



Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy

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1 Introduction

- 1.1. South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust recognises its duty to comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act (HSWA) 1974 and all subordinate regulations, such as the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 (Amended 1999) and the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 (Amended 2002). In the UK, the Personal Protective Equipment (Enforcement) Regulations 2018 (SI 2018/390) provide an enforcement and penalty regime for Regulation (EU) 2016/425.
- 1.2. The Trust is committed to ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety & welfare of all its employees and others who work for, or on behalf of, the Trust. We will do all that is reasonably practicable to ensure that these staff are provided, free of any charge, with suitable personal protective equipment.
- 1.3. Under the Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 2002, the trust is required to provide personal protective equipment and any replacement personal protective equipment to staff, work experience students and, where applicable, voluntary staff free of charge. This would also apply to any respiratory protective equipment (RPE) provided to staff.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to all staff who work at the Trust, including work experience students and, where applicable, voluntary staff.
- 2.2. This policy does not include guidance on the personal protective equipment used for Infection Prevention and Control. For this information, refer to the Infection Prevention and Control Policy, and Procedures.
- 2.3. Although the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 2002 do not apply to most respiratory protective equipment, this policy does refer to respiratory protective equipment.

3. Aim

- 3.1. The aim of the policy is to set out the arrangements for the identification, assessment and management of the hazards and risks to staff. This includes work experience students and, where applicable, voluntary staff. Ensuring that where safe place controls cannot be put in place or are insufficient then they are provided, so far as reasonably practicable, with suitable personal protective equipment.
- 3.1.1. **The objectives are to ensure that the Trust has clear and defined arrangements for:**

- The identification of suitable personal protective equipment.
- The carrying out of suitable and sufficient risk assessments on personal protective equipment.
- The regular review of these risk assessments.
- The provision of suitable and sufficient personal protective equipment.
- The management and control of hazards and risks by the wearing and use of personal protective equipment.
- The cleaning, storage, inspection, and maintenance of personal protective equipment.

4. Responsibilities

4.1. Trust Board

- 4.1.1. The Trust Board will ensure that there are suitable and sufficient arrangements and adequate resources for the identification, assessment, purchase, issue, storage, and management of personal protective equipment. The personal protective equipment provided to staff and work experience students and, where applicable, voluntary staff will be provided free of any charge.

4.2. Chief Executive Officer

4.2.1. The Chief Executive Officer has overall responsibility for:

- The effective implementation of this policy within the Trust and for ensuring that there are suitable and sufficient arrangements for identification, assessment, purchase, issue, storage and management of suitable and sufficient personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment to relevant staff, and, where applicable, voluntary staff.
- Ensuring the allocation of sufficient resources to maintain efficient and effective health and safety arrangements. To provide and maintain a safe working environment, providing suitable and sufficient personal protective equipment and where applicable, respiratory protective equipment.
- Ensuring that policies are regularly reviewed to secure compliance with existing legislation and any changes to this legislation.

4.3. Executive Directors

- 4.3.1. Executive Directors are responsible for the effective implementation of this policy within their directorates and for ensuring that there are adequate resources available to fulfil the requirements of this policy.

4.4. **Executive Director of Quality and Nursing**

- 4.4.1. The Executive Director of Quality and Nursing is the designated lead board member with responsibility for Health and Safety. As such, he/she will ensure that robust management systems exist to reasonably minimise and or adequately control risks to patients, staff and others.

4.5. **Executive Director of Operations**

- 4.5.1. The Executive Director of Operations, as the Trust's Accountable Emergency Officer, **is responsible for:**
- Ensuring that suitable personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment is identified and provided to the Hazardous Area Response Team (HART), Resilience staff and relevant Operational staff who are part of the Specialist Operations Response Team (SORT) so that they can safely attend to any chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) incidents.
 - Ensuring that staff who are part of the response teams for marauding terrorist firearms (MTFA) incidents, are provided with the suitable personal protective equipment (PPE) and respiratory protective equipment so that they can be safely deployed in accordance with the National Ambulance Resilience Unit (NARU) and SECAMB protocols.
 - Ensuring that all other relevant SECAMB staff are provided with suitable personal protective equipment.
 - The provision of information, instruction and training on personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment to HART.
 - Resilience staff and all relevant Operational staff (who are part of the Specialist Operations Response Team and/or who are part of the response teams who deal with MTFA incidents) and for the replacing of personal protective equipment as required.
 - The provision of information, instruction, and training on personal protective equipment to all other operational staff ensuring that there are suitable and sufficient arrangements for the storage, inspection, cleaning, maintenance and, where applicable, decontamination of this personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment.
 - Ensuring that, where applicable, written records of the inspection, cleaning, maintenance, storage and decontamination of personal

protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment are held and maintained.

