



British
Acupuncture
Council

iii

The Guide to Safe Practice for Acupuncture Risk assessment

Health and safety: risk assessment

Introduction

As part of managing the health and safety of your business you must control the risks in your workplace. To do this you need to think about what might cause harm to people and decide whether you are taking reasonable steps to prevent that harm; this is known as risk assessment.

A risk assessment is not about creating huge amounts of paperwork, but rather about identifying sensible measures to control the risks in your workplace. If you work as a self-employed practitioner with no employees there is no legal requirement for you to write down your risk assessment, although making some written notes may help you maintain a safe work environment. If you employ five people or more your legal responsibilities increase and you should seek further guidance about what you are required to do.

An acupuncture practice is typically a low-, although not zero-, risk environment. There are still areas where precautionary steps should be taken. The BAAC believes you have a professional responsibility to take the appropriate steps to look after your patients' safety and to remain aware of all relevant health and safety legislation.

The approach you take to health and safety should be proportionate to the size of your business and the nature of your business activity. For most small, low-risk businesses the steps you need to take are straightforward.

How to carry out a simple risk assessment.

There are five steps to carrying out a risk assessment:

- 1 Identify the hazards
- 2 Decide who might be harmed and how
- 3 Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions
- 4 Record your significant findings
- 5 Review your assessment and update if necessary

We have produced the following basic template for you to use based on information taken from the HSE website: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/controlling-risks.htm>

Clinic address being assessed			
Risk assessment carried out by			
Date of assessment		Review date	
Name of person with overall responsibility for the clinic building			
Is there a first aid box?	Yes/No	Where is the box located?	
Is there a health and safety law poster? (n/a for small premises)	Yes/No or n/a	Where is the poster on display?	

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you doing already to control the risk?	Do you think anything else needs to be done to control the risk?	Action by who?	Action by when?	Completed on what date?