Working Alone or in Isolation Risk Assessment

Before assigning a worker to work alone, the employer must complete a risk assessment and eliminate or minimize any risks associated with working in isolation. In medical clinics, the primary risk of working alone is workplace violence. To assess risks, evaluate the likelihood and severity of potential incidents.

Working alone risk is determined by the following equation:

Possibility of injury (X) Frequency of exposure (X) Access to help (=) Actual risk

For example

Possibility of disabling injury = 2 Frequency of exposure = 2 Access to help = 1

2 x 2 x 1 = 4 is Moderate risk

Working alone risk assessment – explanation of numerical codes					
Severity of injury		**Frequency of exposure to risk (e.g. workplace violence)**		**Access to help**	
No reasonable possibility of injury.	0	No foreseeable exposure.	0	Always have a reliable way to request assistance (e.g., panic button, clinic phone).	1
Minor injury not requiring medical care.	1	Once every several years.	1	Unreliable means of communication to request assistance (e.g., cellphone, out of clinic work).	2
Injury requiring delayed medical care.	2	Frequent exposure to risk (e.g., monthly).	2		
Injury requiring immediate medical care (i.e., life threatening or disabling injury).	3				

Working Along Risk Rating Matrix

Severity of injury	Frequency of exposure x access to help			
	4	2	1	0
3	**12**	**6**	**3**	**0**
2	**8**	**4**	**2**	**0**
1	**4**	**2**	**1**	**0**
0	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**

After calculating the risk level, use the following table to determine how frequently the worker should check in while working alone.

* Specific time intervals must be established in consultation with the worker.

Risk levels of working alone		Suggested time interval*	Leeway
6 to 8	**high risk**	1-2 hours	20 min
3 or 4	**moderate risk**	4-6 hours	40 min
1 or 2	**low risk**	shift start and end	60 min
0	**negligible risk**	policy does not apply	–

Working Alone Risk Assessment

While working alone or in isolation isn't always hazardous, it can become risky under certain conditions. The level of risk depends on factors such as location, type of work, and interactions with patients. Given the range of possible circumstances, it's essential to assess each situation individually.

Type of hazard	Severity of injury (0 to 3)	Frequency of exposure (0 to 2)	Access to help (1 to 2)	Risk level	Time interval for check-in	Comments
Substances						
Toxic chemicals						
Infectious agents or pathogens						
Other (please list):						
Environment						
Extreme weather conditions						
Other (please list):						
Activity						
Working with patients with the potential for violence						
After hours emergency call-out						
Working isolated from other workers						