4.6. Managers and Supervisors

4.6.1. Managers and supervisors' responsibilities include:

- Attending any training to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities outlined in this policy.
- Bringing this policy to the attention of staff within their area of responsibility.
- Carrying out or arranging for a suitable and sufficient risk assessment to be undertaken for personal protective equipment and, where applicable, respiratory protective equipment; and any revisions to these assessments.
- Making arrangements to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that all identified controls and further controls identified by the assessment and any subsequent reviews are put into place.
- Making arrangements to ensure that all of the staff within their area of responsibility receive appropriate information, instruction and training about the significant hazards and risks associated with the work they carry out for the Trust.
- Ensure that all staff within their area of responsibility receive appropriate information, instruction and training in the safe use and operation of the PPE personal protective equipment and where applicable, the respiratory protective equipment that is issued to them.
- Ensuring that any personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment, which is damaged or lost, is replaced as soon as reasonably practicable.
- Ensuring that there is appropriate personal protective equipment and, where applicable, respiratory protective equipment available for temporary staff such as bank or agency staff and/or observers and work experience students.
- Bringing all relevant safe systems of work or safe operational procedures to the attention of their staff.
- Ensuring that there are adequate storage facilities for the personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment issued to their staff.

- Notifying the Health & Safety department immediately of any staff within their area of responsibility who inform them that they are experiencing any health-related problems associated with the personal protective equipment and/or respiratory protective equipment provided to them.
- Where necessary, referring any staff to Occupational Health for assessment.

4.7. All staff

4.7.1. Staff have the following responsibilities:

- To make themselves fully aware of the policy and to abide by it.
- To take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions.
- To abide by and follow any information, instruction and training provided to them in the use and safe operation of the personal protective equipment issued, and where applicable, any respiratory protective equipment.
- To adhere to any safety measures put in place to ensure their safety, including any safe systems of work or safe operating procedures.
- To carry out a visual inspection of the personal protective equipment and, where applicable, the respiratory protective equipment ensuring its fully functioning.
- To wear any personal protective equipment and, where applicable, any respiratory protective equipment issued to them and ensure that it fits properly.
- To ensure, when wearing two or more types of personal protective equipment together, that they are compatible and that their combined use does not reduce the effectiveness.
- To store personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment in accordance with the manufacturers' recommendations.
- To notify their manager of any work-related problems they are experiencing whilst carrying out their work for the Trust; and if it cannot easily be resolved to report any health and safety related concerns using the Trust's incident reporting system Datix, this includes reporting any concerns or issues about personal protective equipment and/or respiratory protective equipment. It also includes reporting any damage and defects to their personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment that if not addressed could pose a significant

hazard. Equally any symptoms of discomfort and/or ill health immediately.

- To report any missing personal protective equipment (PPE) and respiratory protective equipment (RPE) immediately and arrange to obtain replacement PPE and RPE.
- To attend the Occupational Health department, if referred by their manager because of possible work-related problems associated with the work they carry out for the Trust.

4.8. **Head of Procurement**

4.8.1. The Head of Procurement is responsible for managing the uniform contract and the contract with other suppliers. **They are also responsible for:**

- The identification and sourcing of suitable and sufficient personal protective equipment
- Operational staff will be issued, on an individual basis, with:
 - Safety footwear (boots)
 - Lightweight jacket which can be worn with the high visibility jacket
 - High visibility over-trousers
 - High visibility bomber jacket (road traffic collisions)
 - Safety helmet (with protective eye shield)
- Ensuring that a replacement programme is developed for items that require regular replacement such as high visibility garments.

4.8.2. The Head of Procurement will ensure that all personal protective equipment ordered via the Procurement Department has a European conformity 'CE' mark and complies with the requirements of the Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 2002 and the Personal Protective Equipment (Enforcement) Regulations 2018.

