



NATIONAL HOSPITAL  
INTERVENTION AND COMPLIANCE CAMPAIGN





Preventing slip, trip & manual task injuries



**Best Practice Case Study**  
**Slip/Trip/Fall Incident Investigation**  
**conducted in a WA Hospital**



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## **Background**



Example of thorough incident investigation of a reportable injury:

- Background information of incident
- Relevant intrinsic and extrinsic factors (worker's and assessor's findings)
- Controls implemented



## **Background Information**

- Date of Incident
- Date of Investigation
- Reason worker was not back to work after 10 working days (ie. ongoing musculoskeletal problems).
- What was done soon after incident (ie. first aid treatment conducted within the Emergency Department).
- How injury was managed (ie. caregiver referred for injury rehabilitation program).
- The current status of worker (ie. caregiver is currently unfit for work).



## **Demographics and Employment Type**

- Gender (ie. female)
- Age (45 yo)
- Employment type (employee)
- Occupation (Patient care assistant)
- Hours worked per week (32.5 hours)
- Temporary or permanent (3 month temporary contract)



## **Work hours and shifts**

- Time worker commenced working (1630 hrs)
- When injury occurred (1710 hrs)
- Previous work hours (1x 6.5 hour shift prior to day of injury)
- History of extra shifts prior to incident (no extra shifts within 14 weeks prior to injury)
- Staffing levels (full allocation of patient care assistants (PCAs) rostered on)

## **Training and Procedures**

- Worker's safety training record
  - attended job specific training
  - mentioned topics
  - training date attended
  - usual frequency of training (orientation and refresher)
- Task specific procedure provided for task type (cleaning)

### ***Task Performed and Worker's Account of Incident***

- What task was performed and where incident occurred (caregiver was mopping treatment room within obstetric ward)
- Worker's account of incident
  - How it happened: stepped back and slipped while mopping
  - Floor contaminants: did not believe that there was any water or obstacle where she slipped



### ***Worker's Account of Incident***

- Footwear condition: felt that her shoes may have been wet as she had washed a patient's bathroom prior to the incident.
- Changes in flooring condition: There is carpet between the patient's bathrooms and the treatment room.
- Agent used to clean floor: chose mop bucket which had already been filled.



### ***Room Characteristics***

- When treatment room was commissioned
- What treatment room houses (number of wheeled trolleys, a rubbish bin and a set of scales which are located on the floor)
- Size of treatment room
- Flooring type (smooth standard surface vinyl flooring and brand name).
- Purpose of treatment room (used for dry medical supplies and wound dressing equipment)



### ***Floor Condition and Equipment Design***

- No associated floor contamination.
- Floor condition on investigation (excellent condition with no uneven or damaged areas)
- Equipment design (mop bucket is of a wheel design and is able to be moved close to the work area; mop is a standard laundry mop requiring daily or as required head replacement)
- Equipment condition (mop and wringer were found to be in excellent condition)



### ***Cleaning Agent, Lighting, Signage and Footwear***

- Cleaning agent dispenser type, maintenance and working order
- Appropriateness of detergent for floor type and history of use (detergent appropriate for vinyl flooring; detergent has been used throughout the hospital since 2005)
- Lighting (appropriate lighting in the treatment room)
- Signage (wet floor signage had been placed by the caregiver)
- Footwear assessment (found to be appropriate for PCA duties).



### ***Controls***

- Improved condition of floor: Scrubbing was undertaken to vinyl surface to remove potential chemical build up
- Reviewed timing of the floor washing: to coincide with low activity
- Activity was audited: Audit was undertaken on mopping procedure within the department
- Developed new audit processes:
  - to ensure surface integrity to vinyl flooring
  - to assess condition of equipment.
- Reviewed alternate floor cleaning equipment



## **Controls**

- Revised annual training and competency to ensure that correct mopping standards are included
- Developed new procedures:
  - For preparation of buckets: caregivers only to use chemicals prepared by themselves
  - For changing contaminated bucket and mops: Buckets and mops are to be changed when contaminated with blood and body fluids or other additional hazards ensuring thorough removal of contamination

## **Questions**