

Unit 6 - Health, Life Support and Infection Prevention and Control

Learning Outcomes for this Unit:

The overall focus for this unit is to make sure that learners understand and can successfully apply good health and safety working practices, especially in relation to infection and prevention control. They also need to demonstrate an awareness of life support services.

Evidence for learning in this unit:

Most evidence here will be demonstrated on the job and witnessed and recorded by assessors and mentors. Learners may also record reflections in a learning journal.

Detailed Guidance for the Delivery of this Unit:

1. Understand health and safety best practice

1.1 I can describe my own responsibilities, and the responsibilities of others, relating to health and safety in the work setting

Learners will be able to describe what they are doing in terms of protecting the health of themselves and others. They should also link this with the work they do in teams.

Additional information and guidance

Learners will no doubt have a number of duties relating to general health and safety in a work setting. These will be added to by the importance of also needing to care for vulnerable people. The health and safety needs of the organisation will have been covered by some induction training, but learners should also supplement this with their own understanding. They should be aware of what they can and can not do in the environment and also what hazards there are in their working role. They can discuss these with their assessor or mentor for clarification and to check.

1.2 I can describe why it is important to assess the health and safety risks posed by particular work settings, situations or activities

Learners will be able to describe the importance of risk assessment.

Additional information and guidance

There is an old adage that “forewarned is forearmed”, or knowing what might happen will prepare you in case it does. This is a good working idea for any work environment. If you make yourself aware of what risks there are in the job, and how you might stop or limit them from happening, you are more likely to prevent them or at least minimise their impact.

Some health and safety issues might be obvious, such as not lifting very heavy objects on your own, but others might not be so clear, such as dealing with harmful substances such as cleaning products. Learners should keep an active log of what they have identified, what risks it poses and how to minimise or prevent these. It should be a living document that can be added to over time.

1.3 I can describe how and when to report health and safety risks that I have identified

Learners will be able to describe the appropriate response to any health and safety concerns.

Additional information and guidance

Most organisations should have a person responsible for health and safety concerns at work and some sort of register to report and track any concerns raised. Hopefully learners will have been introduced to this during some induction process. If not, they need to familiarise themselves with how to record any concerns and make sure they are followed up properly. They could keep their own log as part of their ongoing CPD practise.

1.4 I can identify key pieces of legislation that relate to moving and assisting

Learners will be able to demonstrate their awareness to the laws and regulations that guide their work.

Additional information and guidance

There are a number of laws in the UK that relate to this area and learners should at least know what they are and what some of the key principles are as they will help them carry out their duties safely and effectively.

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/healthservices/moving-handling.htm> [1]

Much of the advice should be common sense, but there are specifics related to equipment, i.e. for hoisting patients, that may have their own particular requirements.

1.5 I can describe the procedures for responding to accidents and sudden illness

Learners will be able to describe the actions they will take in response to accidents and illness.

Additional information and guidance

There should be some localised policies and procedures relating to the appropriate actions and there will be a need for clarity and purpose if such things do occur. The main thing is that if learners have a good understanding of the situations and actions, they will be more calm and self-assured which is what will be required.

Some written examples of what the issue is and what action should be taken, with some alternatives in case their actions don't work, will cover this criterion.

1.6 I can describe the agreed ways of working in relation to medication and healthcare tasks

Learners will be able to describe and follow agreed procedures in relation to general medication and day to day healthcare.

Additional information and guidance

Part of the learner's work will undoubtedly involve the administration of some medicines and other general healthcare activities such as bathing or perhaps helping with breathing apparatus. All of these activities carry obvious risks to health and well-being, so they need to be sure that they understand the risks and can comply with the guidelines and recommended actions of medicines and medical apparatus. Any learners operating during the Covid-19 crisis of early 2020 will appreciate the need for exacting procedures in terms of hygiene and protection.

1.7 I can describe safe practices for storing, using and disposing of

hazardous substances

Learners will be able to describe procedures for the life cycle management of dangerous materials.

Additional information and guidance

In some cases, again thinking about Covid-19 in 2020, learners may be working closely with people with some form of illness which may be contagious to themselves or their colleagues. In these situations, there will be processes and procedures that need to be followed in relation to the materials that come into contact with any form of carrier. For example, someone may have cut themselves or they may be producing large quantities of saliva. Anything used to treat these areas would be contaminated with bodily fluid and therefore potentially infectious to others. Learners need to show their assessors that they understand this and follow appropriate guidelines, procedures and instructions.

1.8 I can describe how and when to report health and safety risks that I have identified

Learners will be able to describe any health and safety concerns.

Additional information and guidance

Learners will be presented with the appropriate situations where health and safety should be protected, but should also be aware that there may be times when the policies and procedures are not followed. This may be a one off occurrence, but if it happens continuously and becomes a de facto practise, they need to know how to report it. They can describe a situation where this might occur and why they have a duty to report it.

2. Understand and practice infection prevention and control

2.1 I can describe the main ways an infection can get into the body

Learners will be able to describe the main ways infection can occur.