4.9. **The Uniform Group**

4.9.1. The Trust's Uniform Group will decide upon the personal protective equipment to be provided to SECAMB staff. The Uniform Group will also abide by the guidance and recommendations of the National Ambulance Resilience Unit (NARU) with regard to the personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment provided to The Hazardous Area Response Team (HART) and Resilience and Operational staff who are part

of the Specialist Operations Response Team (SORT) attending to marauding terrorism and firearms (MTFA) incidents.

- 4.9.2. The Trust's Uniform Group will also abide by any guidance on personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment provided by the Head of Health, Safety & Security and the Trust's Head of Infection Prevention & Control.

4.10. **National Ambulance Resilience Unit (NARU)**

- 4.10.1. The National Ambulance Resilience Group (NARU) will identify what personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment should be issued to the Hazard Area Response Team (HART), Resilience staff and the Trust staff who respond to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) incidents and/or marauding terrorist firearms (MTFA) incidents. The Trust will provide this equipment to the said staff free of any charge.

- 4.10.2. It is understood that NARU have carried out risk assessments on the personal protective equipment and the respiratory protective equipment that is worn and used by staff attending to chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) incidents and to marauding terrorist firearms (MTFA) incidents.

4.11. **Occupational Health**

- 4.11.1. The Occupational Health Provider, commissioned by the Trust, have the following responsibilities:

- To advise the Trust of all aspects of health in the workplace in order to assist the Trust in complying with legal requirements.
- To assess any managers and staff who have been referred to Occupational Health with suspected work-related ill health, advising the Trust of the action that should be taken.
- To carry out assessments of medical fitness on staff prior to employment.
- To carry out assessments and advise on the manager or staff member's suitability to return-to-work following an injury or musculoskeletal injuries.
- To provide a comprehensive rehabilitation programme for staff who have sustained any injury or illness due to any incidents involving the use and operation of personal protective equipment and/or respiratory protective equipment; and to assist in their recovery to a safe level of fitness so that they can return to work.

5. Definitions

- 5.1. The Health and Safety Executive define personal protective equipment as all equipment (including clothing affording protection against the weather) which “is intended to be worn or held by a person at work which protects that person against one or more risks to that person’s health or safety”.
- 5.2. Personal protective equipment can include items such as safety helmets, gloves, eye protection, high visibility clothing, safety footwear and safety harnesses. It can also include respiratory protective equipment and equipment worn by personnel to protect against chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) hazards and also marauding terrorism and firearms (MTFA) incidents.
- 5.3. The Health and Safety Executive define Respiratory protective equipment as a particular type of personal protective equipment (PPE) designed to protect the wearer from breathing in harmful substances or from oxygen-deficient atmospheres when other controls are not possible or insufficient on their own. The three main types of respiratory protective equipment (RPE) are respiratory facemasks, respirators and breathing apparatus.
- 5.4. **Suitable and sufficient risk assessments for personal protective equipment**
- 5.4.1. The Trust will carry out suitable and sufficient risk assessments on personal protective equipment using the Trust’s personal protective equipment (PPE) risk assessment form in Appendix 1.
- 5.5. **When carrying out the risk assessment, consideration will be given to, among other things, the following:**
- The health of the person carrying out the work activity wearing the PPE and the ergonomic effects.
 - The work activity being carried out and the hazards and risks to health and safety for which the PPE is required.
 - Any existing engineering controls and safe systems of work.
 - The physical effort required to do the work activity and how long the PPE has to be worn.
 - The requirements to maintain visibility and communication.
 - The environment and the surrounding conditions in which the PPE is to be worn.
 - The suitability of the PPE and any risks that the PPE may create.

- The compatibility with any other PPE being worn simultaneously by staff.
- The information, instruction and training that should be provided with the PPE.
- The storage, inspection, and possible maintenance of the PPE.

5.5.1. The suitable and sufficient risk assessment should identify the hazards and any existing controls in place associated with the personal protective equipment to evaluate the level of risk. The level of risk should be reduced to the lowest level as far as is reasonably practicable. Therefore, it may be necessary to introduce further measures to manage and control the risks effectively. The significant hazards, risks and controls should be recorded on the risk assessment form.

5.5.2. The risk assessment should be reviewed periodically to check and ensure that all of the controls that are in place are working effectively.

