

Deafblind Scotland vision – “A society in which deafblind people have the permanent support and recognition necessary to be equal citizens”



## Deafblind Scotland Policy on Risk Assessment

### What do we mean by Risk Assessment?

Risk Assessments are designed to protect staff, volunteers, members of the public and service users, they are not meant to stop people enjoying any activities. Any support requires routine risk assessments to be carried out during the support and does not always require to be written down. A risk assessment can be a visual assessment of a situation, e.g. crossing the road or lifting an object.

A risk assessment involves the examination of a given activity, identifying the hazards present, evaluating the extent of risks and taking into account whatever precautions are already in place.

The purpose of risk assessment is to promote safe working environments and for the organisation to fulfil its obligation to protect other people affected by the work of the organisation as required by the Health and Safety at Work Legislation 1992. This then creates a healthier, safer environment in which risks are managed and under control.

In managing risk to service-users it is essential that the safety of staff and others are given equally serious consideration.

### Policy Statement

Deafblind Scotland is committed to providing a safe working environment for its staff, volunteers and people who use our services, if anyone is concerned about their safety at any time they must discuss it with the Health & Safety Officer, Head of Operations or Service Manager who will arrange a risk assessment.

### Why have Risk Assessment?

As a service provider we must ensure that the environment in which the service is provided is safe as far as is possible. Our organisation has a duty of care and existing legislation forms the basis for risk assessment. The two main pieces of legislation which relate to our work are:

#### *Health and Safety at Work Act 1974*

This set out the basic framework for the management of Health and Safety at work.

#### *Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992*

These regulations require suitable and sufficient assessments of risk to health and safety arising from work activities. Risk assessments should identify steps which need to be taken to

ensure control of Health and Safety for both service user and service provider.

**Words we use:**

- A 'Hazard' means anything that has the potential to cause harm
- A 'Risk' is a chance high, medium or low, that somebody will be harmed by the hazard.
- 'Risk assessment' process used to think about the work, assess risks involved and identify what can be done to reduce the risk.

**Who is responsible for risk assessment?**

Every employee is responsible for recognising risk and taking steps to reduce it where possible.

Every activity in which Deafblind Scotland participates should have a risk assessment undertaken initially and when necessary or when requested by service user or service provider.

Events arranged by Deafblind Scotland will be risk assessed by Deafblind Scotland's Health and Safety Officer and other members of staff involved in organising activities as well as by agents responsible for delivering the activities, events or outings.

## Deafblind Scotland Procedure for Risk Assessment

### ***Aim of procedure***

This procedure provides a framework for Deafblind Scotland's policy on Risk Assessment to be followed, implemented and appropriately monitored.

### **When should the risk assessment procedure be used?**

It should be used to assess the risks of every activity in which Deafblind Scotland participates, at the initial stage, whenever necessary and when requested by a service user or service provider.

### ***How to do a Risk Assessment?***

Complete a Risk Assessment by considering:

- What harm could be caused?
  - To whom could it be caused?
  - In what circumstances would it occur?
- What precautions have already take place
- What further actions are needed to control or eliminate the risk?

***EXAMPLE:*** *Service user is Deafblind.*

1. *Service user could have accident in swimming pool, or*
2. *Be unaware of being told to clear the pool by shouted instruction.*

*The service user would be the person at risk.*

*The risk could occur if guide/communicator member is not in pool/toilet/changing room i.e. with service user at all times.*

*The pool assistants are unaware of service user's dual sensory impairment.*

Judgements are made on a scale of HIGH TO LOW

- a. Severity of the consequence
- b. Likelihood of the risk occurring

Hazard Severity Rating:    HIGH            -Death or major harm  
   MEDIUM        -Injury/full recovery in long term  
   LOW                -Injury/recoverable

Likelihood of Occurrence: HIGH        - very likely/certain  
   MEDIUM        - may happen/likely  
   LOW                - Very unlikely/unlikely

When calculating risk, consider psychological effects as well as physical.

