

West Oxford Community Centre - Lone Worker Risk Assessment

Revised 2/12/07

Purpose

The purpose of this risk assessment is to ensure that any person working alone at West Oxford Community Centre:

- Is aware that there are issues concerning personal safety relating specifically to working alone.
- Has considered what steps they will take if they encounter a problem relating to working alone.
- Has agreed a plan of action with the Centre Manager appropriate to their needs.
- Has identified and agreed any action points which may need to be implemented to ensure appropriate levels of security.
- Has agreed to implement the plan of action, report / log any incidents, and report any reason for concern that may occur in the future to the Centre Manager.

Risk Assessment

The risks of working alone at West Oxford Community Centre, although fairly low compared to many situations are significant.

They need to be listed, analysed and minimised at reasonable levels, reviewed annually and in the light of incidents or other changes that may occur, and kept in perspective.

Staff / Volunteers / Centre Users at Risk

Lynn Carter – Café

Geoff Franklin – Caretaker / Cleaner

Shah Nawaz Khan – Caretaker

Marelyn Clarke - Administrator

Richard Grant – Centre Manager

Surgery Staff

Volunteers

Centre Users

The Risks

There are two types of risk associated with lone working:

- Accidents
- Undesirable Individuals

Accidents

West Oxford Community Centre is a safe environment. However there is a low risk of accidents happening to lone workers, eg scalding / burns / cuts / trips / bangs on head etc. The risk of a serious accident is very low. First Aid kits are available.

Working in the kitchen and cleaning / caretaking / doing maintenance are the occasions when accidents to lone workers are most likely.

Actions

First rule for any lone worker situation is do not put your self at risk.

Lone workers need to know what they will do in an emergency. They will need to have access to a phone to use to contact the emergency services. If, you are working alone in the Community Centre, access to the office phone or a mobile phone is essential.

Wait until there are others at the centre before undertaking a more risky activity.

Take extra care when alone.

Undesirable Individuals

The risks centre around individuals or groups of individuals wishing to use the Centre for unacceptable purposes eg drinking, drugs, smoking, shelter, theft.

This may take the shape of:

- Someone wandering into the café, office, an activity, or the surgery making demands.
- People misusing the toilets, usually associated with drug use.
- People hiding.
- People gathering outside the Centre.
- Sleeping under the eaves, sheltering from the rain.
- Leaving a window / door open, planning to return later.
- Impersonation / theft.

Staff have all experienced the need to ask individuals or groups of individuals to leave the building. The experience of having to ask a person making demands / behaving inappropriately to leave the building is relatively common. Perhaps once a month.

Associated with this experience can be a real fear, particularly when locking up, of encountering an individual using the building inappropriately (there have actually been no incidents of this happening).