5.5.3. The risk assessment should also be reviewed and revised if there is reason to suspect it is no longer valid or following any significant changes to any aspect of the personal protective equipment to which it relates. For instance, if there is a change in working practices or changes in the equipment used or the workplace/working environment. It should also be reviewed following the reporting of any notifiable incident involving personal protective equipment to the Health and Safety Executive as per RIDDOR; and/or if an employee wearing the identified personal protective equipment suffers an illness, injury or onset of the disability which makes them more vulnerable to risk. All revisions and changes to risk assessment should be recorded.

5.6. **Personal protective equipment procedures**

5.6.1. Personal protective equipment (PPE) should be provided as 'last resort' to protect against hazards and risks to health and safety. Therefore, before considering PPE, the Trust will consider any existing engineering controls and safe systems of work.

5.6.2. However, where PPE is issued as an important means of protecting staff from hazards and managing and controlling the level of risk involved in the various work activities, then to ensure that it is effective, it is necessary to follow the manufacturers and Trust's instructions on its correct use. Therefore, **the following procedures should be observed when using personal protective equipment:**

- High visibility clothing must be worn (zipped up) when dealing with all incidents on the public highway and at any other appropriate places such as the grounds of an airport.

- Head protection (with eye shield) must be worn at all times at identified work locations/premises assessed as requiring head protection and at all road traffic incidents.
- Safety footwear must be worn at all times when on operational duties.
- Where there is a risk of inhalation of wood, dust or other particles other than asbestos, a fluid repellent surgical facemask should be worn.
- Life jackets should be worn when staff are within the 3 metres (warm zone) of water and when staff are trying to carry out a rescue around, near or by deep or fast running water.
- Rigger/Debris gloves should be worn whenever handling jagged metal at road traffic incidents.
- Ear protection must be worn when working within the 2-metre zone around vehicles, when cutting equipment is being used/operated during a road traffic collision extrication and/or when blue ear protection signage is displayed.
- Occupational Health carries out hearing tests. These should be requested by staff via a Line Manager's referral following any decrease in hearing, tinnitus or due to prolonged exposure to noise whilst at work.
- All HART staff carry personal dosimeters that measure radiation levels. In the event of an activation, staff should follow the procedure as taught and inform the Clinical Coordination Centre and on-call Tactical Advisor.

5.7. General guidance on personal protective equipment

- 5.7.1. All staff wearing personal protective equipment and, where applicable, respiratory protective equipment should adhere to the following general guidance:
- 5.7.2. Before using any personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment, check that it is free from any defects and is in good repair.
- 5.7.3. Make sure that the personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment is functioning correctly before use in specified work activities.
- 5.7.4. When wearing personal protective equipment and, where applicable, respiratory protective equipment ensure that it fits properly and, if necessary, adjust the personal protective equipment so that it is comfortable to wear.
- 5.7.5. When using two or more types of personal protective equipment together, ensure that the equipment is compatible and that their combined use does not reduce their effectiveness.

5.7.6. Report symptoms of discomfort or ill health immediately.

5.7.7. Report defects or missing items immediately.

5.8. Storage of personal protective equipment

5.8.1. The Trust will have arrangements in place to provide for the storage of personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment when it is not in use. Where possible this should be separate from the storage of ordinary clothing.

5.8.2. This storage can be either clothes peg or a locker, but it should be adequate to protect the personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment from contamination, loss or damage by hazardous substances, damp or sunlight.

5.8.3. The Hazardous Area Response Team (HART) and the Resilience Team have specific, designated storage areas for all of the personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment that they use. The personal protective equipment for CBRN Incidents is stored within vehicles.

5.8.4. The personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment for the operational staff who attend to marauding terrorist and firearms (MTFA) incidents are stored locally by these staff in agreement with the respective Heads of Operations (HoO) and the Clinical Operations Managers (COM) and in accordance with the standard operating procedure for deployment.

5.9. Maintenance of personal protective equipment

5.9.1. The Trust will have arrangements in place for the maintenance of personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment and this will be carried out in accordance with the various manufacturers' recommendations for the respective piece of personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment.

5.10. Volunteers

5.10.1. Although the Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 2002 do not apply to voluntary workers and visitors to worksites, section 3 of the *Health and Safety at Work Act* (HSWA) 1974 and the duty to protect the public from the hazards of work activities does apply.

