***Back Pain Management and Prevention Policy***

**Introduction**

We are committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of our employees. We recognise that back pain is a health and safety issue and acknowledge the importance of identifying and preventing the development of back pain.

This policy will apply to everyone in the company. Managers are responsible for implementation and the company is responsible for providing the necessary resources.

**What is back pain?**

Back pain covers a range of conditions that affect muscles, tendons, ligaments, nerves or other soft tissues or joints. Most back pain does not have an identifiable cause and most cases are not due to anything serious.

**Policy**

* On-going risk assessment of all jobs involving lifting or carrying and the training involved
* Regular refresher training for involving lifting or carrying particularly around any new situations that may arise
* Changing the culture to ensure that employees realise that taking regular breaks particularly from desk-based or repetitive work, is acceptable
* The company will provide adequate resources to work towards a healthy workplace
* Ensure that any regular Display Screen Equipment user has a suitable and sufficient assessment of their work station carried out

**Managers**

* Recognise what tasks increase risk of back pain
* Conduct and implement recommendations of risks assessments
* Ensure good communication between management and staff, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes
* Ensure that staff are fully trained on manual handling duties
* Attend training as requested, manual handling and health and safety
* Ensure staff have access to Display Screen Equipment assessments
* Temporary changes in duties and activities to avoid activities that exacerbate back pain such as manual handling or heavy lifting
* Promotion of physical activity via a wellbeing programme i.e. walking, promoting the stairs instead of the lift
* Avoidance of prolonged sitting, access to suitable seating and workstations
* Changing the beliefs from the negative: “Back pain means I have hurt my back” or “back pain needs rest” to the positive: “let’s work together to help you stay active and manage your back pain”.
* If experiencing back pain have regular meetings to consult with the employee and discuss their ability to do their job and any possible changes in their duties

**Employees**

* Follow manual handling/lifting/carrying advice
* Ensure work stations are set up correctly
* Report back pain to your employer and to your safety representative if there is one in your workplace
* Talk to your employer and safety representative about  how your normal work could be done in an improved way
* Your employer may be able to put you in touch with occupational health support. For more information on this please see the [Advice for Employers pages](http://www.hse.gov.uk/msd/backpain/employers.htm).

**Signed by:**

**Managing Director: Date:**

**Employee Representative Date:**