Additional Support for Disabled Staff and Students: PEEPS and Assisted Evacuation.

Training for the DLOs

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Agenda

- What the law says.
- What we need to do to comply with the law.
- Who needs help - Identifying those who have additional support needs.
- PEEPs.
- What help is required.
- Practicalities of providing the necessary assistance.
- Safety.
- Questions.
The Legal Position

- The University has specific duties with regard to the treatment of disabled people under various statutes including the DDA 1995, SENDA 2001 and the Human Rights Act 1998.

- These laws make it illegal to discriminate against disabled people or treat them less favourably than anybody else.

- The Regulatory Reform Order 2005 imposes a duty to provide safe means of escape for everyone who uses a building.

- Failure to comply with these duties is likely to result in legal action against the University.
What Do We Need To Do?

- Identify those needing help and assess what additional support needs they have.
- Make adaptations to buildings and services to ensure that disabled people have reasonable access and their safety is not compromised.
- Provide appropriate instructions to disabled staff and students so that they know what is required in an emergency.
- Ensure that management procedures are in place to provide assistance to those people who are unable to leave the building by their own unaided effort.
Identifying Those Needing Help

- Staff and student applicants are asked to declare whether they have a disability.
- A questionnaire is sent out to everyone who has declared a disability asking what additional support they require.
- Invite them to visit.
- An assessment can then be made to determine any adaptations that may be required.
- Remember, some people may choose not to declare a disability or may become disabled after they arrive, eg broken leg. We also need to consider visitors.
PEEPs – Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans

- PEEP documents the procedures and action required to ensure safe evacuation.

- HoDs are responsible for ensuring that PEEP documents are in place for their staff and students.

- They are person-specific and need to be completed as soon as possible after the person joins the University.

- If you don’t have any disabled staff or students, it’s a good idea to produce generic plans. These can be used as the basis of your PEEP documents and also for ‘unexpected’ cases and visitors.
The arrangements that are documented in the PEEP need to be discussed and agreed with the person concerned.

Guidance is available on Safety Services Web Pages. This includes pro-formers that will help you to document what has been agreed.

Peeps need to be reviewed periodically. This should be done at least once a year but may need to be done more often if circumstance are likely to change.
What Help Is Required

- The first step in formulating a PEEP is to talk to the person concerned and find out what help, if any, they require.
- The disability that a person has will largely determine the assistance that they require.
- Broadly speaking there are three scenarios that we need to consider:
  - People with impaired sight.
  - People with impaired hearing.
  - People with impaired mobility.
Assisting People Who Have Impaired Sight

- For buildings and areas that a person uses regularly, we simply need to help them to familiarise themselves with the escape routes.
  - Security devices.
  - Route to the assembly point.

- Buddy system – for areas that they are not familiar with or that are visited infrequently.

- Fire Marshals – to take account of visitors who may be in the building.
Buddy System

- If possible try to identify a specific person to act as a buddy.
- Where it’s not possible to identify any particular individual to act as a buddy, encourage people who work in the same area or who are on the same course to assist if they are around when the alarm sounds.
- If the person concerned has full time non-medical help on site then this person will be responsible for providing assistance.
Assisting People Who Have Impaired Hearing

- In areas where a person with impaired hearing works regularly, visual warning devices that are linked to the fire alarm can be provided.
- The larger University buildings are covered by a radio paging system that sends out a message to a vibrating pager if the fire alarm is activated.
- Buddy system in areas that do not have visual warning devices or the paging system.
- Fire Marshals to cater for visitors.
Assisting People Who Have Impaired Mobility

- This category covers a broad spectrum of conditions not just wheel-chair users.
- In many cases people are able to use the stairs in an emergency, albeit at their own pace. Not everyone who uses a wheel-chair is necessarily unable to use the stairs as a last resort.
- If anyone is unable to evacuate then a management system for providing assistance will be required as part of the PEEP.
Assisting People Who Have Impaired Mobility – Cont.