5.10.2. Therefore, if the Trust were required to provide personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment to volunteers and visitors to comply with section 3 of HSWA 1974 then it would have to do so. Therefore, the Trust would do this by following the requirements of the Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 2002 and any other relevant associated legislation such as the control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH) regulations and the Control of asbestos regulations 2012 and this policy.

5.11. Training

- 5.11.1. Managers and staff will receive training in accordance with the Trust's training needs analysis and its statutory and mandatory training programme.
- 5.11.2. The Hazardous Area Response Team (HART), Resilience staff and relevant Operational staff (who are part of the Specialist Operations Response Team (SORT) responding to marauding terrorist and firearms incidents), will receive information, instruction and training on the safe use and operation of personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment. This will enable them to safely deal with chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) and marauding terrorism and firearm (MTFA) incidents.
- 5.11.3. Information, instruction and, where necessary, training will be provided to all staff who have to wear personal protective equipment and, where applicable, respiratory protective equipment. The information, instruction and training on personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment will include:
- The hazards and risks which the personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment is provided to guard and protect against.
 - The circumstances, purpose, and manner in which the personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment must be worn/used.
 - The factors affecting the performance of the personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment such as poor fit, wear and tear, contamination and damage.
 - The actions to be taken to maintain the personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment in a clean, efficient and safe working order.
 - The importance of the correct storage of personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment.
 - The importance of reporting any defective or absence of personal protective equipment and respiratory protective equipment.

6. Monitoring & Audit

- 6.1. The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored in the following way.

Standard/Process/ Issue	Monitoring & Audit
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Personal Protective Equipment Policy

The number of risk assessments completed on personal protective equipment as per legislation and policy in a financial year.	Method	By	Committee	Frequency
Actions taken as a result of the risk assessments.	Report from the Risk Team on the number of risk assessments on personal protective equipment completed in a financial year.	a) Risk Team.	Health & Safety Committee	Annually, as a minimum
	Audit on 10% of the risk assessments on personal protective equipment completed in a financial year.	b) Risk Team & Health & Safety team.		

7. Audit and Review (evaluating effectiveness)

- 7.1. All policies have their effectiveness audited by the responsible Management Group at regular intervals, and initially six months after a new policy is approved and disseminated.
- 7.2. Effectiveness will be reviewed using the tools set out in the Trust's Policy and Procedure for the Development and Management of Trust Policies and Procedures (also known as the Policy on Policies).
- 7.3. This document will be reviewed in its entirety every three years or sooner if new legislation, codes of practice or national standards are introduced, or if feedback from employees indicates that the policy is not working effectively.
- 7.4. All changes made to this policy and procedure will go through the governance route for development and approval as set out in the Policy on Policies.
- 7.5. **Implementation & Communication.**
 - 7.5.1. The policy will be implemented and communicated to ALL staff within the Trust via the weekly newsletter. The policy will also be available on the intranet (The Zone).

8. References

- Health and Safety at Work Etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health Safety at Work Regulations 1992 (Amended 1999)
- Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 1992 (Amended 2002)
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002
- Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations 1992
- Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1992 (Amended 2002)
- Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) 1998
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013.

9. Equality Analysis

- 9.1. The Trust believes in fairness and equality, and values diversity in its role as both a provider of services and as an employer. The Trust aims to provide accessible services that respect the needs of each individual and exclude no one. It is committed to comply with the *Human Rights Act* and to meeting the *Equality Act 2010*, which identifies the following nine protected characteristics: Age, Disability, Race, Religion and Belief, Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation, Sex, Marriage and Civil Partnership and Pregnancy and Maternity.
- 9.2. Compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty: If a contractor carries out functions of a public nature, then for the duration of the contract, the contractor or supplier would itself be considered a public authority and have the duty to comply with the equalities duties when carrying out those functions.

10. Appendix 1 PPE Risk Assessment Form

South East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Risk Assessment Form							
Risk assessment on (specific piece of personal protective equipment):							
Person (s) carrying out the assessment:				Department/Area/Directorate:			
Risk assessment number:		Date of assessment:		Date of review of assessment:			
Ref	Hazards (List all of the identified hazards)	Existing Controls (List all of the measures currently in place to control exposure to the hazards)	Initial risk score (SxL =)	Further controls required- Action Plan (List all of the additional measures to be introduced to reduce the risk to the lowest level reasonably practicable)	To be Completed by: (Insert name of person)	When (Insert date when further controls will be completed)	Final risk score (SxL=)
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							