changes in the workplace that could alter health and safety risks?

Areas in your work environment may be constantly monitored and controlled via the following housekeeping methods.

Areas	Housekeeping task	Checked
▶ Clothes dryer filters ▶ Heater filters	▶ Clean filters regularly. ▶ Clean dryers prior to each use. ▶ Ensure regular filter cleaning on heaters in line with manufacturer's directions.	☐
▶ Toilets ▶ Staffrooms ▶ Lockers ▶ Smoking areas ▶ Eating areas	▶ Clean daily or as required. ▶ Ensure soap and drying options are available (moist hands breed bacteria). ▶ Close locker doors. ▶ Clear cigarette butts and other rubbish. ▶ Remove waste products and uneaten food.	☐
▶ Spills ▶ Sharp edges ▶ Irregular corners ▶ Pillars ▶ Corridors	▶ Clean spills as they occur. ▶ Use signs to alert others of slippery surfaces. ▶ Remove trip hazards. ▶ Check sharp edges of walls and posts are covered. ▶ Remove or store items safely, including prams and sporting equipment.	☐
▶ Damaged surfaces and equipment ▶ Waste disposal	▶ Remove or report issues. ▶ Empty bins before they overflow. ▶ Clean bins regularly.	☐
▶ Sheds ▶ Storerooms ▶ Storage cupboards	▶ Organise and maintain storage areas. ▶ Develop a plan to demonstrate where each item goes. ▶ Periodically empty out and reorganise shelves. ▶ Keep chemicals separate from children's materials. ▶ Ensure chemicals are out of children's reach, but that adults can access chemicals without straining.	☐

Practice task 6

1. Obtain copies of a service's policies and procedures relating to housekeeping monitoring duties, including any checklists or monitoring guides. Explain how these documents ensure housekeeping occurs appropriately.

2. Do you think the policies and procedures link clearly with housekeeping monitoring duties? Is there a process, checklist or monitoring guide available? Explain your answer.

2C Maintaining health and safety incident records

Health and safety incidents can occur regularly in your service. Incidents may involve children and adults, including yourself, your co-workers and visitors to the service. Adults working in education and care settings may slip or fall, be exposed to illness and infection, or be injured because of incorrect manual-handling techniques or faulty equipment.

Workplace incident reports

When any workplace incident occurs, complete an incident report or record as soon as possible. This type of record may vary from service to service, but it will require specific types of information. Depending on the type of incident that has occurred, the specific incident record or documentation may vary. In particular, your service may use different records for incidents involving children compared to adults. All incident records are confidential.

A copy of the ACECQA approved incident record for children can be found in Topic 1. Most services choose to use this document as it is provided by the regulatory body. This form may also be adapted to suit adult incidents.

Example

Completing an incident report

Stacey, a qualified educator, bends to lift a child from the ground onto the change table to change his nappy. As she bends down, her lower back twists and she cries out in pain.

Stacey is unable to complete any other duties and the service director, Gloria, takes her to the doctor. An incident report is completed and taken along with them to the doctor's surgery.

Injury report	
Injured person details	
Surname: Grover	**Given names:** Stacey
Reason for being on premises: Educator	
Injury details	
Date of injury: 16/1/18	**Time of injury:** 10.15 am
Circumstances leading to the injury and how the injury occurred: Lifting child onto a change bench for nappy change routine; twisted and pain occurred in lower back	
Products or structures involved: Nappy-change bench	
Location: Infant room, nappy-change bench	
Name of all witnesses: Gloria Stephens	

Nature of injury sustained:

☐	Abrasion, scrape	☑	Cut
☐	Bite	☑	Rash
☐	Broken bone/ fracture	☑	Sprain
☐	Bruise	☑	Swelling
☐	Burn	☐	Concussion
☐	Other (please specify)		

Action taken

Details of action taken, including first aid administration of medication:

Applied ice

Medical personnel contacted: Yes / ~~No~~

If yes, provide details: Dr Michael Spears

Details of person completing this record

Name: Gloria Stephens

Time record was made: 10.30am

Date record was made: 16/1/18

Notifications (including attempted notifications)

Next of kin: Brian Grover (husband)

Time: 11.30 am	**Date:** 16/1/18

Regulatory authority (if applicable):

Time:	**Date:**

Follow up

Has the incident been followed up?

Who by?

What controls were put into place?

