

To:
SHA Learning & Development Leads (for
dissemination to Trust Learning & Development
Leads)
The National Association of Healthcare Fire Officers
(for dissemination amongst members)

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Dear Colleague,

FIRE SAFETY TRAINING: E-LEARNING

Under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, fire safety training is a statutory duty for all employees, and a number of queries have arisen regarding the use of e-learning for delivering this statutory requirement.

The purpose of this letter is to clarify the position regarding the use of e-learning in achieving this statutory duty to provide fire safety training. The content has been agreed between the Department, Skills for Health, and the National Association of Healthcare Fire Officers in an effort to provide clear and unambiguous advice.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order requires employers to ensure that all staff are provided with training on fire safety appropriate to the risks identified as part of the fire risk assessments carried out as a statutory duty under the legislation.

The Department's fire policy for the NHS, including Foundation Trusts, is to comply with the prevailing legislation.

How organisations implement their mandatory training strategies is a local decision, but the guidance in Firecode (***Health Technical Memorandum 05-01: Managing healthcare fire safety***) is that no member of staff should go without training delivered by the Competent Person (usually the Trust Fire Safety Adviser) for longer than two years. Specific detail of what should be included in fire safety training is covered in chapter 4 of Firecode ***Health Technical Memorandum 05-03 Part A: General fire precautions***.

E-learning provides for basic fire safety training that meets a common, national standard and enables the level of understanding to be assessed.

The expectation is that by following the approach set out in the bullets points below, organisations will not be in breach of any statutory duty under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005:

- Training should **NOT** be reliant solely on e-learning, but should include face-to-face training delivered by a Competent Person;

- Staff involved in direct patient care where the evacuation of patients is foreseeable, will require training from a Competent Person (e.g. Trust Fire Safety Adviser) this may include the use of specialist equipment and techniques for evacuation;
- Staff with specific roles e.g. Switchboard Operators, Estates Staff etc. should be provided with additional training on their roles in the event of a fire situation;
- All staff should be made aware of the significant findings of fire risk assessments, including any measures to mitigate or control the risk(s) identified.

An example of how training might be arranged is set out below.

Staff	E-Learning		Competent Person	
	Annual	2 Years	Annual	2 Years
Direct patient care (hospital)	❖		✓	
Direct patient care (community based staff)	✓	❖		✓
No patient contact	✓			✓
Specialist role		❖	✓	

Key: ✓ = This form of training is recommended to occur at this frequency
 ❖ = This form of training is optional at this frequency to supplement Competent Person delivered training

I hope that this clarifies the acceptable use of e-learning in delivering basic level fire safety training, and would be grateful if this could be cascaded to Learning & Development Lead's within Trusts. The National Association of Healthcare Fire Officers will also circulate this letter to their members.

Yours Sincerely



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