

Work Instruction

Asbestos Incident Response

1. Purpose

This document describes the organisational response to any incident involving asbestos-containing materials (ACM) in West Moreton Health (WMH) facilities to reduce an identified risk associated with the inhalation of asbestos fibres.

2. Scope

This document relates to all permanent, temporary or casual, WMH staff including contractors, consultants and students involved in any incident that produces (or has the potential to produce) asbestos fibres in the workplace at WMH facilities. This procedure should be read in conjunction with the [Work Health and Safety Incident Management Procedure](#)

3. Instruction

WMH is committed to controlling the risks associated with asbestos related materials at all facilities by:

- taking a risk-based approach to the management and control of asbestos related materials
- embedding and promoting safety culture and risk assessments prior to undertaking any works
- developing and implementing awareness at all sites in the location of asbestos and asbestos containing material
- undertaking audits by external subject matter experts, evaluating and reporting changes via the S4HANA system
- ensure all workers responsibilities for asbestos containing materials are made clear.

3.1 Principals

This document was developed with the guiding principles:

- accessible asbestos records available at each site
- aimed at reducing the risk associated with asbestos works, removal, etc.
- undergo regular reviews to ensure ongoing safety of asbestos related materials.

3.2 Process

In the event of any incident that releases or has the potential to release asbestos fibres, first consideration should be given to preventing the released asbestos fibres from spreading.

Staff, contractors and visitors should leave the room or area. Anyone potentially contaminated should be quarantined (to avoid spreading fibres further) and immediately undertake a personal hygiene procedure pending specialist advice.

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The Manager of the area should:

- restrict access to the area
- close all windows, doors, etc to the area of the incident
- consider shutting down air conditioning (contact Maintenance Department on ext. 1263, or 3810 1263, or switch for after-hours issues)
- contact the Infrastructure and Assets Project Manager or Maintenance Manager or Nominated Officer – Maintenance Department or switch for after-hours issues
- notify the Work Safe and Wellbeing Unit (WSW Unit).

3.3 Risk Assessment

The Infrastructure and Assets Project Manager or Maintenance Manager, in conjunction with the Asbestos Management Plan's Nominated Officer, will undertake a risk assessment of the incident area and develop a control method to remove the source of the asbestos fibres and repair any damaged surfaces using non-asbestos materials.

Any potential risk from damaged ACM depends on several factors including the type of ACM, the extent and nature of the damage, and how it was caused. All asbestos-related work shall be undertaken using the Work Area Access Permit (WAAP) process.

3.4 Escalation

In the event that damaged asbestos presents any immediate risk to any persons, a CODE YELLOW shall be called and escalated as per the [West Moreton Disaster and Emergency Management Plan](#).

3.5 Reporting

The WSW Unit will report a notifiable event to all relevant parties as per [Work Health and Safety Incident Management Procedure](#)

4. Roles and Responsibilities

| Role | Responsibility |
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| West Moreton Hospital and Health Board | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endorse plans to address Asbestos related materials. |
| Chief Executive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate the expectation that all staff are required to conduct their duties to high professional and ethical standards and act in the public interest. • Assigning and supporting an appropriately experienced unit to undertake the management of asbestos for all West Moreton facilities. • Ensuring nominated responsible officer/s monitor and report any incidents. • Understand facility environments in which West Moreton operates. • Provide assurance to the Board that West Moreton has an effective process in place to manage asbestos related incidents and asbestos related materials. |

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| Director | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures responsible person/unit actively engages with subject matter experts to undertake risk assessments in response to changes to obligations and breaches. • Allocate appropriate resources to enable responsible person/unit to contribute to the development and audit of Asbestos Registers and systems. |
| Responsible Person | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is familiar with asbestos related obligations within their responsibility. • Ensures appropriate and effective compliance controls and reporting mechanisms are communicated, implemented and monitored. • Develops improved compliance controls as required and commensurate to the risk of non-compliance. • Engages and works with the accountable person, subject matter experts and affected roles and units to implement necessary actions in response to change to obligations. • Assists in the development and ongoing maintenance of Asbestos Registers, completion of self-assessments and other assurance activities, including coordinating resources and staff and patient/consumer engagement as required. • Scans the internal and external environments to identify potential threats to West Moreton. |
| Accountable Person | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts as the central coordination point, including implementing risk assessments, and other safety controls. • Monitors compliance with the system. • Establishes, coordinates and prepares reports to ensure the Asbestos Register is accurate. • Provide advice and guidance in relation to asbestos related materials. • Prepares and implements awareness, communication and training initiatives to raise awareness. • Collaborates with relevant units to ensure the safety of contractors, visitors and patients. • Identify and communicate risks in operations. • Ensure breaches are reported to the Responsible Person and OHS. • Where responsible for contractors and outsourcing arrangements, ensure these take into account asbestos related materials risks. • Understand the environment in which they operate, including policy, procedures, work instructions, registers, personnel etc. within their area of responsibility. |
| Maintenance Staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and contractors should be made aware that there is asbestos at the facility they are visiting. • Actively participate in awareness training and refresher training as required. • Escalate concerns, issues and failures to responsible person. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff informed of changes to obligations, policy, procedures and work instructions. |
| Staff | Staff are to place a S4HANA Request for any works required. |