Has the worker returned to their employment: Yes/No

Date of return:

Notifiable incidents

Specific incidents must be officially reported to the state/territory health and safety authority immediately. The aim is to identify the cause of the incident and prevent similar incidents from occurring in the future.

Notifiable incidents involve:

▶ the death of a person

▶ a serious injury or illness

▶ a dangerous incident, including near misses.

Serious injuries or illnesses

You must report to the regulator if a person has had a serious illness or injury. This includes:

▶ an immediate admission to hospital

▶ a part of their body amputated

▶ a serious injury to the head or eye

▶ a serious burn

▶ the separation of skin from tissue; such as de-gloving or scalping

▶ a spinal injury

▶ loss of a bodily function

▶ serious lacerations

▶ medical treatment after exposure to a substance (within 48 hours).

Dangerous incidents

A dangerous incident is where the person has been exposed to:

▶ an escape, spillage or leakage of a substance

▶ an implosion, explosion or fire

▶ an escape of gas or steam, or another pressurised substance

▶ an electric shock

▶ a fall or release from a height of any materials, equipment, resources, substance or thing

▶ a collapse, overturning, failure or malfunction or damage to something that is required to be used by legislation

▶ a collapse or partial collapse of a structure

▶ a collapse or failure of excavation.

Notifying the regulator

The PCBU/employer is responsible for notifying the regulator if a notifiable incident occurs. Relevant phone numbers and paper or online forms are available on the website of your health and safety authority. You have a legal obligation to retain any documents you complete related to this incident for five years. Fines may apply to those who do not maintain records as required by legislation.

The regulator will want to see the incident report, and they may wish to see the site where the incident occurred, so ensure you leave this untouched unless you are given permission to make changes or you need to do one of the following:

▶ assist the injured person

▶ remove a deceased person

▶ make the area safe for others.

Failing to notify the regulator is a criminal offence and penalties may apply. For more information, including definitions and examples, visit: http://aspirelr.link/incident-notification-fact-sheet-swa

Practice task 7

Access a service policy and procedures for workplace incidents, including an injury report, and answer the following questions.

1. Is the form the same as the one used for children? If not, what are the differences?

2. Do the documents reflect the information discussed in this section? Explain what you found.

Summary

▶ Providing health and safety information to others in the workplace is a key responsibility of your job role.

▶ It is imperative that you have sound knowledge and understanding of how policies and procedures relate to health and safety in your workplace.

▶ When emergencies occur, quick, coordinated and effective action can make an immense difference to safety by minimising negative impacts to ensure the safety of children and adults.

▶ Emergency drills allow staff to practise procedures, and provide opportunities for them to experience different situations, leave the building under different circumstances, and observe and evaluate ways to improve the procedure.

▶ Personal protective equipment (PPE) is equipment that is worn by a person to provide protection from hazards.

▶ Effective housekeeping can eliminate some workplace hazards and help to ensure tasks are completed safely.

▶ Health and safety incidents may occur regularly in your service. They may involve children and adults, including yourself, your co-workers and visitors to the centre.

Learning checkpoint 2
Impementing policies and procedures into work team processes

Part A

Access a service emergency management plan. Choose one of the hazards that is included in the risk assessment or training schedule that forms part of this plan; for example, bushfire, fire, severe weather, flooding, intruders, or a major medical emergency.

Collect the following information and documents in relation to the hazard:

- ▶ policies and procedures
- ▶ risk assessment details
- ▶ risk control information
- ▶ housekeeping practices
- ▶ details of personal protective equipment (PPE) that relates to the hazard or emergency.

Once you have collected the relevant information, write a summary about your chosen hazard that includes how the information you collected relates to preventing the emergency, and managing the emergency if it occurs.
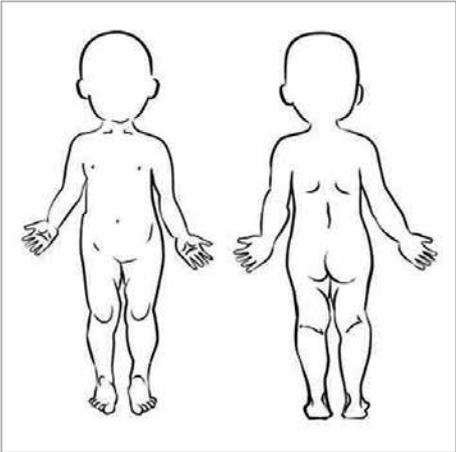
Part B

An educator, Amy Lewis, has slipped and is seriously injured. She is unconscious and has a wound to the back of her head that is bleeding profusely.

