



## NMHS POLICY

### Fatigue Identification, Prevention and Risk Management

<b>Scope (Staff):</b>	All NMHS Staff including Employees, Volunteers and Labour Hire
<b>Scope (Area):</b>	All NMHS sites and services

#### 1. Aim

NMHS has a duty of care to ensure the safety of staff and others in the workplace by providing staff with reasonable working hours, as far as practicable, and identifying and managing risks resulting from fatigue.

#### 2. Background

Shift work is a necessary function of the 24/7 operational demands in healthcare. However, exposure to shift work is associated with a range of adverse health effects and it is recognised that all staff may be affected by fatigue regardless of hours of work.

Key risk factors for fatigue include working overnight, being on call, working extended hours and working rotating or irregular shifts.

NMHS will apply relevant legislation, regulations and policies in a professional manner with due regard to the organisational requirements and the individual circumstances of staff potentially affected by fatigue.

When managing staff potentially affected by fatigue, NMHS will comply with the:

- [Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984](#)
- [Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996](#)
- [WA Code of Practice – Working Hours](#)
- [Industrial Instruments](#)
- [WA Health Code of Conduct Policy MP1024/19](#)

#### 3. Risk

Fatigue can occur as a result of both work related and non-work related factors. The cumulative effect over time when not managed effectively, can result in an increased risk of incidents and injuries in the workplace, posing a risk to staff health and wellbeing and patient safety. Non-compliance with this policy may expose the organisation and its accountable officers to industrial, legislative and reputational risk.

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## 4. Definitions

<b>Fatigue</b>	Is a state of mental and/or physical exhaustion which reduces a person's ability to perform work safely
<b>Staff Member</b>	Under the <a href="#">Health Services Act 2016</a> , this refers to an employee in the NMHS and a person engaged under a contract for services by the NMHS. For the purpose of this policy, this also includes agency staff, contractors, volunteers, students and persons on work placement / work experience / unremunerated clinical agreement (UCA).
<b>Risk</b>	The probability of injury or harm occurring and the severity of the consequences of the harm
<b>Hazard</b>	In relation to a person this means anything; that may result in an injury, or harm to the health of the person.
<b>Risk Management</b>	The process, by which hazards are; identified, assessed and controlled.

## 5. Principles

Fatigue is a hazard and as such should be identified, assessed and controlled in accordance with the [Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984](#) (the Act), [Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996](#) and the relevant [industrial instrument](#). Managers, supervisors and staff should actively manage working hours, rosters, organise planned leave and identify opportunities to prevent fatigue. Where it is not possible to prevent fatigue, Managers, Supervisors and staff should effectively manage fatigue related risks to staff health and patient care.

Foreseeable factors which could contribute to and increase the risk of fatigue in the workplace should be identified. Risk of injury due to fatigue should be assessed, and control measures considered to reduce the risk. The most effective control measures should be selected and implemented in consultation with the staff in the relevant work area and regularly evaluated and reviewed to ensure ongoing effectiveness.

## 6. Roles and Responsibilities

### Managers/Supervisors

Managers and Supervisors are required to:

- ensure staff access scheduled breaks, rosters and planned leave in line with the relevant industrial award;
- ensure the safe and effective allocation of work hours/shifts considering all issues that may impact the health of the staff member and risks to effective patient care;

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- be proactive in monitoring staff in relation to fatigue – take appropriate action upon identifying or being notified of a fatigued member of staff, or one at risk of fatigue, in the workplace and refer to the [Fitness for Work Policy](#) for further guidance;
  - responding to reports of fatigue in a supportive manner and implement control measures in consultation with the affected staff member which may include, but is not limited to, assisting the staff member with safe transport home, restricting or altering their work duties, increasing supervision and reporting the risk via a [NMHS Incident / Hazard form](#);
  - consult with staff on potential fatigue risks, before rostering arrangements and substantial changes to roster patterns are implemented and as otherwise required by the relevant industrial instrument
  - ensure staff performing shift work or extended hours/ overtime are appropriately supported and supervised
  - ensure employees comply with the requirements of the [NMHS Additional Employment Policy](#);
  - manage leave in line with the relevant industrial instrument and [NMHS Leave Management Policy](#).

