**Emergency First Aid @ Work – Role and Responsibilities** (LO 1.1)

**First Aid duties**

The Health & Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 apply to all workplaces in the UK and require an employer to provide suitable first aid cover in the workplace, including those with less than 5 employees and the self-employed.

Organisations and individuals have to demonstrate a ‘duty of care’ - that is a moral and legal obligation to ensure the safety of people in their charge and for whom they assume responsibility. It is about what reasonable people would be reasonably expected to do at the time.

**Role and Responsibilities of the First Aider**

On this course we define first aid as ‘***’the immediate temporary care for the ill and injured”*** with the emphasis being on caring for the casualty, providing safe treatment and inspiring confidence in the casualty and those around them.

When we consider our role, we talk about the three ***P’s:***

The first P is P for ***Preserve Life*** – and this concerns keeping everyone safe, including yourself. For example if someone slips on some ice in the office carpark then it makes sense to stop others from walking across that area. Never rush into an environment that is clearly dangerous – if it’s too dangerous to approach a casualty then call the emergency services and reassure the casualty from a distance. The last thing you need is to become a casualty yourself!

The next P is P for ***Prevent worsening*** - simple measures like keeping a casualty warm will prevent the increased risk of hypothermia on a cold day. Controlling bleeding will reduce the risk of the casualty developing shock through blood loss. Rolling an unresponsive casualty into a SAP will prevent the airway from becoming blocked.

The final P is P for ***Promote recovery*** – we can promote recovery through practical measures like cleaning and dressing a wound, providing water for someone suffering from dehydration or offering sugar to a diabetic who is hypoglycaemic (low blood sugar level) We can also promote recovery through psychological measures by being confident in our abilities, reassuring and sympathetic towards the casualty. We also promote recovery by making appropriate decisions about the casualty’s care – can we fix the problem ourself or do we need to refer the casualty for medical intervention.

**What about our responsibilities?**

**Behave in a manner that is Reasonable & Practicable** – you will be expected to operate in a manner that is reasonable and practicable eg you are not expected to put yourself at risk in order to help a client eg enter a dangerous area (gas filled room, rock falls, fire, water etc). Where a casualty is in cardiac arrest with facial trauma it would be reasonable for you the first aider to perform compression only CPR and not do rescue breaths if there was nothing available to minimize the risk of cross infection.

**Safety:** You have a responsibility to consider the safety of yourself, the casualty and anyone else in your charge. Don’t take risks and become a casualty yourself or put others in danger. Eg in the outdoors, if a member of your group falls off their bike, manage the risk of further accidents by closing the trail above the scene of the accident and move other group members off the trail. Make the area safe first before you approach the casualty.

**Assess:** You will need to assess the casualty and make decisions about their care and possible treatment. You can probably treat a minor injury such as a cut or burn yourself but for more serious injuries or illnesses your casualty may need to go to hospital or a minor injuries unit.

**Monitor:** You must be able to observe any improvement or deterioration in the casualty’s condition – eg is there any change in their skin colour or the rate & nature of their breathing - and react accordingly eg changing their position, keeping them warm, calling 999 to advise the call operator of any changes.

**Accident Report Forms:** First Aiders must always fill out an accident report form

**First Aid Kits:** It may also be your responsibility to maintain the first aid kit - we will discuss this in more detail later.

**Swift First Aid**

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