



Quarries National Joint Advisory Committee (QNJAC)

## **Occupational Health**

### ***Information Sheet 1***

***November 2011***

### ***Pre-Placement and Post-Employment Medicals***

Approved by the Quarries National Joint Advisory Committee (QNJAC)  
(Version 1: 2 November 2011)



## Occupational Health Information Sheet No 1: Guidance for Pre and Post Employment Medicals

<p><b>Legal Requirements:</b></p> <p>Regulation 43 of the Quarries Regulations 1999 requires that an employer of a person at work in a quarry must ensure for any work where health surveillance is required by the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 in respect of any work to which that person is to be assigned, that health surveillance must commence before a person begins to carry out such work.</p> <p>In current practice this is normally included in the pre-placement medicals which may also cover other health and wellbeing issues.</p> <p>It may include specific health checks related to the exposures they are likely to encounter in these tasks to ensure their health can be appropriately managed in relation to such exposures. Pre-placement medicals will provide a useful baseline for future health surveillance checks and will inform the employer of any previous occupational exposures and health status on taking up the post. These medicals must be performed by a competent occupational health provider.</p> <p>In carrying out any medicals employers should be mindful of their duties under the Equality act 2010, guidance on which may be found on the Home Office and Equality &amp; human Rights Commission websites (see “Guidance currently available” for links)</p> <p>There is no specific legislation requiring a post employment medical however, the EU Social Dialogue Agreement on “Workers’ Health Protection through the Good Handling and Use of Crystalline Silica and Products Containing It” has the requirement for employers to make available the option for post-employment medical follow-up of employees who have been exposed to respirable crystalline silica (RCS) in the workplace and who have ceased their employment.</p>
<p><b>Why should you read this guidance?</b></p> <p>Pre-placement and post employment medicals where possible provide useful “snapshots” of a person’s health and pre placement checks can provide a base line for future health surveillance.</p> <p>The pre-placement medical checks can be used to determine whether medical conditions exist prior to proposed employment. This is useful for individual risk management since employers may be able to modify an individual’s work activities to prevent further exposure in cases where there are already health issues or potentially to prevent risks to others who may be affected by their work activities.</p>
<p><b>Paybacks/Benefits to the business:</b></p> <p>Benefits to the business:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Awareness and management of pre-existing medical conditions for an employee</li></ul>

- Will highlight to employer any previous occupational exposures and health impact these may have to date
- Compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2004 which may require adjustments to be made to accommodate workers to make them more effective in the workplace.
- Potential for reduced Employers Liability insurance premiums.

**Benefits to the worker:**

- Timely information on health issues affecting them, early detection of occupationally-related ill health to enable remedial actions to be taken.

**What specific activities in the work place are relevant?**

Activities in the minerals industry can lead to occupational exposure to noise, vibration, silica dust, chemicals, gases, fumes, ionising and non-ionising radiation etc. Musculoskeletal injuries arising from manual handling, repetitive work and poor posture (ergonomic considerations) are major causes of lost time.

**Guidance currently available:**

- Occupational Health Management in the Quarry Industry <http://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/meetings/qnjac/qnjac-ohg.pdf> this includes many useful references.
- INDG 304 - Understanding Health Surveillance at Work
- HSE COSHH Essentials G404 "Health Surveillance for those exposed to Respirable Crystalline Silica (RCS)" <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/guidance/g404.pdf>
- COSHH Approved Code of Practice and Guidance.
- EU Social Dialogue Agreement on RCS - [www.nepsi.eu](http://www.nepsi.eu)
- Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005 – Guidance on Regulations
- Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005 – Guidance on Regulations
- Home Office Equalities Act Guidance - <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/equalities/equality-act-publications/equality-act-guidance/>
- Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance on the Equality Act <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/new-equality-act-guidance/>

**USEFUL CONTACTS:**

HSE website; <http://www.hse.gov.uk/>  
 Safequarry website <http://www.Safequarry.com>  
 MPA website <http://www.qpa.org/>

**Current practice available in the industry:**

Pre placement and post-employment medicals usually follow a protocol such as this:

Completion of baseline general health, lifestyle and Occupational Health Questionnaire conducted by a OH Nurse or OH Doctor, which could include:

1. A review of noise exposure, past and present hearing problems.
2. Audiometry tests
3. Vision screening.
4. A respiratory questionnaire.

5. Lung function testing.
6. A skin review.
7. A musculo-skeletal review, particularly for upper limb, spine and vibration disorders.
8. Height, weight and body mass index
9. Blood pressure
10. Urine analysis

During the screening the Occupational Health Nurse can decide if more detailed investigation is required in any area, especially were the proposed activity presents specific risks. E.g. shift work and work in confined spaces

Note: An occupational health provider will consider the need for x-rays at pre-placement and post employment medicals on a case by case basis.

NOTE: It is advised that competent occupational health professionals provide this service. A GP without specialist training in occupational medicine will not be competent for this role.

**Training and Information that you should consider for your workforce:**

The content of this guidance could be used as the basis of a simple Toolbox Talk.

**Key Performance Indicators to consider:**

- % of new starters that have received a pre-placement medical in compliance with company policy
- % of leavers in scope who have been offered a post-employment medical in compliance with company policy
- % of leavers in scope who have received a post-employment medical in compliance with company policy
- Whether a report has been received in the last 12 months from the Occupational Health provider summarising the findings from these medicals

**Note:**

1. For those participating in the SDA for Silica there is biennial reporting and automated calculation of key performance indicators relating to health surveillance.
2. 'New starters' includes existing employees exposed to new hazards.

This Information Sheet has been developed by the Quarries National Joint Advisory Committee (QNJAC) in conjunction with the MPA Occupational Health Working Group to help quarry operators, contractors, managers and others learn how to make health and safety improvements in the quarry industry. This guidance represents good practice which may go further than the minimum you need to do to comply with the law

It has been approved by the Quarries National Joint Advisory Committee (v1 date 2 November 2011.).