

Introduction

Some time ago, the Health & Safety Executive introduced a tiered approach to health surveillance for employees that are exposed to hand transmitted vibration.

HAVS diagnosis requires that an individual's level of assessment changes with findings and as they progress through the system, the complexity of the assessment increases, based on the outcome of the previous assessment.

This systematic approach works well for HAVS and our customers understand the general process.

For this reason, MOHS has adopted a similar "Tiered" system of assessment for most types of health assessment.

Tier 1 Pre-Assessment

This is the first level of assessment.

Ideally, it will be undertaken before an employee has been exposed for the first time. If an employee is already working, then it applies to the first time that an employee is assessed.

It will usually be completed by a Technician or Advisor but can also be completed by the employee, using our online system, as long as no measurement is required (such as a skin assessment).

Where no issues are identified, the outcome from this assessment would usually be "Fit" and the employee will move to routine review.

Where issues are identified, the employee will move on to the next "Tier" of assessment.

Tier 2 Periodic Review

If the Tier 1 assessment finds no problems, employees automatically move to Tier 2 routine surveillance. In most cases, employees will be reviewed annually using the same questionnaires and tests as were used in Tier 1. Employees will remain at this Tier, whilst exposed, unless some problem is found.

As per Tier 1, It will usually be completed by a Technician or Advisor but can also be completed by the employee, using our online system, as long as no measurement is required.

If a Tier 2 assessment yields a new or changing issue, the practitioner will try to identify what factors are to blame. In many cases, these factors are not work related and the practitioner will refer the employee to their own GP or another health professional. Where work is suspected of being the cause, they should gather any information that supports this theory, such as MSDS's, risk assessments & employee medical records and escalate the case to an experienced Advisor for Tier 3 Assessment & Review.

The practitioner has some discretion regarding escalation and may choose, in the case of Spirometry, for example, to temporarily increase the frequency of testing to ensure that there is a pattern of poor results before escalation.

Where there is a dramatic change in measurements, new or changing symptoms, or where there is a pattern of change of three or more consecutive tests, then the practitioner should elevate the issue to the next level (Tier 3) of assessment.

Tier 3 Assessment & Review

An advanced level of assessment or review, undertaken by an experienced OH Advisor.

The practitioner will review all of the information gathered during Tier 1 & 2 assessments and may also undertake further measurements or questioning.

At this level, the practitioner will try to identify likely work-related health issues and confirm that there are causative factors that an employee has been exposed to that would explain and symptoms or unusual readings.

The practitioner may refer the employee to other health care professionals for specific investigations or test and may request information from the employer including risk assessments, method statements and MSDSs.

The Advisor will attempt to identify causative agents. Where evidence supports a work-related cause, the case will be escalated to Tier 4. Non work cases may be referred to an employee's GP.

Tier 4 Assessment, Review & Diagnosis

This is the highest level of assessment, undertaken by an experienced and qualified OH Physician who will review what has taken place before and may also undertake further assessment, measurements and questioning.

At the end of the process, the physician will make a diagnosis and give advice to both the employee and employer regarding future exposure and any other requirements.

Recalls and reviews

In some cases, employees may need to remain at Tier 4 under the supervision of a Physician for a while. This is particularly true for serious or rapidly changing health issues. In other cases, workers with stable symptoms may move to regular Tier 3 review under the care of an OH advisors. Many will revert to routine Tier 2 review and remain there unless further problems arise.

Summary

Level	Conducted by	Intervention
Tier 1	Technician or Advisor	Pre-assessment
Tier 2	Technician or Advisor	Periodic review & initial investigation
Tier 3	Advisor	In depth investigation & review
Tier 4	Physician	Specialist diagnosis & advice on exposure

A copy of this leaflet may be downloaded from:
<https://mohs.co.uk/resources/>

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A Tiered approach to Health Surveillance



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