When a decision has been made, calculate the overall risk according to the table below:

<b>Hazard Severity</b>	<b>Likelihood of occurrence</b>	<b>Risk</b>
HIGH	HIGH	HIGH
HIGH	MEDIUM	HIGH
HIGH	LOW	MEDIUM

MEDIUM	HIGH	HIGH
MEDIUM	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
MEDIUM	LOW	MEDIUM
LOW	HIGH	MEDIUM
LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
LOW	LOW	LOW

**EXAMPLE:** *Service user swimming, without control measures to mitigate risk*

1. *Service user having an accident in the pool*  
 Hazard Severity *HIGH*  
 Likelihood of occurrence (if unaccompanied) *HIGH*  
 Risk *HIGH*

2. *Service user not hearing instructions*  
 Hazard Severity *LOW*  
 Likelihood of occurrence *HIGH*  
 Risk *MEDIUM*

**How can the risk be reduced?**

Determine measures to reduce risk to the lowest level reasonably practicable. Consider ideas for reducing risk and then reconsider the calculated risk score. You may find the score had reduced. In some circumstances it may not be possible to reduce the risk. In these circumstances it may be necessary to accept the risk.

**EXAMPLES:**

*Identify with the manager and others in the team on a clear protocol within the service for supporting this activity – clarifying the role and responsibilities of Deafblind Scotland guide/communicator/staff who is supporting someone to go swimming. The main responsibilities at the swimming pool are first ensuring that the pool attendants are aware that the person has a dual sensory impairment and alerting pool attendants should a problem occur.*

**Action Plan**

Complete an Action Plan where you have allocated task and implemented measures in collaboration with those people identified as having a responsibility. Once you have done this ask the question, has risk been sufficiently reduced? You may need to go back and determine measures to reduce risk again.

Tasks, actions and dates need to be discussed, recognised and agreed with those identified with having a responsibility.

Example:

Tasks	Action	Date
1. Arrange training in pool for Deafblind Awareness	Service staff	Within 1 month

2. Discuss problem with service user – arrange meeting with relevant parties.	Service staff initially and guide/communicator regularly	Before swimming starts next week
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Once the protocols agreed are put in place it may be that the risks are reduced as shown below

*EXAMPLE: Service user swimming, with control measures to mitigate risk in place*

**1. Service user having an accident in the pool**

<i>Hazard Severity</i>	<i>HIGH</i>
<i>Likelihood of occurrence</i>	<i>LOW</i>
<i>Risk</i>	<i>MEDIUM</i>

**2. Service user not hearing instructions**

<i>Hazard Severity</i>	<i>LOW</i>
<i>Likelihood of occurrence (if accompanied)</i>	<i>LOW</i>
<i>Risk</i>	<i>LOW</i>

**Review Date**

After completing the assessment a review date needs to be considered. If calculated risk is high, on-going review may be necessary. If calculated risk is low, reviewing on an annual basis may be adequate.

Risk assessments will be affected by individual circumstances, situations and activities and the examples given below are to indicate the types of assessments that may be made.

<b>Hazard Identified</b>	<b>Hazard Severity</b>	<b>Likelihood Of Occurrence</b>	<b>Risk Average</b>	<b>Control Measures Required</b>
Possibility of service-user falling whilst walking unaided.	High	Medium	High	Service-user should be advised that they should be accompanied on all journeys outside the home.
Possibility of service-user falling whilst getting in/out of car.	Medium	Low	Medium	Service-user should be advised of safest ways to enter and exit from a car.
Possibility of service-user falling whilst getting in/out wheelchair.	High	Low	Medium	Only staff who have received wheelchair training should be used to provide service for this wheelchair user.
Service user unable to	High	High	High	Service-user should be accompanied by two

support own body weight and is prone to falls.				guide/communicators and use a wheel chair where possible.
An assessment visit to a person who has self referred to the service and lives in a rough area of town.	High	Unknown - High	High	Contact Social Work office, which may be able to advise on known risks. The lone working procedures should be strictly adhered to. If at all possible the visit should be made by two people but still have the lone working procedure being followed.

### Communication Risk Assessment

(Service-user's ability to interpret meaning and purpose correctly)

Hazard Identified	Hazard Severity	Likelihood of occurrence	Risk (Average 2 & 3)	Control Measures Required
Possibility of service-user not understanding written information in alternative format.				
Possibility of service-user not understanding information communicated in BSL				
Possibility of Service-user not understanding information communicated in DBM				
Possibility of Service-user not comprehending information due to total deafness, lack of sight and with no tactile communication skills.				