Additional information and guidance

At this level, it is not expected that learners are experts in disease transmission, but they should have a working understanding of some of the means of transmission and infection. The main ways for an infection to enter the body are through places exposed to the air, so mouth, nose, eyes, ears, urinary and alimentary tracts. Infection can also enter through damage to the skin. Learners need to demonstrate a clear awareness of these and give some working examples of how they might operate, for example, poorly cooked food that contains bacteria will enter the body if the food is eaten or poorly stored contaminated items may infect colleagues.

2.2 I can identify effective hand hygiene

Learners will be able to follow best practice in hand hygiene.

Additional information and guidance

Recent studies (March 2020) show quite clearly that infection can spread easily through people's mouths, eyes, nose etc. as it is transferred from hands to these wet surfaces. Studies showed that the Covid-19 virus could stay infectious and active for 3 days on stainless steel and plastic surfaces, therefore any contact with these via the skin would transfer the virus. However, 20 seconds of contact with basic soap would destroy the surface of the virus and therefore stop the risk.

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/best-way-to-wash-your-hands/> [2]

2.3 I can explain how my own health and hygiene might pose a risk to the

individuals I support or work with

Learners will be able to demonstrate their understanding of good health and protection of others.

Additional information and guidance

Many infections can be carried by people without them being aware. The famous case of “Typhoid Mary” illustrates this clearly.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mary_Mallon [3]

Learners need to be aware that they are caring for people who may be very vulnerable to disease and infection and therefore need to exercise precautions in regards to their own health. If learners have an illness that they are aware of, then they need to make sure they do not pass this on to others they are in contact with through good hygiene and social distancing where possible. They also need to practise basic hygiene such as covering their hands and hair when preparing food for people. Recent studies show that only 75% of people in the UK wash their hands after going to the toilet which is clearly bad hygiene.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/the-european-countries-t...> [4]

2.4 I can identify common types of personal protective clothing, equipment and procedures and how and when to use them

Learners will be able to show an awareness and appreciation of PPE.

Additional information and guidance

The Covid-19 pandemic has sadly highlighted the importance of good PPE (Personal Protective Equipment). The type of PPE needed will vary depending on what area of the sector learners work in, but as a minimum they should be able to say what they have and why it is needed. Various web sites give more detailed guidance:

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/the-european-countries-t...> [4]

If they do not have the PPE they need to carry out their job safely, they need to talk to their supervisors or union representatives to rectify this situation. If it is an organisational failure, they need to report this.

<https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing> [5]

2.5 I can explain the safe handling of infected or soiled linen and clinical waste

Learners will be able to show their understanding through their practice.

Additional information and guidance

Infected materials and clinical waste are clearly quite dangerous items and clear policies and procedures should be in place when dealing with them. Learners should have some induction or training in relation to this and should be able to demonstrate their understanding and application in line with the guidance. They should be able to demonstrate their care and attention in this area.

3. Understand basic life support services

3.1 I can identify some of the equipment used in life support services

Learners will be able to talk about some of the equipment required for life support.

Additional information and guidance

At this level, learners only need to be aware of what equipment is generally used and do not need a detailed understanding of all the supplementary equipment or services that go with this basic stuff.

The most basic equipment would be:

- PPE
- Oxygen and mask
- Oxygen cylinder
- AED (Automated External Defibrillator)

More equipment is listed here, though it is more for support purposes.

<https://www.qcs.co.uk/basic-life-support/> [6]

3.2 I can understand the basic principles of life support practices

Learners will be able to understand some of the basic procedures if faced with this situation.

Additional information and guidance

The main focus here is on knowing what should be done and hopefully having some hands on experience of the training and equipment. All learners should appreciate the mechanics of CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) though full training in this approach may not always be part of basic training, depending on where they work.

3.3 I can demonstrate I can meet the standards for basic life support in the appropriate area of my care sector

Learners will be able to show basic competence in the operation of the equipment.

Additional information and guidance

Learners may not be directly involved in life support practices, but it is still important to understand how it works and what needs to be done should it ever be required. If possible, learners should be given the opportunity for practice runs so that if the real thing happens they will not be overtaken with anxiety and stress so that it can't be undertaken at all.

3.4 I can explain the importance of quality life support care

Learners will be able to explain why they are so important in what they do.

Additional information and guidance

Learners are working in an industry that has one purpose: making other people's lives better. It seems like an obvious one, but there is a danger that being exposed to long term suffering can anaesthetise people and make them become cold and lack compassion. Learners need to remind themselves every day that they are essential to the care of others and all the work they do is making someone else's life worthwhile.

This criterion is for no other purpose than to say to people doing care work thanks.

Source URL: <https://theingots.org/community/emcare12u6x>

Links

[1] <https://www.hse.gov.uk/healthservices/moving-handling.htm>

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[2] <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/best-way-to-wash-your-hands/>

[3] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mary_Mallon

[4] <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/the-european-countries-that-wash-their-hands-least-after-going-to-the-toilet-a6757711.html>

[5] <https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>

[6] <https://www.qcs.co.uk/basic-life-support/>