

Gradual Process Injury Prevention Policy

Policy Statement

Gradual Process Injury (GPI) is a collective term for a range of conditions (including injury) characterised by discomfort or persistent pain in muscles, tendons, and other soft tissues. Every case of GPI has the potential to be classified as a significant hazard because the condition may cause 'Serious Harm'. Therefore the risk factors for GPI need to be controlled by eliminating the hazard if at all possible, or else, by isolating or minimising the hazard.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff members of Cycling Southland.

Purpose

To provide systems and procedures for proactively managing the risk factors that may contribute to a range of gradual process type conditions.

Responsibilities

The General Manager is responsible for:

- Taking all practical steps to ensure that there is compliance with the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Code of Practice (COP) for Visual Display Units.
- Ensuring all staff at risk attend a GPI awareness training session in their first month of employment and as required.
- Encouraging staff to report any work-related pain to their manager as early as possible.
- Ensuring the work environment of any staff who do develop symptoms is monitored and all practicable steps are taken to remedy any deficiencies.
- Facilitating an early return to work for any staff member who has been absent through a GPI-related injury where possible.

Staff members are responsible for:

- Reading the GPI awareness information and attending training where required.
- Adjusting workstation equipment to maintain a comfortable body position.
- Taking breaks away from the workstation and practising micro-pauses as appropriate.
- Reporting early symptoms to the manager; preferably before visiting a doctor.
- Participating in an early return to work programme if applicable.

Procedures

Pre-employment Procedures

Managers will seek to establish, if the prospective staff member suffers from any gradual process injury that the particular job may aggravate or contribute to, by checking the statement on the application form.

Existing Staff

- Individual staff members should adjust their own workstation to maintain a comfortable working position, vary tasks, practice micro-pauses and take other breaks. They must report any problems to the General Manager.

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Next review date: July 2019

- Every year, a full workstation assessment from a properly trained Workstation Assessor will be carried out. The Workstation Assessor will work with the staff member to recommend changes or adjustments, and will provide a brief summary of findings to the employee and General Manager.
- Early warning symptoms should not be ignored in the hope that the pain will go away. If discomfort during work activities persists for more than a few days action should be taken. By taking these steps, individuals will be making important decisions about stopping the symptoms from worsening and developing into a possibly serious and long-term condition.

Standards

Approved COP for the Use of Visual Display Units in the Place of Work; Guidelines to the Selection and Purchase of Workstation Furniture and Equipment.

Definitions

The Health and Safety in Employment Act defines Serious Harm (in part) as ‘a condition that amounts to, or results in, permanent or temporary severe loss of bodily function’.

References

- The Health and Safety at Work Act (2016).
- The current *Approved COP for the Use of Visual Display Units in the Place of Work* published by the OSH service of the Department of Labour.
- *Guidelines to the Selection and Purchase of Workstation Furniture and Equipment.*
- Cycling Southland Accident Reporting and Rehabilitation policies.
- Record of Accident/Incident/Serious Harm.