Occupational Health and Safety Policy

1. Introduction

1.1. Description

The Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) policy contains required Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) standards and responsibilities in order to provide a safe and healthy workplace for Staff, Clients and visitors.

1.2. Scope

This policy applies to all VCH Staff.

2. Policy

2.1. Health and Safety at VCH

VCH, as an employer, recognizes its responsibility for the protection of Staff health and safety. It is expected that Staff at every level understand their commitment and accountability for the overall health and safety performance of the organization including recognizing all applicable legislations and regulations and setting annual corporate goals for safety performance.

Staff must also follow health and safety standards which include, but are not limited to:

- Baseline Health Assessment/Immunization
- Code White
- Community Risk Screening
- Confined Space Entry
- Contractor Coordination
- Cytotoxic Agents Management
- De-energization and Lockout
- First Aid
- Footwear
- Indoor Air Quality
- Influenza Prevention Policy
- Joint Health & Safety Committee
- Laser Safety - in development
- Musculoskeletal Injury Prevention
- Purchasing Staff Radiation Protection Apparel for Use with Radioisotopes
- Purchasing Staff Radiation Protection Apparel for Use with X-ray Equipment
- Radiation Safety Program: Safe Use and Installation of Medical X-ray Equipment
- Radiation Safety Program: Safe Use of Radioisotopes in Nuclear Medicine
- Radiation Safety Program: Safe Work Procedures for Support Personnel
- Respiratory Protection
- Safe Patient Handling
- Scented Products
- VCH-Contractor Joint Incident Investigations
- VCH Incident Investigations
- Violence and Aggression ALERT – Acute Care
- Weapons in the Workplace
- Working Alone or in Isolation
- Workplace Violence Prevention

- WHMIS Standard (Original)
- WHMIS Standard 2015 (Globally Harmonized System)

VCH will:

- Commit to providing required OHS resources.
- Commit to providing required training to Staff in their specific tasks to protect their health and safety.
- Recognize that occupational injuries and illnesses can be prevented or reduced and will take all reasonable steps to ensure all incidents are investigated.
- Embrace the concept of the Internal Responsibility System (IRS) and ensure Staff are provided with resources, services, training and any other necessary information that allows them to promote the IRS and to maintain optimum workplace health and safety as well as wellness.
- Recognize that the overall evaluation of Staff must include a health and safety performance component.
- Recognize and support the efforts of its various Joint Health and Safety Committees (JHSC) and ensure all Staff have been empowered to participate in its health and safety program by being given the opportunity of being a member on the JHSC through their union, and by communicating with the JHSC member representing their work area.
- Recognize that a WorkAbility program is an effective way of providing rehabilitation for injured Staff in enabling their return to work.

2.2. Responsibilities

2.2.1. Senior Executive Team

Senior Executive Team members will:

- Assume overall responsibility for the health and safety of their Staff.
- Ensure that all levels of management are accountable for workplace health and safety performance in their areas of responsibility.
- Take all reasonable care to ensure that VCH complies with:
  a) The OHS legislation and regulations pertaining thereto;
  b) Orders from WorkSafeBC officers; and
  c) Orders from the Ministry of Labour.

2.2.2. Executive/Directors

Executive and Directors will provide a safe and healthy workplace by:

- Ensuring this policy is implemented in their department.

- Ensuring Staff compliance with applicable health and safety regulations.
- Ensuring that continuous improvement in health and safety is of the highest priority.
- Incorporating OHS issues into senior management meetings and ensuring that minutes relating to health and safety issues are recorded.
- Ensuring managers and supervisors are familiar with the contents of and their responsibilities under VCH safety standards.
- Ensuring managers and supervisors have completed and are up to date with required Occupational Health & Safety training and online courses.
- Ensuring resources required for the implementation and administration of VCH safety standards are made available.
- Ensuring that JHSCs are present where required.
- Ensuring that all employees in the company are held accountable for infractions of health and safety by making health and safety performance a part of the Employee Performance Appraisal Process.
- Encouraging all Staff to get involved in health and safety activities through participation and/or representation on the JHSC.
- Preparing policies and/or procedures to address health and safety issues as they relate to outside contractors working on VCH property.
- Reviewing IRS accountability and efficiency on an annual basis.
- Ensuring that the overall health and safety program and the IRS continue to meet or exceed OHS legislation and regulations through regular audits/reviews.

2.2.3. Managers/Supervisors

Managers/Supervisors will be responsible for providing management leadership (leading by example) in the areas of health and safety. This includes:

- Completing Occupational Health & Safety for Leaders training including the Incident Investigation course at time of becoming a manager or supervisor.
- Completing the Occupational Health and Safety Refresher for Leaders online course annually.
- Being familiar with the contents of VCH safety standards and their responsibilities under the standards.
- Developing, implementing and/or approving workplace, departmental and job-specific health and safety programs and procedures.
- Ensuring that Staff work in a safe and healthy manner using the prescribed measures, procedures, and protective devices.