Demonstrate your knowledge of the service policies and procedures and WHS legislation by completing the following tasks.

1. Complete an incident report that is used in a service. If you are unable to access one, use the following.

Injury report		
Injured person details		
Surname:	Given names:	
Reason for being on premises:		
Injury details		
Date of injury:	Time of injury:	
Circumstances leading to the injury and how the injury occurred:		
Products or structures involved:		
Location:		
Name of all witnesses:		
Nature of injury sustained:	☐ Abrasion, scrape	☐ Cut
	☐ Bite	☐ Rash
	☐ Broken bone/ fracture	☐ Sprain
	☐ Bruise	☐ Swelling
	☐ Burn	☐ Concussion
	☐ Other (please specify)	
Action taken		
Details of action taken, including first aid administration of medication:		

Medical personnel contacted: Yes / No	
If yes, provide details:	
Details of person completing this record	
Name:	
Time record was made:	
Date record was made:	
Notifications (including attempted notifications)	
Next of kin:	
Time:	Date:
Regulatory authority (if applicable):	
Time:	Date:
Follow up	
Has the incident been followed up?	
Who by?	
What controls were put into place?	
Has the worker returned to their employment: Yes/No	
Date of return:	

2. Provide the name and contact details of your state/territory health and safety authority, and explain the reporting process you must follow. Assess their requirements against the sample injury report form in question 1 and identify any details that are missing from the document/record.

Topic 3

In this topic you will learn about:

3A Supporting workplace consultative procedures

3B Reporting health and safety issues

Supporting consultation, cooperation and communication

All staff should be actively involved in contributing to safe work practices, including discussing and documenting workplace safety issues. Your role is to provide current and accurate WHS information and direction, and to support your work team through encouragement, role-modelling, initiating discussions and effective communication processes.

You must also ensure all workplace safety policies and procedures reflect current legislation and guidelines, and that all staff understand and follow these documents. Continuously monitoring and reporting hazards and health and safety issues can also be an effective way to minimise risks. Information gained from the monitoring process can be used to inform the review, development and implementation of safe work practices.

The following table maps this topic to the National Quality Standard and both national learning frameworks.

National Quality Standard	
	Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice
✓	Quality Area 2: Children's health and safety
	Quality Area 3: Physical environment
✓	Quality Area 4: Staffing arrangements
	Quality Area 5: Relationships with children
	Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
✓	Quality Area 7: Governance and leadership

Early Years Learning Framework	My Time, Our Place
Principles	
Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships	
Partnerships	
High expectations and equity	
Respect for diversity	
Ongoing learning and reflective practice	
Practice	
Holistic approaches	Holistic approaches
Responsiveness to children	Collaboration with children
Learning through play	Learning through play
Intentional teaching	Intentionality
Learning environments	Environments
Cultural competence	Cultural competence
Continuity of learning and transitions	Continuity and transitions
Assessment for learning	Evaluation for wellbeing and learning
Outcomes	
Children have a strong sense of identity	
Children are connected to and contribute to their world	
Children have a strong sense of wellbeing	
Children are confident and involved learners	
Children are effective communicators	

3A Supporting workplace consultative procedures

All workers have a responsibility to contribute to safe work practices. Consultation about WHS needs to be supported by providing accurate information and regular training for staff. Consultation needs to be a two-way exchange between employers and workers that involves:

▶ sharing health and safety information

▶ providing workers with a reasonable opportunity to express their views

▶ taking those views into account.

Workers may be consulted by setting up a health and safety committee (HSC) or by holding regular staff meetings. Workplace consultative procedures include:

▶ verbal methods, such as discussing policies and practices with appropriate people including the health and safety representative (HSR), HSC member or chairperson, employer or supervisor.

▶ nonverbal methods, such as noting issues in diaries and communication books, and filling out documents such as grievance or work injury forms and maintenance registers.

Legal requirements regarding consultation

The PCBU/employer is required to consult with workers as much as is reasonably practicable and should have a system in place that allows staff to:

▶ identify and report hazards

▶ assess risks

▶ consider appropriate controls

▶ put the controls into place.

