



Standard Operational Guidance

CATS Fatigue Guidance

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Fatigue Management Guidance for all Staff

It is mandatory that you attend the lecture on Fatigue Management which is part of your induction programme

Purpose

Fatigue is a workplace health and safety issue and is generally caused by lack of sleep. Fatigue affects a person's health, reduces performance and productivity within the workplace, and also increases the chance of a workplace accident occurring.

The guide is intended to raise awareness of fatigue and provides some practical tips for shift workers to address fatigue within your daily life.

What is fatigue

Fatigue is mental or physical exhaustion that stops a person from being able to function normally. The time of day when work takes place is a key factor in fatigue.

What causes Fatigue

We all have a responsibility for our own health and safety when it relates service delivery. This means that you should ensure that your personal behaviour outside work does not contribute to workplace fatigue.

Fatigue management is therefore a shared responsibility.

- Shift working is a key factor as well as the length of shift worked. (You are more likely to feel fatigued in the final hours of a shift).
- Previous hours and days worked. (The effects of fatigue are cumulative) so it is important to manage your roster carefully and ensure that any extra work undertaken does not impact on your ability to perform).
- The duration of the period between two consecutive duties. Incidents are more likely to happen if you fail to take adequate rest between shifts.
- Due to circadian rhythms our bodies are programmed for different levels of wakefulness depending on the time of day. So naturally night shift working disrupts this rhythm which can impact adversely on the quantity and quality of sleep.
- Difficulty in taking breaks when busy on a clinical shift
- The intensity of the work undertaken
- The variability in the pattern of your work shifts (speed of rotation from night to day)
- Recovery time required after a long sequence of duties.

Assessing Symptoms of fatigue

If you identify symptoms, both in yourself and others take a break!

Three or more symptoms in a short period of time - you are likely to be experiencing fatigue-related **impairment**. Utilise these symptoms to identify individuals who are at risk

Physical Symptoms	Emotional Symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yawning• Heavy eyelids• Eye-rubbing• Head drooping• Micro sleeps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More quiet or withdrawn• Lacking in energy• Lacking in motivation• Irritable or grumpy

Steps for Managing Fatigue

- Ensure you manage your roster carefully
- Ensure that you manage your roster to allow for 48 hours break after a run of shifts prior to rotating back onto the rota
- Ensure enough rest time (minimum of 12 hours) between shifts especially if you overrun on your shift due to a late return from retrieval. (Please discuss with the consultant on duty to arrange a late start if you are on again the following day/night)
- The duty consultant is responsible for negotiating a rest period with the clinical team when 'back to back' retrievals are anticipated.
- Taking regular breaks are very beneficial, for example taking a 30 minute break reduces fatigue levels back to baseline.
- If returning from a long retrieval post night shift and having delivered the patient to PICU it is mandatory that a member of the team sits up front with the technician.
- If a long retrieval is anticipated ensure that the technician takes a break whilst the clinical team are stabilising the child
- Ensure you offer a tea break to the technician prior to or during the return leg of a journey post PICU
- Keep yourself well hydrated
- Ensure you eat well

*Remember if you are rostered to work a night shift you should endeavour to establish a sleep pattern during the day and **never think** that you will be able to get sufficient rest at work*

- Go through the "normal" rituals of going to bed as you would before a normal sleeping night
- Develop way of unwinding after a late shift or a night shift
- Don't give up if you cannot sleep immediately read a paper or listen to music remember rest in itself is very important
- Take a shower or a relaxing bath before going to bed
- Black out curtains and ear plugs are very useful tools when it comes to sleeping during the day