

## DSE Assessment

A 'display screen equipment assessment' (DSE) is an assessment to minimize the risk of musculoskeletal injuries that may occur whilst at your work station. The DSE may include the laptop, PC monitor, mouse, keyboard, printer, chair, desk, smart phone and any equipment you may use to carry out your daily duties. These regulations have been in place since 1992.



### Why do we need a DSE assessment?

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) have set regulations that, as an employer, you are legally bound to adhere to. The HSE state that 'as an employer, you must protect your workers from the health risks of working with display screen equipment (DSE), such as PCs, laptops, tablets and smartphones'. The HSE further state that these 'regulations apply to workers who use DSE daily, for an hour or more at a time'.

Employers therefore must:

- Undertake a DSE assessment on all workers who use a workstation (in the office or at home)
- Make changes to the work station if the assessment highlighted any risks to the employee
- Provide an eye test if the employee asks
- Failure could result in legal action

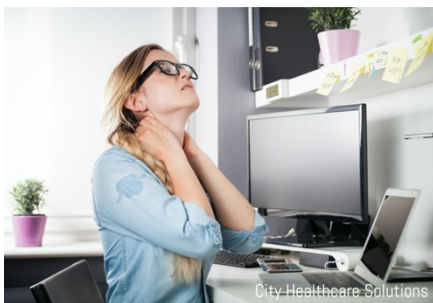
### **What does the DSE consist of?**

A DSE assessment is a checklist that consists of questions about the user (does the user suffer from any issues whilst at the desk or even away from the desk). A practical assessment is then carried out with the user, which consists of how the user is sitting in the chair, assessing his or hers posture at the desk and how the employee uses other items of equipment at the workstation that may increase the risk of MSK injury. Once the detailed checklist is complete, the assessor, employee and usually a HR representative discuss the assessment and what changes need to be made to reduce the risk of MSK injury. These changes may not require new equipment. It may be the case of changing the desk set up, adapting the chair and teaching the employee about correct posture and how to use the DSE correctly.

### **What are the benefits of having a DSE?**

Undertaking a thorough DSE assessment is not only is a legal obligation, but it can provide the employee with a safe and comfortable workstation. The assessment allows the employee to be comfortable at work, minimize the risk of aches, pains or poor posture that could lead to headaches and other MSK injuries. In turn this will allow the employee to be more productive and work in a positive, happy & safe environment.

- Improve the health and wellbeing of employees
- Reduce sick days due to MSK injury – reduces financial burden on the company
- Increase productivity whilst at the desk
- Employees feel valued and looked after
- Reducing claims for poor workstations resulting in injury



### **Quick tips**

- Start with the chair. Raise/lower the chair so your hips are just above your knees. Ideally feet flat on the floor. If your feet cannot reach or they are not flat then you can use a foot rest.
- Make sure you use the backrest to support your lower and mid back. Adjust the backrest so that it is resting on your spine with moderate pressure.
- Move the chair to the desk. Your feet should be on the floor or rest, your back against the backrest and hips slightly higher than your knees. Your elbows should be around 90 degrees to the desk. If the desk is too high or too low, then this may need adjusting.
- Declutter your work station and bring back to the desk the items you use most and have them in reach. You don't want to have to keep reaching for items that could put strain on certain joints.

### **What to do next**

If your employees work with display screen equipment, whether at home or in the office, then you should provide a DSE assessment. Below are our contact details and we will be happy to assist you in any way we can. We are also conducting remote DSE assessments. This includes a thorough history, discussion, picture analysis and a follow up call.

## References

Health and Safety Working with display screen equipment (DSE) A brief guide. (n.d.). [online] Available at:  
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg36.pdf>