The PCBU must also support staff to:

▶ remain up to date with current hazard information

▶ obtain resources required to minimise hazards

▶ have a process of leadership in place to prevent hazards.

Purpose of consultation

Regular consultation should occur in relation to WHS matters, including the development of policies and procedures. Your workplace may also be involved in audits. Consultation is important for providing information about the processes used to isolate, eliminate or minimise hazards; for seeking clarification or improvements to procedures or control methods; and for providing feedback about the effectiveness of current safe work strategies.

Consultation with HSRs, HSC members, team leaders, supervisors, directors and other staff members can help to develop guidelines and methods for safe work practices.

When workers are involved in consultation processes, they participate more actively and take on the roles required to maintain a safe and healthy workplace more readily. Every participant should feel that they are a supported and valued member of a team. Consultation also helps workers to:

▶ be committed to WHS issues and processes

▶ willingly follow guidelines and procedures

▶ use equipment according to guidelines and operating manuals

▶ apply appropriate actions in hazardous situations.

When consultation must occur

To provide opportunities for you and staff to contribute to safe work practices, you may organise the following consultative activities.

Meetings

Consultation usually occurs at organised meetings with HSRs or HSC members, team leaders, supervisors, directors and other staff members. These meetings should provide all staff members with the opportunity to share their own opinions, views, skills and knowledge, and to contribute to the ideas and opinions of others. Most importantly, these consultative activities provide workers with the opportunity to raise WHS issues, which may involve discussing any risks, hazards and injuries that have been reported and determining appropriate strategies to deal with them.

Health and safety meetings should be organised in advance to allow as many people as possible to attend. They should be chaired by one person, who should ensure that the meeting covers all relevant matters. Having someone chair the meeting also ensures that people stay on topic and that everyone is given the opportunity to voice their opinions.

Someone should also be responsible for taking the minutes (notes) of the meeting. This ensures that the service keeps an accurate record of what was discussed; for example, what issues were raised and what strategies will be used to deal with them.

Changes in work practices that arise from meetings can be documented in handouts and fact sheets. Information can also be posted on noticeboards in the staffroom or in specific work areas. You need to read this information and ask questions if you are unclear about these changes in work practices.

In your role, you may be responsible for:

▶ chairing the meeting

▶ taking minutes

▶ encouraging or assisting others to participate

▶ making changes or assisting others to make changes to the workplace, policies or procedures

▶ supporting others to adapt to changes.

Discussions, coaching and guidance

Speaking directly with your co-workers and health and safety personnel is an effective strategy for contributing to safe work practices. A good time to do this is when you see someone about to complete a task that may pose a risk to health and safety. For example, if you see a co-worker about to lift something that might cause injury, explain the correct procedures for lifting and why the procedures are in place. You may also like to demonstrate the correct lifting technique.

When people ask for assistance or guidance, ensure you listen carefully and share as much information as you can. If you are unable to answer a question, refer them to someone who can help, or get back to them with an appropriate response.

Coaching and guidance may also be planned; for example, you may organise to discuss a particular situation or WHS issue with staff. This often occurs in response to an incident to ensure it does not happen again and that everyone understands the current procedures. You should check the safe work practices of the work team. Provide guidance about WHS issues regularly, particularly to less experienced workers who may not be confident carrying out all WHS procedures. Check work practices by observing workers as they follow the day-to-day routines of the service. You may also adopt a more formal approach where workers are asked to demonstrate the correct procedures, such as lifting an infant out of a cot.

All staff members should actively support and guide other staff. Guiding others will test your communication and feedback skills, as you need to ensure support and direction is not overwhelming or demeaning to the person you are guiding. Use careful explanations, feedback, encouragement and problem-solving skills at these times. Ask your supervisor or director if you are unsure.

Example

Discussions, coaching and guidance

Mel, one of the educators at Garden Village Childcare Centre, recently injured herself lifting an object that was too heavy. Mel had been outside supervising the children when she attempted to move a piece of equipment. Instead of waiting for another educator to help her, she tried to lift the equipment herself and pulled a muscle in her back.

As a result of this incident, Kate, the director, organises a representative of the health and safety regulator to visit and instruct the work group about correct lifting techniques. Staff take turns practising these lifting techniques and identifying when team lifting is necessary.

In the months after the coaching session, Kate makes sure she regularly observes Mel and other workers, monitors how they apply what they learnt, and provides follow-up guidance and coaching when necessary.

