



July 2007

**Often there is no incentive to change unless the pain of where you are at is greater than the pain of the change itself.....(Unknown)**

## Hazardous Substances – What must I do?

According to the Workplace Health and Safety Regulation 1997 (s102) an employer must “keep a copy of the MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheet) close enough to where the substance is being used to allow a worker who may be exposed to the substance to refer to it easily.”

An MSDS is effectively a document that states: 1) Whether the product is hazardous, 2) What are the contents of the product 3) What safety precautions should be taken when using the product, 4) First aid instructions.

What is a hazardous substance? The only way to tell if a substance is hazardous is to check the MSDS itself. What this means is you need to do an inventory of what your workers may come in contact with, then obtain a copy of the MSDS. For example if your staff member does the dishes in the client’s home and they use Morning Fresh, they are using a hazardous substance.

This is a big job to identify what your staff may come in contact with and then obtain each MSDS. If you don’t the penalties can be significant in the event of an incident.

*If you wish to have some assistance in complying with the Act then please call us. Our MSDS retrieval service can save you a lot of heartache, time and money.*

I have provided below some general information which you should follow when working with chemical substances around clients’ houses or your workplace:

- **Poisons Information number is 131126**
- Remember, always wash hands before and after use of products.
- If flammable, remove from sources of ignition.
- Always ventilate room before using.
- Ensure nozzle is pointed away from user.
- Avoid skin and eye contact and breathing vapour.

- If breathing stops at any time, clear airways and apply resuscitation.
- Always mop up spills immediately Avoid decanting products into unlabelled containers. The Workplace Health and Safety Regulations also has rules in relations to what labels must contain on a hazardous substance.
- If prolonged use, use gloves and eye goggles and other applicable protective clothing or equipment.
- If vomiting occurs spontaneously, keep head below hips to prevent aspiration.

Our MSDS service can take away much of the heartache associated with managing this process. We will provide you with a substance request form to log what products you require MSDS’s for. We will locate, produce and forward these onto you. We currently manage and maintain an extensive range of product MSDS documentation.

## How effective are your procedures.

Almost all organisations we have walked into have developed their procedure manual in line with some accreditation system or program. Eg. Disability Services Quality System, Residential Aged Care standards, Retirement Village Accreditation Scheme, HACC etc...

I hear more often than not services are becoming resource poor. Not enough staff, time or money. So the pressure is on to use what you have most effectively. We spend so much time working in our systems that we often don’t work on them.

Policies and procedures written around your various accreditation standards are useful for meeting your compliance obligations but how useful are they to you for managing your service, seeking improvements and training your staff.

What is missing? Most services have not worked out what their work flows are. For example, what are the steps to entering a new client into the service? Is the process being used efficient and effective?

One of the ways you might consider to find out is to flow chart what exactly happens now. Can you see improvements in the process? Can you stream line it?

Flowchart your desired process and you now have a useful tool that will help train staff, and assist in making sure it happens the right way every time. To make your flowcharts more useful, map them or reference back to your existing policy and procedure documents.

By doing this you have:

Determined the best way for you to handle a process.

- You have articulated how things should be done in a simple easy to use format that shows the step by step process.
- You have a tool your staff can understand and refer to and can be trained with.

You have your flowcharts referenced to the applicable policy / procedure documents for the necessary detail, which also assists with demonstrating compliance.

If this does not suit, you may wish to consider other alternatives to measure your system performance. This might include the way you perform your internal audits or your use of key performance indicators. What ever you do, remember your policies and procedures are the structure which should shape how you work.



*How you structure your quality management system will determine how effective it becomes.*

# Continued

In these turbulent times, coaches help managers refine their goals and strategies, reassess their assumptions, and develop their leadership style.

Our "Manager Whisperer" program is comprised of two components. The first is an in depth analysis of who you are, your goals and expectations, and defining your development plan.

The second component is an extension of phase one and provides you with regular sessions to interact with your coach. During these sessions, you have the opportunity to refine your skills, ask advice or run through appropriate scenarios. Call and ask for Annie or John.