5. Definition/s

| Term | Definition |
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| Accountable Person | A person responsible for oversight, including establishment of appropriate systems, processes or resources to ensure compliance with assigned compliance requirements are associated obligations. |
| ACM | Asbestos Containing Materials |
| Assurance | A positive confirmation intended to give confidence that what is reported may be relied upon. Specifically if it involves an objective examination of evidence to provide an independent assessment on compliance and controls (systems and processes). |
| Non-Compliance | Occurs when West Moreton Health does not comply with a compliance obligation (e.g. breach of State or Federal legislation). This can be the result of an act or failing to act. Refer to Compliance Management FAQ for examples of compliance breaches. |
| Compliance | Outcome of activities undertaken across West Moreton to satisfy/meet its obligations, and is made sustainable by embedding in culture, behaviours and attitudes of staff. |
| Register | Register that identifies the exact location of the asbestos related material. |
| Responsible Person | Nominated senior officer (Senior Maintenance and Facilities Manager or delegate) responsible for monitoring compliance. |
| S4HANA / SAP | SAP S/4HANA is an abbreviation of SAP Business Suite 4 |
| WMH | West Moreton Health |
| WSW | Work Safety Wellbeing |

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

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| Level of risk | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medium |
| What will be monitored | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness and competence. Compliance. Results and recommendation from internal and external assurance activities. |
| How (method) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three yearly audits undertaken by external subject matter expert. Record and action recommendations as required from the audits. Annual review of Policy. Monitoring of asbestos related materials |
| Frequency | Three yearly audits undertaken by external subject matter expert. |


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| Responsible officer | Senior Maintenance and Facility Manager or their delegate, in consultation with key stakeholders including Engineering staff from Infrastructure and Assets. |
| Reporting to | Manager Infrastructure and Assets |

7. Related West Moreton Documents

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| Policy and Procedure Documents <i>Located on the WMH Policies and Procedures A-Z Listing page</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMHHS2015112 Infrastructure and Assets – Asbestos-Containing Materials – Work Area Access Permit Process Work Instruction • WMHHS2017052 Asbestos Containing Materials Work Instruction • WMHHS2019029 Work Health and Safety Incident Management Procedure |
| Clinical Guidelines/Pathways | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil |
| Other | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil |

8. Compliance Requirements and Obligations

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| Legislation and other compliance requirements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of Practice for Management and Control of Asbestos in Workplaces [NOHSC:2018 (2005)] • Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld) • Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 (Qld) • Queensland Government Asbestos Management Policy for its Assets: 2014 • Queensland Government Asbestos Management Policy for its Assets, Implementation Standard: Minimum Requirements for Asbestos Management 2015 • How to Safety Remove Asbestos Code of Practice 2011 Qld • How to Management and Control Asbestos in the Workplace Code of Practice 2016 • Queensland Health Asbestos Management and Control Policy (Policy QH-POL-048:2012) |
| National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards |  1. Clinical Governance |
| Other Standards | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil |

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9. References and Resources

West Moreton Hospital and Health Service Asbestos Management Plan
Workplace Health and Safety Queensland 2016, [Management of asbestos incidents – Guide to agency response and management of events involving asbestos containing material](#)

10. Development, Revision and Approval History

| ID & Version No. | Approval Date | Effective Date | Review Date | Document Custodian / Author | Approving Authority |
|---|---------------|----------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| WMHHS2015111v1 | 01/06/2015 | | 01/06/2017 | Manager Infrastructure and Assets | Executive Director Finance and Business Services |
| WMHHS2015111v2 | 19/03/2018 | | 19/03/2021 | Manager Infrastructure and Assets | Chief Finance Officer |
| WMHHS2015111v3 | 12/07/2021 | | 12/07/2024 | Senior Health & Safety Advisor | Director Service Support |
| Summary of changes | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New (include information/background as to why the document was developed e.g. new treatment for an identified risk) <input type="checkbox"/> Scheduled review, substantial changes including: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scheduled review, changes include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Transfer from Procedure to Work Instruction – Asbestos Containing Material Procedure to be governing document ○ New format ○ Updating policy references <input type="checkbox"/> Scheduled review, nil changes <input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed due to: (e.g. legislative change, recommendations from coronial inquiry/RCA, change in service delivery model, new equipment), changes include: | | | | | |

11. Key Words

Asbestos, materials fibres, incident

12. Appendices

Nil