Inspections and audits

Health and safety inspections and audits occur regularly to resolve issues systematically, and to officially monitor, locate and report particular health and safety aspects in the work environment.

Consultation is important during workplace inspections and audits, which may involve service staff and/or an external health and safety inspector. Inspections and audits occur to ensure that a service and its workers are meeting their WHS responsibilities.

Staff have the right to know when an inspection or audit will occur. Although they should always follow WHS policies and procedures, it may benefit staff to undertake refresher training at this time.

Inspections and audits also provide an opportunity for continuous improvement, and identify how your service can better meet its responsibilities to children, family members and workers. The results of an inspection or audit can be used to inform the revision, development and implementation of safe work policies and procedures in your work area. It can also be used as an opportunity for you to encourage consultation and teamwork to respond to issues of concern or celebrate a successful outcome.

Consultation

Consultation activities include sharing and recording information. The information needs to be recorded so workers can reflect on and communicate it to others outside the group if required. The following table shows some consultation methods and how the results can be recorded and communicated. These options are flexible and allow workplaces to develop their own systems for consultation.

Method	Recording	Communication to work group
Formal meetings and discussions	Minutes of meetings should be taken and made available to all staff. If changes are expected to occur, these should be outlined clearly.	Can be communicated through a revised policy or procedure, a plan of action or a continuous improvement plan.
Informal meetings and discussions	Issues raised informally or spontaneously should be dealt with and recorded according to service procedures.	Can be recorded on a report form or listed as an agenda item for a formal meeting.
Induction and training	Personnel files must contain information stating the induction and training that has been undertaken.	Can be shared at staff meetings in discussions or in newsletter items.
Information sessions	Training plans and/or guides should be filed and dated.	Can be shared at staff meetings, in discussions or in newsletter items.
Written workplace information	Copies of the workplace information should be filed and dated.	The work group may receive a copy and be able to give feedback.

Practice task 8

1. List the health and safety consultative activities that may occur in an education and care service.

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2. For each of the activities, identify the roles you could take to encourage the work team to participate and contribute.

3. Choose one organisational policy or procedure that relates to a health and safety area in a service. Briefly explain how you would share this information to co-workers.

3B Reporting health and safety issues

Workers in any organisation have a responsibility to report any health and safety issues and concerns they identify in the workplace. These issues must be reported according to relevant health and safety legislation, as well as the organisation's policies and procedures.

Legislative requirements

Health and safety is primarily the role of state and territory governments. Comcare is responsible for the health and safety of workers in the Commonwealth government, ACT government and organisations that are self-insured. The Commonwealth government also jointly funds the independent statutory agency Safe Work Australia.

Health and safety legislation is comprehensive and covers key information such as:

▶ duties to provide a safe and healthy workplace for all workers and others who attend the workplace

▶ work systems that are safe and without risk to health

▶ training workers to work in a safe and competent manner

▶ requirements to take steps to prevent injury, illness and disease

▶ requirements to consult with workers and their representatives over WHS matters

▶ provisions for health and safety inspectors to visit workplaces, investigate incidents and enforce provisions of the legislation.

Reporting procedures

Your service should use records to report safety issues, which include incident or injury reports, hazard checklists, written reports of findings and maintenance records. These records must be completed as soon as practicable after an incident and they must include as much detail as possible. Where a serious incident has occurred in your service resulting in medical assistance and/or treatment, the PCBU/employer must notify the relevant health and safety authority and ACECQA immediately.

All policies and procedures must comply with and reflect current legislation, regulations and industry standards. However, there may be some variations in health and safety policies and reporting procedures across different services depending on:

▶ the size and nature of the service

▶ the service culture

▶ the degree of formality in the workplace

▶ management expectations

▶ staff induction and training

▶ individual attitudes

▶ literacy levels

▶ the complexity and design of forms

▶ the accessibility of the forms required for completion.

For example, the line of contact and reporting may be different in each service. The policies and procedures provide directions based on how the service is structured.

Example

How an issue is dealt with in different services

Issue: A shade sail has come loose at one corner.

