

Useful links and information on Fire Safety to go with podcast.

This is a specific document on Fire Safety and Risk Assessment in Healthcare premises- **HM Government Fire Safety Risk Assessment in Healthcare Premises (FSIHP)**, available to download at:

from https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/14892/fsra-healthcare.pdf

Not relying on the Fire Service as part of your Evacuation Plan

Pages 30 and 31 of the above document under the heading of **Emergency Evacuation of Persons with Mobility Impairment**, states “*The plan should not rely on fire and rescue service involvement for it to be effective*”.

Refuge Points

FSIHP on pages 75 and 76 one of the bullet points states: “*Where refuges are provided, they should be enclosed in a fire-resisting structure which creates a protected escape route leading directly to a place of safety and should only be used in conjunction with effective management rescue arrangements. Your fire evacuation strategy should not rely on the fire and rescue service rescuing people waiting in a refuge*”.

A refuge is an area where a person in a wheelchair (for example), or with another form of difficulty, may rest or wait in relative safety for a short while, allowing others to use the route normally until assistance is available from appropriate numbers of staff who may use specific equipment provided for the purposes of evacuation ie evacuation chair or resQmat. Where equipment is provided it must be maintained and inspected and staff must be trained in, and practice its use so it can be effectively used during an evacuation.

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP)

A PEEP is a plan for a **person who may need assistance**, for instance, a person with impaired mobility, to evacuate a building in the event of an emergency. The following document on PEEPS from Lancashire Fire and Rescue gives the background, considerations and a template to use. https://www.lancsfireandrescue.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/personal_emergency_evacuation_plans_peeps_.pdf

The government is currently consulting on legislation in respect of PEEPS.

The current HM Government guidance on PEEPs can be found in this document Fire Safety Risk Assessment: Means of escape for disabled people. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/886446/9446_Means_of_Escape_v2_.pdf

Information on PEEPS starts on Page 6 and PEEP templates are on page 44 and 46. The guidance also suggests that a sign should be displayed in reception (see page 48) requesting those with a disability to notify a receptionist on arrival so that arrangements can be made to evacuate them in the event of a fire whilst they are in the building.

Standard Emergency Evacuation Plans

A standard plan is used where there are visitors or casual users of the building who may be present infrequently or on only one occasion. The provision of standard PEEPs takes account of the following:

- the disabled person's movements within the building;
- the operational procedures within the building;
- the types of escape that can be made available;
- the building systems, e.g. the fire alarm; and
- the existing egress plan.

Standard evacuation plans are written procedures that can be used as options for disabled people to choose from. They are held at the reception points within the building and are advertised and offered to people as part of the entry/reception procedures.

We like to call these General Emergency Evacuation Plans (GEEPs) and they can follow the same format as PEEPs but you will hold a range of them for casual visitors with different evacuation needs.

Fire Safety Legislation

The main piece of legislation in respect of Fire Safety is **The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005**, known in brief as the RRO

Fire Risk Assessments (FRA)

The RRO requires a fire risk assessment to be carried out for all non-domestic and some types of domestic properties. It is the responsibility of the appointed 'Responsible Person' or 'Duty Holder' to ensure the FRA is undertaken by a 'competent person' and that the assessment is 'suitable and sufficient'. Where a business employs five or more persons, the significant findings of the fire risk assessment must be recorded in writing. FRAs must be kept up to date and reviewed and updated when numbers of staff change, buildings are modified, new activities under taken in the building, or following an incident.

Testing of Fire Alarms

The RRO requires employers and building owners to maintain and test Fire Alarm equipment. The relevant British Standard with regards to the testing of a fire alarm system is BS 5839-6: 2019 *Fire detection and fire alarm systems for buildings*. In section 25.2 it states that **all fire alarm systems in commercial premises need to be tested weekly**. FSHIP on page 61 also details weekly testing

Fire Evacuation Exercises

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 states that: "*The responsible person must establish and, where necessary, give effect to appropriate procedures, including safety drills, to be followed in the event of serious and imminent danger to relevant persons.*"

The government's guidance on fire safety suggest that Fire Safety Drills should be carried out at least annually **but preferably more frequently**, it is generally expected that best practice is twice a year. British Standard BS 9999:2008 Code of practice for

fire safety in the design, management and use of buildings, states that fire emergency procedures “*should be tested at least once, but preferably twice, in each 12-month period and there should be a test evacuation of the entire building at least once per year*”.

Maintenance and testing

All fire protection installations and equipment should be serviced annually by a competent contractor (fire extinguishers, fire alarms), here is a table detailing what is required:

EQUIPMENT	INTERVAL	ACTION REQUIRED
Fire detection and alarm equipment	Weekly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check for state of repair and operation • Repair or replace defective parts • Test operation, including self-contained alarms and manually operated devices <p>WEEKLY FIRE ALARM TEST</p>
	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service and test by a competent engineer • Clean self-contained smoke alarms and replace batteries
Emergency Lighting	Weekly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check torches and replace batteries if required • Repair or replace defective units
	Monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check all lights and torches for state of repair and correct functioning <p>CHECK EMERGENCY LIGHTING MONTHLY</p>
	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service and test by a competent engineer. Replace batteries in torches.
Fire Fighting equipment, including hose reels.	Weekly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check all equipment for correct installation and apparent function
	Annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service and Test by a competent engineer <p>ANNUAL FIRE EXTINGUISHER CHECK ANNUAL ALARM MAINTENANCE</p>

Fire Wardens

Part 2 of the RRO states that a sufficient number of ‘competent persons’ to assist in implementing preventative and protective measures, including safety drills.....these are your Fire Wardens, and sufficient numbers should be appointed depending on the size of the building, to cover all hours of operation and in suitable numbers to cover for planned and unplanned leave and when appointed wardens are away from the building.