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- Ensuring that necessary equipment, materials and protective devices will be provided and maintained in good condition.
- Establishing safe practices and developing procedure manuals for jobs that could have an impact on the health and safety of Staff.
- Ensuring that proper training is provided to workers who need it.
- Ensuring that proper personal protective equipment is available where required.
- Ensuring that accidents and incidents are investigated and that causes are rectified.
- Ensuring that the health and safety program is communicated to Staff during their orientation, that the OHS Policy statement is posted and that VCH standards are readily accessible.
- Regularly evaluating the performance and effectiveness of the IRS, and health and safety programs and procedures in their department and making improvements, as required.
- Regularly attending health and safety-related training programs to ensure continuing competency under the British Columbia Occupational Health and Safety Regulation.
- Holding regular safety meetings with Staff under their authority.
- Using progressive discipline if required.
- Reporting departmental health and safety problems to senior management.
- Performing workplace inspections and accident investigations.
- Correcting unsafe working conditions as soon as reasonably achievable.
- Conducting job observations/audits.
- Maintaining adequate health and safety records as required by legislation and for due diligence purposes.

In addition to the above responsibilities, Managers/Supervisors shall be responsible for all the duties and responsibilities outlined in the British Columbia Occupational Health and Safety Regulation.

2.2.4. Staff

Staff will:

- Work in compliance with safe work practices and procedures established by VCH.
- Actively participate in workplace, departmental and job-specific health and safety programs.
- Comply with established policies, procedures and work practices regarding health, safety and the IRS.

- Get involved in the health and safety program by suggesting changes or recommending improvements that may result in a safer workplace environment
- Use proper safety and personal protective equipment for the job assigned.
- Follow proper procedures for using, cleaning, inspecting and storing personal protective equipment issued to them during the course of their work. Any damages or defects of personal protective equipment will immediately be reported.
- Participate in orientation and ongoing training related to health and safety.
- Regularly attend health and safety-related training programs.
- Make sure they are aware of the potential hazard(s) of a job before starting work.
- Not perform jobs with which they are not familiar and will not operate equipment for which they did not receive appropriate training to operate.
- Identify workplace and job hazards, defects and contravention of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation.
- Immediately report any injury, accident or incident.
- Report any health and safety problems to their manager.

2.2.5. Visitors

Visitors are not allowed in areas not normally accessible to the general public. If visitors must be in an area not normally accessible to the general public, they must be accompanied by a VCH Staff member at all times.

Should visitors or members of the general public need to be taken to locations such as the ones mentioned above, Staff members accompanying the visitors must generally inform the visitors of VCH's OHS policies and procedures and that they adhere to them.

In addition, Staff must ensure that visitors to VCH:

- Do not interfere with safety or any other equipment.
- Do not interfere with any Staff in the execution of their tasks that might cause an injury or illness.
- Comply with emergency procedures in the event of an emergency.

2.2.6. Contractors

VCH Contractors:

- Shall take every reasonable precaution to safeguard the health and safety of their own employees, VCH Staff and Clients.
- Will partake in VCH's Contractor Coordination Safety Program.
- Will provide qualified employees.

- Shall meet or exceed the requirements of this Occupational Health and Safety policy and VCH health and safety procedures.
- Must not start work in the facility before they sign a letter indicating that they are familiar with and agree to abide by this policy and its procedures.
- Must have proper workers' compensation coverage (registration with WorkSafeBC) and must submit the relevant paperwork to VCH before any work can commence. All contractors must show proof of good standing with WorkSafeBC by providing a clearance letter.
- Will ensure all precautions shall be taken by their employees when it comes to safety issues such as proper guarding on equipment, proper grounding of electrical equipment and power tools, procedures to follow in case of fire or emergency and other safety issues as outlined in this policy and VCH health and safety procedures.
- Must ask for clarification from their contract provider if they feel they do not have all the information required for the job.

2.2.7. Volunteers

Volunteers are responsible to:

- Attend orientation as required.
- Act safely at all times while on VCH premises and follow the direction of all safety policies and procedures as they relate to their service.
- Report any incidents or injuries that occur to their local manager.

2.2.8. Workplace Health

Workplace Health will:

- Provide consultation, education and subject matter expertise to guide Staff compliance with this policy and regulatory and workplace health and safety standards.
- Coordinate, develop and implement VCH's Workplace HEALTH & SAFETY program according to identified priorities and applicable legislation.

2.2.9. Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committees

The Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committees will:

- Promote safe work practices and working conditions by raising awareness through various activities.
- Assist in creating a safe place of work by recommending corrective measures to management.
- Participate in the identification and control of safety hazards.
- Receive, consider and resolve matters respecting health and safety of workers.

- Recommend means of education and delivery of information on health and safety issues.

2.3. Compliance

This policy will be monitored and enforced through Workplace Health risk assessments, monthly Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee audits, incident investigations and management compliance reports. Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension without pay or termination of employment.

3. Supporting Documents and References

3.1. Related Policies/Standards

- Baseline Health Assessment/Immunization
- Code White
- Community Risk Screening
- Confined Space Entry
- Contractor Coordination
- Cytotoxic Agents Management
- De-energization and Lockout
- First Aid
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3.2. Guidelines, Procedures and Forms

- Occupational Health & Safety for Leaders (Online)
- Occupational Health and Safety Refresher for Leaders (Online)

3.3. Keywords

health, occupational health, safety, workplace health

4. Definitions

"**Clients**" means all people receiving care or services from VCH and includes patients and residents.

"**Staff**" means all employees (including management and leadership), medical staff members (including physicians, midwives, dentists and nurse practitioners), residents, fellows and trainees, health care professionals, students, volunteers, contractors and other service providers engaged by VCH.

5. Questions

Contact: Workplace Health

Issued by:

Name: _____ Title: _____ Date: _____

Signature of issuing official