Service	Guidelines and procedures	Actions
Service 1: Large organisation that forms part of a chain of services	▶ A HSR is located on the premises, but all reports must be lodged at head office. ▶ Reporting is completed through an online process. ▶ Staff must consult and obtain approval from the education and care services officer before they can rectify some issues.	▶ The HSR is alerted of the situation. ▶ Head office is contacted and informed of the hazard. ▶ A maintenance report is completed online and marked urgent. ▶ The education and care services officer is contacted, the issue is discussed and risk controls are decided on and then implemented. ▶ The education and care officer organises the repair.
Service 2: Community-run service catering for 35 children	▶ A HSR is located on the premises and is responsible for all WHS issues. ▶ The HSR completes any formal reports, but individual staff are able to complete reports themselves in consultation with the HSR. ▶ The HSR works closely with the service director and attends committee meetings to resolve larger issues requiring funding. ▶ The director has authority to organise maintenance for emergency issues with the approval of a committee member.	▶ The HSR and director are alerted of the situation. ▶ A maintenance report is completed. ▶ The director and HSR decide on and implement risk controls. ▶ The director contacts a committee member, alerts them to the issue and gains approval for repairs. ▶ The director organises the repair.

Service	Guidelines and procedures	Actions
Service 3: Private service directed by the owner	▶ A HSR is located on the premises and is the staff contact when the owner is not on site. ▶ The HSR and the owner work closely together to ensure all issues are resolved. ▶ The owner approves and organises all maintenance.	▶ The HSR and owner are alerted to the situation. ▶ A maintenance report is completed. ▶ The owner and HSR decide on and implement risk controls. ▶ The owner organises the repair.

Reporting tools

You can use a maintenance report, service report form or a maintenance request or maintenance work schedule to report health and safety concerns or issues.

These reports can be used to identify and manage hazards and risks effectively. These reports will be developed to suit your service. Points on the form may include:

▶ date and time of recording

▶ address and service name

▶ description of the fault, concern or issue

▶ risk assessment

▶ name and role of the person completing the report.

Practice task 9

1. Review an organisation's health and safety policy and procedures. How would the organisation deal with the issue in the previous example (a shade sail coming loose in one corner)?

2. Who might this issue be reported to?

3. Who else would need to know about the issue?

4. Who would organise the repair?

Summary

▶ All staff should be actively involved in contributing to safe work practices, including discussing and documenting workplace safety issues.

▶ Your role is to provide current and accurate WHS information, and to direct and support your work team through encouragement, role-modelling, initiating discussions and effective communication processes.

▶ Consultation is important for providing information about the processes used to isolate, eliminate or minimise hazards; for seeking clarification or improvements to procedures or control methods; and for providing feedback about the effectiveness of current safe working strategies.

▶ All workers have a responsibility to report any health and safety issues and concerns they identify. WHS issues must be reported according to relevant legislation, as well as the organisation's policies and procedures.

▶ You can use a maintenance report, service report form, maintenance request or maintenance work schedule to report health and safety concerns or issues. These checklists and reports can be used to identify and manage hazards and risks effectively.

Learning checkpoint 3
Supporting consultation, cooperation and communication

Part A

Read the case study, then answer the questions that follow.

> ### Case study
>
> Belinda is moving the lunch trolley out into the hallway when a wheel comes off. The dirty plates and cutlery fall to the floor, as does the leftover food.
>
> Another staff member, Lucy, comes to Belinda and helps her to clean up the mess. Lucy says, 'I told them to fix that trolley last week! They never get anything done around here!'
>
> Belinda is embarrassed about the incident. She asks Lucy not to tell the owner of the service as she may have been wheeling the trolley too fast. She says she will get her husband to come in when he picks her up tomorrow to see if he can fix the trolley himself. In the meantime, she will carry everything in and out of the room using a tray.

1. What would you say to encourage Belinda to report the issue?

2. Access a copy of a maintenance report or hazard report form and complete it using the information from the case study according to relevant policy and procedures. If you cannot access either of these forms, use the following sample form.

Workplace maintenance report			
Location:			
Date:		**Time:**	
Area/space/room:			
Person reporting:		**Signature:**	
Reported to:		**Signature:**	
Item	**Hazard/issue**	**Immediate action taken to reduce or eliminate hazard**	**Recommended further action**

Part B

1. Identify a way that you could involve your work team in a consultative activity about WHS to ensure they promptly report maintenance issues. Include the responsibilities that you would expect the PCBU/employer to take on as part of this activity. Write down what you would do, how you would do it and provide any materials or resources you would use.

2. Briefly explain what you would tell the team so they could see the benefits of consultation, cooperation and communication in relation to WHS in the workplace.