## MUSCULOSKELETAL DISORDER (MSD) HAZARDS

[Organization Name] must be aware that Hazards related to poor ergonomics must be treated the same as any other workplace hazard. This means they need to be:

* recognized and identiﬁed
* assessed
* eliminated or controlled

Employers who are covered by the (OHSA), and its regulations, have legal obligations to protect workers from hazards due to poor ergonomics, such as:

* musculoskeletal disorder
* visibility
* fall

As an employer, to reduce MSD risk, you must:

* keep equipment in good condition
* provide information, instruction and supervision
* communicate hazards
* take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances
* make sure monthly inspection takes place (if you have more than 5 workers)
* review and comply with applicable regulations

Keep Equipment in Good Condition

Equipment, materials or protective devices that are in disrepair can increase the risk of an MSD.

Under clause 25(1)(b) of the OHSA, employers must make sure the equipment, materials and protective devices they provide are maintained in good condition.

For example:

* wheels on carts are not broken, misaligned, ﬂat, have items caught in them or tangled with debris. This is because wheels in disrepair can increase the push/pull forces required to move the cart
* bearings are properly maintained, otherwise the eﬀort required to move the equipment increases (for example, dumping cement from a cement mixer)
* seats do not have missing or torn padding; otherwise, the amount of whole-body vibration transmitted to the worker may increase
* hand tools are properly maintained; otherwise, the amount of hand-arm vibration transmitted to the worker may increase
* hand tools do not have broken handles; otherwise, contact stress may injure the worker’s hand
* height-adjustable equipment is not broken; otherwise, awkward postures may result
* hoists or mechanical lifts are not in disrepair; otherwise, physical demands on workers may increase
* chairs are not in disrepair; otherwise, the worker may experience poor posture
* keyboard trays are functioning correctly, so the keyboard is at a proper height
* overhead or task lighting is functioning correctly; otherwise, the worker may experience awkward postures or eye strain

Provide information, instruction and supervision

Under clause 25(2)(a) of the OHSA, employers must give their workers information, instruction and supervision to protect their health and safety. This may include:

* safe-work methods speciﬁc to the workplace that target a reduction in MSD risk
* manual materials handling techniques(for example, safe lifting, team lifting, site-speciﬁc lifting, safe pushing/pulling, etc.)
* client or patient handling techniques and use of mechanical lifts and transfer aids
* computer ergonomics
* safe ways of using equipment
* how to recognize the signs and symptoms of MSDs and the importance of early reporting
* how to recognize and report MSD hazards
* workstation setup and work practices that reduce MSD risk

Employers must also make sure that workers are supervised, so they perform the work safely and follow the information and instruction correctly.

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