## A little wisdom

*Choice, not chance, determines destiny.*

*True wisdom lies in gathering precious moments each day.*

*For every minute you are angry you lose 60 seconds of happiness.*

*Treat your friends like family and your family like friends.*

*Take the time to laugh - it's the music of the soul.*

*Tomorrow is not promised to us, so take today and make the most of it.*

## Forgettable facts

*In Los Angeles, there are fewer people than there are automobiles.*

*About a third of all Americans flush the toilet while they're still sitting on it.*

*You're more likely to get stung by a bee on a windy day than in any other weather.*

*Research indicates that mosquitoes are attracted to people who have recently eaten bananas.*

*Penguins can jump as high as 6 feet in the air.*

*A Saudi Arabian woman can get a divorce if her husband doesn't give her coffee.*

*The Neanderthal's brain was bigger than yours is.*

*Donald Duck comics were banned from Finland because he doesn't wear pants.*

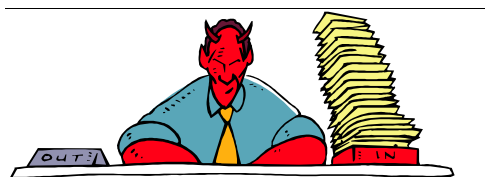
*The average bank teller loses about \$250 every year.*

*In 1980, there was only one country in the world with no telephones - Bhutan.*

*Pollsters say that 40 percent of dog and cat owners carry pictures of the pets in their wallets.*

*Bubble gum contains rubber.*

*The largest pumpkin ever grown on record was 482kg.*



*The 300 page questionnaire about cutting back on bureaucracy*

## What have we been up to recently

- We have continued to support a few local health service providers in the Darling Downs region from an administrative perspective.
- Written applications for the 2007 Aged Care approvals rounds.
- Supported a regional disability service provider prepare for their upcoming accreditation audit.
- Commenced a business case for a significant development for a disability service provider.
- Conducted a significant 3<sup>rd</sup> party investigation for the Department of Child Safety.
- Business Operations Health Check – workshop for an aged care provider.

## Can you take the risk?

Recent events in the aged care industry in Victoria surrounding food poisoning, and gastroenteritis, highlight how vulnerable organisations which care for and/or support people in a community setting can be.

I am often amazed at how relaxed people often are when it comes to some basic concepts in hygiene and safe food handling, let alone how the organisation might deal with such an event. These people have the "It won't happen here" attitude.

As a result of these critical incidents these services have had to endure:

- Significant immediate expense rectifying the issue.
- Incredible damage to their reputation, which could affect their long-term income.
- Increased surveillance from at least 3 government departments / agencies.
- Longer term expenses ensuring such events will not occur again.
- Potential significant increases to insurance premiums.
- Possible litigation and legal costs.

How much does training, self monitoring and risk management planning cost by comparison.

Many community providers do not operate in a residential setting. This does not exclude them from facing many of the same risks.

I like to use the Courier Mail test. If it was to happen would it make the papers? This is a sure fire reason to plan for it not to happen, and heaven forbid if it did, how would the organisation respond.

Recent legislation has forced many organizations to construct a risk management plan. Have you got yours together and are you working to that plan?

Don't be the next organisation I read about in the papers.

Good Luck, Andrew

## Newsletter delivered by Email.

*If you wish to receive our newsletter via email, please email us on:*

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## Care Managers Australia

### Services offered:

- ✦ Community and disability sector Consulting
- ✦ Residential Aged Care consulting
- ✦ Retirement Village consulting
- ✦ Home Care consulting
- ✦ Accreditation support
- ✦ Assistance with policies and procedures
- ✦ Management support
- ✦ Administration / Accounting systems
- ✦ Documents, reports and applications
- ✦ Recruitment
- ✦ Investigations/reviews
- ✦ Risk management planning
- ✦ Emergency response documentation
- ✦ Security reviews
- ✦ Feasibility studies
- ✦ Mentoring
- ✦ Motivational speaking

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*Helping you help others.....*