

1 June 2026

Vibrations at Work Risk Assessment and Policies

I would be grateful if you would forward a copy of the Trust's policy and procedures document on control of vibration at work

Please see attached policy

I would be grateful if you would forward a copy of the Trust's most recent risk assessment for the control of vibration at work for the orthopaedic theatres in the Royal Victoria Hospital and Musgrave Park Hospital

Please see attached risk assessment

Musgrave Park Hospital has undertaken a risk assessment in relation to the control of vibration at work within orthopaedic theatres, most recently reviewed in June 2025.

1. Identified Hazard: The primary hazard identified is:

- Hand-arm vibration arising from the use of hand-held power tools (e.g. surgical drills and saws).

2. Persons at Risk: The assessment identifies:

- Surgical staff operating hand-held powered instruments.

Potential health risks include:

- Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS)
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

3. Existing Risk Control Measures

A range of controls are in place to mitigate exposure risk:

- Use of hand-held power tools with built-in vibration reduction features
- Limited and infrequent exposure, with use spread across the working day
- Restriction of exposure primarily to trained surgical personnel
- Regular maintenance of all powered surgical instruments
- Planned replacement of equipment at end of lifecycle
- Immediate removal and repair of defective equipment
- Maintenance of a comfortable theatre working temperature

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4. Risk Assessment Outcome

- Likelihood: Rare
- Severity: Minor
- Risk Rating: Low

5. Exposure Assessment Findings

- A vibration assessment conducted on 28 May 2013 determined daily exposure at 1.3 m/s²
- A further calculation using the HSE Hand-Arm Vibration Exposure Calculator (11 June 2025) confirmed the same level: 1.3 m/s²

This level is:

- Below the Exposure Action Value (EAV) of 2.5 m/s² as defined in the *Control of Vibration at Work Regulations (NI) 2005*
- Therefore, considered to present an extremely low risk

Accordingly:

- No additional control measures are required under the Regulations at present

6. Policy Framework

The assessment is supported by:

- BHSCT/Gen (08) – Policy and Procedural Arrangements for Control of Vibration at Work

7. Health Surveillance and Monitoring

Although the risk level is low, precautionary measures include:

- Referral to Occupational Health Services for any staff presenting symptoms of:
 - HAVS
 - Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

Health surveillance is provided where staff:

- May be exposed above the action value
- Are occasionally exposed where risk is identified
- Have an existing diagnosis of HAVS

8. Action Plan

- No additional risk control actions are currently required due to the low exposure level

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- Ongoing arrangements include:
 - Continued monitoring
 - Occupational health referral where clinically indicated

Responsible Lead:

- Theatre Managers

Timescale:

- Ongoing

Summary- The current assessment concludes that:

Exposure to hand-arm vibration in orthopaedic theatres at Musgrave Park Hospital is well below regulatory thresholds, with robust controls in place and no requirement for further action beyond ongoing monitoring and occupational health support where necessary.