### **Staff Members**

Staff members are required to present to work in a manner that ensures that they can safely, competently and productively undertake the inherent requirements of their position and not risk adversely affecting the safety and health of themselves or others.

To fulfil their obligations employees shall:

- present fit for the work for which they are employed; plan for sufficient rest and monitor their levels of fatigue
- be aware of the signs of fatigue for themselves as individuals and in their colleagues
- report to management promptly should they become aware of potential impairment due to fatigue, in either themselves or others
- ensure written permission is obtained in accordance with the [NMHS Additional Employment Policy](#) to seek approval to undertake any work external or additional to NMHS employment
- actively participate in consultation on potential fatigue risks, rostering arrangements and substantial changes to the roster pattern in accordance with the relevant industrial award
- Plan, request and access leave in accordance with the relevant industrial instrument and the [Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety - Management of Accrued Leave in the Public Sector Policy Statement](#), [NMHS Leave Management Policy](#), and [WA Department of Health Management of Accrued Leave Policy](#).

### **NMHS Human Resources / NMHS Occupational Safety and Health (OSH)**

Managers, supervisors and staff may contact site [Human Resources](#) and/or [NMHS OSH](#) for advice on issues related to rostering/shift work and fatigue management.

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## 7. Compliance Monitoring

The NMHS Chief Executive and NMHS site or service Executive Directors are responsible for ensuring Managers and Supervisors comply with this policy.

Failure of NMHS staff to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action as per the [Department of Health Mandatory Policy MP 0127/20 Discipline Policy](#).

Legislative breaches and subsequent penalties related to this policy are included under the Act (Section 19 Duties of employers and Section 20 Duties of employees) and the [Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996](#) (Part 3 – Workplace safety requirements in particular section 3.1).

### Related internal policies, procedures and guidelines

[NMHS Additional Employment Policy](#)

[NMHS Fitness for Work - Employees Policy](#)

[Department of Health Mandatory Policy MP 0127/20 Discipline Policy](#)

### References

[Health Services Act 2016](#)

[Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984](#)

[Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996](#)









[Industrial Instruments](#)

### Useful resources (including related forms)

[Work Safe WA – Code of Practice \(2006\) Working hours](#)

[Safe Work Australia Guide for Managing the Risk of Fatigue at Work 2013](#)

[NMHS OSH intranet site](#)

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NSQHS Standards Applicable:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>  Std 1: Clinical Governance <input type="checkbox"/>  Std 2: Partnering with Consumers <input type="checkbox"/>  Std 3: Preventing and Controlling Healthcare Associated Infection <input type="checkbox"/>  Std 4: Medication Safety		<input type="checkbox"/>  Std 5: Comprehensive Care <input type="checkbox"/>  Std 6: Communicating for Safety <input type="checkbox"/>  Std 7: Blood Management <input type="checkbox"/>  Std 8: Recognising and Responding to Acute Deterioration		
National Standards for Mental Health Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Std 1: Rights and Responsibilities <input type="checkbox"/> Std 2: Safety <input type="checkbox"/> Std 3: Consumer and Carer Participation <input type="checkbox"/> Std 4: Diversity Responsibility <input type="checkbox"/> Std 5: Promotion and Prevention <input type="checkbox"/> Std 6: Consumers <input type="checkbox"/> Std 7: Carers <input type="checkbox"/> Std 8: Governance, leadership and management		<input type="checkbox"/> Std 9: Integration <input type="checkbox"/> Std 10: Delivery of Care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 10.1 Supporting Recovery</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 10.2 Access</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 10.3 Entry</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 10.4 Assessment and Review</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 10.5 Treatment and Support</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 10.6 Exit and Re-entry</li> </ul>		
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The health impact upon Aboriginal people have been considered, and where relevant incorporated and appropriately addressed in the development of this health initiative (ISD reference number 1S12P0120).

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