

Bethany Care Ltd

Slips, trips & falls Prevention

Policy & Procedure 45

“A little slip at work can have a big impact on your life”.

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Slips, Trips & Falls Prevention

1. Object & Field of Application

- 1.1 This document details the process Bethany Care Ltd (BCL) uses to minimise the effect and frequency of slips, trips and falls.

2. Legislation

- 2.1 Health Services Act 1991, Workplace Health and Safety Act and Regulation 1995.
2.2 Work Health and Safety Act 2011.

3. Statement

- 3.1 Bethany Care understands the need for its staff and clients to operate in a safe threat free environment.
3.2 The service is committed to identifying and treating causes of slips, trips and falls.
3.3 While safety audits are conducted on a monthly basis, all staff have a daily responsibility in this area.

4. Background

- 4.1 Each year more than 13,000 Queensland workers suffer an injury as a result of a slip, trip or fall costing Queensland businesses more than 256,000 lost work days and over \$60 million in workers' compensation payments.
4.2 In addition to worker' compensation costs, there are financial, physical and emotional costs for the injured worker and their family. A workplace injury often affects injured workers' well being by restricting their usual home and leisure activities.
4.3 Simple and cost effective measures can reduce the number and severity of these injuries. This policy aims to provide guidelines to help stop these incidents occurring.

5. Slips, Trips and Falls

- 5.1 Slips, trips and falls can happen at any Bethany site. They can occur at many points, for example, when entering a building, in a kitchen, wet areas like bathrooms or even outside the building.
5.2 There are serious consequences to slips, trips and resulting falls. These can include;
- Sprains or strains
 - Broken bones when trying to break the fall
 - Back injuries due to the sudden and forceful impact during a fall
 - Burns if occurring near hot surfaces, or if the person is handling hot fluid
 - Cuts if it occurring near sharp objects

6. Removing Unnecessary Contaminants

- 6.1 For the purpose of this policy, contaminants can be considered as anything that ends up on the floor. Contaminants can be wet such as water, oil or grease, or dry such as dust, metal shavings, plastic bags or off-cuts. All staff must take appropriate action to remove unnecessary floor contaminants, as they find them, in order to prevent slips.

7. Ensure Floor Surfaces have Sufficient Grip

- 7.1 Floor surfaces require sufficient grip to prevent slipping, especially in areas which may become wet or contaminated. The greater the thickness or viscosity of the contaminants, the greater the slip resistance of the flooring required to protect against slipping. Wet areas should be mopped up and treated as soon as they are discovered.

8. Cleaning

- 8.1 Cleaning affects every workplace and the people in it. Besides regular cleaning programs, every Bethany staff member has a role keeping the work area clear, safe and taking responsibility for spills.
- 8.2 As previously mentioned floors need to be cleaned properly to ensure:
- Contaminants are effectively removed
 - A build up of cleaning product residue is avoided
 - The floor does not become too slippery
 - Floors maintain slip resistant properties (of non-slip flooring).
- 8.3 Prompt attention to spills is vital in order to prevent slips

9. Obstacles & Other Trip Hazards

- 9.1. Trips can often occur due to uneven flooring or cluttered walkways with low obstacles which are not easily visible or noticed. Common examples of low obstacles include trailing cables, uneven edges to flooring, gratings or covers, loose mats or carpet tiles and changes of floor surface level. Bethany staff must take care to remedy or report uneven or cluttered areas.

10. Trip Prevention

- 10.1. The best place to start is with good housekeeping practice. It is vital that this takes place at the respite house.
- 10.2. Ensuring the floor surface is in good order such as being free from holes, uneven surfaces, curled up linoleum or carpet edges. If these exist the matter must be immediately reported or remedied by the staff member.

11. Environmental & Lighting

- 11.1. Poor lighting and distractions such as unfamiliar or unexpected loud noises, or extreme environmental conditions, such as extreme cold or heat, can impact a person noticing slip or trip hazards in their path. Adequate light levels without glare or shadowing is required to highlight potential slip or trip hazards. Other distractions, like those mentioned, should be minimised as much as possible.

12. People & Activity

- 12.1. Work activities, the way work is organised and attitudes to safety can affect the ability to see or think about where they are going. For example, people hurrying, carrying large objects, pushing high trolleys or talking on a mobile phone could contribute to the cause of a slip or trip. Staff should ensure these factors do not hamper safety.
- 12.2. Workers need to be able to maintain their balance when performing tasks and be able to recover if they slip or trip. For example, when handling clients, workers should have a full view of where they need to travel and should also have a free hand to hold onto a rail, if one is available, when walking down steps.

13. Footwear

- 13.1. Footwear plays an important role in reducing the risk of slips, trips and falls. Footwear should be;
- Suitable for the type of work and work environment at Bethany Care.
 - Comfortable with an adequate non-slip sole and appropriate tread pattern
 - Checked regularly to ensure treads are not worn away or clogged with contaminants

END

Checklist for Dealing with Emergency Spills

1. **Assess** the spill size, chemical type and available cleanup equipment. Stop - Think! Do not rush. Carefully plan cleanup.
2. **Consult** the Material Safety Data Sheet for any special precautions and equipment needed for the cleanup.
3. **Evacuate** the immediate area.
4. **Warn** other personnel of the spillage.
5. **Wear** appropriate personal protective equipment.
6. **Clean** up spill using appropriate available cleanup equipment.
 - If the hazardous chemical is in powder form, carefully sweep into a dust pan. Avoid vigorous sweeping or other actions that might generate respirable dust. Contaminated cleanup materials can then be disposed of as chemical waste.
 - After removal of spilled material, if the chemical is soluble in water, the area should be washed with warm, soapy water to remove any remaining residue.
7. **Extinguish** ignition and heat sources.
8. **Prevent** spill from spreading.
9. **Attend** to any persons who may have been contaminated or affected.
10. **File** – if necessary file a formal incident report (RIF Form).