

NFDC Mandatory Health Surveillance

The requirement for health surveillance within our industry is both legislative and best practise. The implementation of mandatory Occupational Health will bring countless benefits promoting a healthier and safer industry to work within. It will ensure compliance with H&S regulations and will demonstrate good practice among members.

Every Employer has the duty to assess risks to health and safety, in an industry where safety is paramount, health assessments are often inadvertently overlooked.

There are legal duties to provide health surveillance under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. In addition there are requirements for specific health surveillance under regulations which include Control of Substances Hazardous to Health 2002 and Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005.

Already Employers are obliged to undertake Medical Surveillance under the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012, which has been a legal duty for many years. More recently with the introduction for Medical Surveillance to extend for all operatives carrying out Notifiable Non-Licensed Works (NNLW) in April 2015 all members should now have in place full and completed NNLW medicals for all employees working within NNLW conditions.

Organisations have a duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) to ensure a safe system of work. It is implicit in this duty that the medical fitness of employees is a component of such a safe system of work. As the demolition industry is considered to be a Safety Critical working environment the implementation of Health Surveillance provides a means to satisfy 'Fitness for Work' certification for Safety Critical Work.

As of March 2016 the NFDC have introduced the requirement for Health Surveillance within the NFDC Site Audit Scheme as a Mandatory requirement for all members. Members must be able to demonstrate at the time of Audit a 'Letter of Appointment' or 'Service Agreement' with a Health Care provider outlining as a minimum requirement assessment for:

- **General Wellbeing**
- **Audiometry Screening**
- **Vision Screening**
- **Musculoskeletal Review**
- **Lung Functioning Assessment**
- **Hand-Arm Vibration (HAV) Syndrome Screening**
- **Occupational Dermatological Surveillance**

Upon request evidence of 'Fitness for Work' certificates shall be provided to the Auditor.

Minimum Health Surveillance Standards

General Wellbeing - Although not a legal requirement it is best practice to ensure the Wellbeing of your Employees. It demonstrates commitment and investment towards Employees and in turn promotes motivation and job satisfaction. Typical Wellbeing checks include:

- Height
- Weight
- BMI
- Blood Pressure
- Urine Analysis

Audiometry Screening - Under the Control of Noise at Work Regulations (2005), there is a health surveillance requirement for those workers who are regularly exposed to noise over the upper exposure action value of 85 dB (A).

Benefits of health surveillance programmes means that appropriate and regular hearing tests are undertaken and records are kept to ensure that this aspect of health is monitored, in addition to employees wearing the correct PPE for the tasks they undertake to protect themselves from hearing loss.

Vision Screening – Impaired vision can be detrimental when working within a Safety Critical environment. Occupational health assessments should check peripheral vision, colour vision and eyesight. Further referrals can be made to an optician if required.

Musculoskeletal Review – Although currently there are no legislative requirements for health surveillance to monitor Musculoskeletal Disorders the NFDC believes it is best practice to complete these assessments within regular Occupational Health screening. Symptoms can be monitored as Musculoskeletal Disorder causes problems affecting:

- Muscles
- Tendons
- Ligaments
- Nerves
- Other soft tissue and joints

Damage to these vital parts of the anatomy can cause conditions such as low back pain, joint injuries and repetitive strain injuries of various sorts which can prevent employees from working.

Lung Functioning Assessments - There are multiple respiratory diseases which can be contracted whilst working on a demolition site which can be fatal if the correct precautions are not taken. Occupational Health screening can monitor and detect Health Symptoms for the following commonly contracted illnesses:

- Pneumoconiosis- arising from silica or asbestos exposure
- Occupational Asthma
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary disease

HAV Screening - Hand- arm vibration syndrome can be caused by regular and frequent use of a vibration tool or work process which can cause neurological, vascular and musculoskeletal symptoms. The Occupational Health Standards in the Construction Industry report (HSE, 2007) and the Control of Vibration at Work Regulations (COVWR, 2005) stipulates Employers have the duty to provide Health Surveillance to employees who are likely to be regularly exposed above the Exposure Action Value or are considered to be at risk for any other reason.

Occupational Dermatological Surveillance - Occupational skin diseases can be defined as a disease in which workplace exposure to a physical, chemical, biological or a mechanical force has been the cause of or played a large role in the development of the disease. Occupational dermatitis is caused when someone comes into contact with hazardous agents at work.

Occupational Health Screening will monitor and detect any symptoms associated with Occupational Dermatitis