

<b>TOPIC:</b>  Health and Safety	<b>SUBJECT:</b>  Musculoskeletal Prevention  Disorders Prevention	<b>Code:</b> HS120
		<b>Date of Issue:</b> November 2007
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## **POLICY STATEMENT**

Avenue II is committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment for all staff. In recognition of Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs) being a significant risk in our workplace, Avenue II will demonstrate its commitment to minimizing the risk of exposure to MSDs by providing financial, physical and human resources to ensure suitable control strategies are in place. Avenue II endeavours to manage MSD hazards through the following control measures: elimination, redesign, planning, purchasing, education and evaluation.

To that end, Avenue II is committed to increasing MSD awareness, decreasing the risk of MSD's, and adapting the job and workplace to the capabilities and limitations of the employees wherever possible.

Avenue II will ensure that workers have the equipment and on-going training they need to reduce their exposure to MSD hazards.

The risk of MSDs will be assessed using MSD hazard identification tools, analyzing injury reports, workplace inspections, hazard reports, and any other means that might help to identify their frequency and severity. Once risks have been identified, proactive solutions will be implemented to address and reduce future risks.

## **DEFINITION**

### Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs)

MSDs are injuries and disorders of the musculoskeletal system. They may be caused or aggravated by various risk factors in the workplace. MSD includes injuries and disorders of the muscles, tendons, nerves. It is also referred to as repetitive strain injury (RSI), cumulative trauma disorder (CTD), musculoskeletal injury (MSI), and sprain and strain.

MSDs do not include musculoskeletal injuries or disorders that are a direct result of a fall, struck by or against, caught in or on, vehicle collisions, or violence.

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## **PROCEDURES/RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Supervisor (Director/Manager/On Call)**

1. Supervisors will participate in identifying, assessing, and controlling MSD hazards.
2. Supervisors will provide reasonable equipment that meets staff needs within budgetary constraints. Examples include mechanical lifts, carts, trolleys, and ergonomic office furniture.
3. The Supervisor will ensure that the employees are adequately trained in equipment use, and will enforce use.
4. Proper use will be enforced and failure to do so will be subject to progressive discipline.
5. Where possible, prior to decisions being made about the purchase of new equipment or new furniture, worker input and ergonomic features will be considered. Wherever possible items will be trialed for no less than one week's time.
6. Supervisors will along with the JHSC investigate lost time MSD injuries and report all findings to the Executive Director.
7. When employees are returning to work after an MSD, an assessment of the work will be conducted, and alterations are made to reduce the risk of a re-occurrence.

### **Employee**

1. Employees will report any ergonomic hazards, concerns, equipment problems, unsafe tasks and incidents to their Supervisor immediately and cooperate in the investigation/solution as required by the Supervisor.
2. Employees who are experiencing musculoskeletal discomfort related to work will report symptoms to their Supervisor immediately. Employees will be involved in the ergonomic solution to reduce the incidence of MSD.
3. Employees who receive ergonomic aids or equipment will use the equipment correctly, and at all times.
4. Employees will participate in education and training programs regarding MSD identification and prevention.

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### **Joint Health and Safety Committee**

1. The Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) will look for MSD hazards during workplace inspections and review the incident/accident data related to MSDs.
2. When necessary, the JHSC will make MSD recommendations to management in writing.
3. Investigate lost time MSD injuries with Supervisors and report findings to the Executive Director.

### **FORMS**

*Health and Safety Hazard Complaint Form*

*Home Inspection Sheet – Health and Safety Checklist*

*Accident Investigation Report*

*Incident Report*

### **TRAINING**

Supervisors and JHSC committee members are trained to identify MSD hazards during workplace inspections.

New staff trained in MSD hazards upon hire.

MSD hazards and controls shall be reviewed with staff on an annual basis.

Education for workers includes:

- signs and symptoms of MSD;
- how to recognize MSD hazards;
- workplace policies and procedures dealing with concerns related to MSDs;
- information on equipment, adjustments and procedures workers need to use or follow or reduce or eliminate their exposure to MDS hazards; and
- how to identify and communicate health and safety concern/hazards on “individual routines”.

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Education for JHSC and Supervisors includes:

- All of the training as a worker, plus how to;
  - respond when workers report a concern, pain, or discomfort;
  - recognize MSD hazards and use MSD hazard identification tools;
  - recognize indicators for MSD hazards;
  - analyze injury and incident reports for MSD trends and issues;
  - look for MSD hazards during inspections; and
  - control MSD hazards in the workplace.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Information regarding MSDs is posted on bulletin boards and/or distributed to employees periodically, and included in ongoing staff training.

### **EVALUATION**

The program will be evaluated for effectiveness on a yearly basis. Considered will be:

- MSD awareness increased evidenced by issues identified on an ongoing basis
- Eliminate MSD issues
- Yearly policy review
- Yearly employee MSD survey based on current trends
- Bi-yearly MSD updates through training, survey or newsletter
- Employee input