

**What is an exposure control plan?**

An exposure control plan is a document that describes how workers will be protected from occupational exposures such as [hazardous drugs](#) in the workplace. An exposure control plan includes information on the nature of the hazards and the risks associated with exposure, as well as controls such as safe work procedures that the employer will use to protect workers.

The requirements for exposure control plans are described in [sections 5.54](#) and [6.46](#) of WorkSafeBC's *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation*.

**What should my plan include?**

Your exposure control plan is specific to your workplace and must include the following information:

- ☐ Statement of purpose and responsibilities;
- ☐ Risk identification, assessment, and control;
- ☐ Education and training;
- ☐ Written work procedures, when required;
- ☐ Hygiene facilities and decontamination procedures, when required;
- ☐ Health monitoring, when required;
- ☐ Documentation, when required.

**Where do I start?**

The first thing is to identify potential occupational exposures in your workplace, and then conduct a risk assessment to evaluate the risk. In long-term care and community support, you will want to consider the following:

- ☐ Toxicity and potency of the drug
- ☐ Route of exposure
- ☐ Physical and chemical properties of the drug
- ☐ Formulation of the drug
- ☐ Workplace activity (frequency and duration of exposure and alteration of drugs)
- ☐ Other employees in the same work area that may be exposed

*Note: Depending on your workplace, there may be other considerations. This is not an exhaustive list.*

A risk assessment must be conducted by a qualified person. WorkSafeBC defines a qualified person as someone who is "*knowledgeable of the work, the hazards involved and the means to control the hazards, by reason of education, training, experience or a combination thereof*".

The objective of the risk assessment is to determine the job types, tasks, and procedures for which occupational exposure is anticipated and to evaluate the likelihood that such exposure would occur. Some factors that the employer should consider when performing a risk assessment include determining the nature of the hazard, the nature of the exposure, and the risk level.

Steps to consider when developing or reviewing your exposure control plan are outlined below.

Step 1	Identify and assess areas where a potential risk of exposure to hazardous substances exists
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ We have identified and conducted an inventory of all hazardous drugs in our workplace.</li> <li>✓ A written risk assessment has been conducted by a qualified person for the hazardous drugs identified in the workplace.</li> <li>✓ We have identified categories of tasks and procedures that may put workers at risk for exposures (i.e., preparing, administering, cleaning up a hazardous drug spill, etc.).</li> <li>✓ We have identified the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ nature of the hazard.</li> <li>○ routes of exposure.</li> <li>○ signs and symptoms of exposure.</li> </ul> </li> <li>✓ We have considered all job roles in the workplace when assessing the risk of exposure.</li> </ul>
Step 2	Implement hazard controls
	<p>We have considered the hierarchy of controls when taking measures to eliminate or reduce the risk of exposure in the workplace, and we have implemented the highest level of protection first:</p> <p><b>Elimination or Substitution</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ We have evaluated if the hazardous drug(s) can be eliminated from the workplace.</li> <li>✓ We have evaluated if alternative forms of hazardous drugs that have lower risks of exposure can be substituted (where appropriate).</li> </ul> <p><b>Engineering Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ We have implemented engineering controls where appropriate (physical barriers, ventilation, sharps containers, biological safety cabinets and closed system drug-transfer devices).</li> </ul> <p><b>Administrative Controls</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ We have policies and procedures for reducing exposure to hazardous drugs. <i>(examples may include: reducing the number of times hazardous drugs are handled, delivering drugs to point of care in a form that is ready to administer, handling and disposal of sharps, cleaning of spills, handling of contaminated laundry).</i></li> <li>✓ Safe work procedures for all tasks and activities involving handling hazardous drugs have been developed and implemented.</li> <li>✓ We limit access to areas where hazardous drugs are present.</li> <li>✓ We have clearly communicated the rules and guidelines to workers through a combination of training and signage.</li> <li>✓ A policy for protective reassignment has been developed (if applicable).</li> </ul>

	<b>Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ We have identified appropriate PPE to be used to prevent or reduce the exposure to hazardous drugs.</li> <li>✓ We understand the limitations that PPE has in providing protection and how it needs to be used in combination with other control measures.</li> <li>✓ We have trained employees on how to use PPE (donning, doffing), store the PPE when not in use, and clean PPE that is not disposable.</li> <li>✓ If respirators are required, employees have been fit tested within the last 12 months and there is a respiratory protection program in place in the workplace.</li> </ul>
<b>Step 3</b>	<b>Develop policies and written safe work procedures</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ We have a workplace policy relating protective reassignment (if applicable).</li> <li>✓ We have procedures to be followed for employees who are or may be exposed to a hazardous drug in the workplace.</li> <li>✓ We have procedures to be followed if there is a spill of hazardous drug or if a worker believes they have been exposed.</li> <li>✓ We have identified cleaners and disinfectants to be used in the workplace.</li> </ul>
<b>Step 4</b>	<b>Worker education and training</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ We have ensured that workers have been informed and trained in our policies and procedures.</li> <li>✓ We have trained all workers who have the potential to be exposed to hazardous drugs on ways to reduce their risk of exposure.</li> <li>✓ The exposure control plan describes worker education and training and how it will be carried out.</li> </ul>
<b>Step 5</b>	<b>Monitor the workplace</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ We have a plan in place to monitor hazards.</li> <li>✓ We make changes to policies and procedures as necessary.</li> <li>✓ Workers know who to go to with health and safety concerns.</li> <li>✓ When resolving safety issues, we involve employees and the occupational health and safety committee and/or representative.</li> </ul>

*An exposure control plan must be reviewed at least annually and updated as necessary by the employer in consultation with the joint committee or the worker health and safety representative as applicable.*