



## Musculoskeletal Disorders and Contract Cleaners

### What are Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs)?



Strains, sprains and overuse problems affecting the body's muscles, joints and nerves

They can include anything from back pain to pain in the hands and wrists

MSDs are the most common form of work related ill health in Great Britain, with an estimated 12 million lost working days each year

### Risks to Cleaners



The work:

- Is demanding and labour intensive
- Is heavy manual work
- Is often time pressured
- Is often done in awkward postures for long periods
- Can involve heavy machinery
- Is done in buildings not designed with cleaning in mind

### Recognising that you might have a problem



- Increase in sickness absence
- Reports of pain and discomfort
- Reports from safety representatives
- Low motivation and dissatisfaction of cleaners, not wanting to do certain tasks
- Cleaners adapting their own equipment
- Cleaners wearing splints, bandages or back supports

### Main Causes of MSDs in Cleaners



- Manual Handling Tasks
- Awkward Postures
- Work Organisation
- Vibrating Equipment
- Accidents



### Managing the Risks



Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended) require you to :

- avoid hazardous manual handling where possible
- perform a suitable and sufficient risk assessment if it cannot be avoided
- reduce the risk of injury as far as is reasonably practicable

## Managing the Risks



### • RISK ASSESSMENT

HSE's Book *Caring for Cleaners* HSG234

Gives good check lists to help you:

- General Equipment
- Maintenance
- Postural
- Workplace and Environment
- Work and Organisation

It also has a Cleaners' health questionnaire to help you identify problems



## Risk Assessment Aids



- HSE Website [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)
- MAC Tool and other practical help
- Leaflet – *Getting to grips with manual handling* HSE Books INDG143(rev2)
- Workplace Health Connect 0845 609 6006

## Problem Solving



Change Equipment



## Problem Solving



Method of Working



## Summary



Having a system in place to look at all operations that could give rise to MSDs that involves:

- assessment of the work, environment and organisation of the work
- training and information

could reduce your sickness absence, staff turnover and provide you with a healthier, more motivated and productive staff