- The best advice that I can give is that, where possible, you arrange for the person to work in areas that they can evacuate from without assistance.

- The University has recently published a directory of accessible pool teaching rooms so that appropriate rooms are booked for students. (Safety Services web pages)

- In many cases it will not be possible to arrange a person’s work areas such that they can leave the building without assistance and so safe waiting areas are required.
Refuges

- Refuges provide a place of temporary safety where a person can wait while the assisted evacuation procedure is being put into effect.
- We can’t leave people in refuges indefinitely. We must have a plan for getting people out, without the intervention of the Fire Service.
- Identifying suitable refuge areas and a means of assisting people down the stairs is part of the PEEP process.
- Refuges also require a means of communication.
Refuge Communication Systems

- In new buildings and those that have evacuation lifts, people requiring assistance can contact the Control Room via the refuge call points.
  - These are located in the refuge areas on each floor level.
- In existing buildings without the above facility we currently rely on a mobile phone call to let us know that assistance is required.
- For all buildings we ask occupants to make a back-up call to Control, especially if anyone is unaccounted for at the assembly point.
EVACUATION REFUGE POINT

PRESS BUTTON FOR HELP

HICKS BUILDING 3
Evac-chairs

- Safety Services have a stock of Evac-chairs for assisting people with impaired mobility. These can be deployed to areas where a need has been identified.

- We also have two hoists that can be used to assist people who have difficulty transferring from their normal chair to the evac-chair.

- If the use of evac-chairs or hoists forms part of your PEEP then department staff will need to be trained to use them.
Evacuation Lifts

- On activation of the fire alarm lifts will automatically return to the ground floor and ‘park’ so they CAN NOT be used after the fire alarm has sounded.

- Anyone who is able to use the stairs to leave the building should do so.

- If the Control Room receive a call for assistance via the refuge communication system then response staff will attend the building.

- If it is safe to do so, the lift will used by the response team or the Fire Service to assist anyone who is unable to use the stairs.
Remember that you will need to make suitable arrangements for everyone who needs help and for all of the buildings that they may need to use.

Buddy system – for areas that they are not familiar with or that are visited infrequently.

Fire Marshals – to take account of visitors: I.E. assist them to a refuge area and summon assistance.
Role Of The Fire Service

- If, when the Fire Service arrive, there are still people in the building who require assistance, it is likely that they will take over management of the evacuation.

- Pass on any details that you have regarding the incident and the whereabouts of anyone still in the building and take any action requested by the Fire Service.

- It is only the Fire Service who can give permission for the building to be re-occupied. Even if you think that it is a false alarm you must wait for the all clear before going back in.
Role Of Fire Drills

- To ensure that procedures are adequate they need to be tested.
- The fire drill at the start of term is used for this purpose and any disabled staff or students who are present are expected to participate.
- Following the fire drill or an evacuation due to fire or false alarm it may be necessary to review our procedures to ensure that any shortcomings are addressed.
Safety

- As with all other fire procedures, your own personal safety is your first priority; nobody is expected to put themselves at risk. Unless a person is in severe and imminent danger, don’t try to carry them down the stairs!
- You are covered by the University’s insurance if you are acting in accordance with the procedures that are documented in the PEEP.
- Remember that the Fire Service and University response staff are on their way and will assist when they arrive.
Every case is different there is no ‘one size fits all’ solution.

Speak to the person concerned as soon as possible, invite them for an information visit, find out what their needs are.

Plan ahead, buildings can’t be altered overnight. Changes to room bookings and management procedures take time to organise.

Review your arrangements periodically to ensure that they are still appropriate.

Help is available from Safety Services.
Questions?

- Please feel free to ask questions now.
- If you think of something later or need help when preparing PEEPs my contact details are:
  - Steve Massey – Fire Safety Adviser
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  - E-mail s.massey@sheffield.ac.uk
  - Or if I’m not around you can e-mail safety@sheffield.ac.uk