

LEGIONNAIRES DISEASE

2020-21




Vista Care Solutions Ltd trading as Sunlight Care Newham. Registered in England. Company No: 11353031.
Registered Office: 3-9 Balaam Street, London, E13 8EB

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AUTHOR: SHAK HABIB
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Mr Shak Habib

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LEGIONNAIRES DISEASE

Introduction

All reasonable steps will be taken to identify potential legionella hazards in Sunlight Care to prevent or reduce the risk of exposure for residents, staff, and visitors.

Legionnaires' Disease

Legionnaires' disease is a form of pneumonia caused by victims ingesting or breathing in legionella bacteria. It can be potentially fatal, and everyone is susceptible to infection. There are a number of factors that increase susceptibility, including increasing age, particularly for those residents who are over 50 years, those with existing respiratory diseases or certain illnesses and conditions such as cancer, diabetes, kidney disease, alcoholics, smokers, and those with an impaired immune system. Victims often feel confused and run high temperatures, many developing acute septicaemia.

Legionella bacteria can grow in recirculating hot and cold-water systems in buildings and can cause infections, particularly when released as a spray, such as in a shower.

Since legionella bacteria are so common in our environment, they cannot be prevented from entering water systems, but taking adequate precautions can reduce the risk of an outbreak developing.

Safe Water Systems

Sunlight Care will provide a safe and healthy environment for its residents, employees, and visitors, and this extends to the management and maintenance of a safe water system.

The following will be applied:

1. The management and maintenance of the water system is the responsibility of a named who shall ensure compliance with this policy and best current practice. The system shall be assessed and evaluated to ensure that there is a low risk to residents, staff, and visitors and others who use hot water in Sunlight Care.
2. Temperature controls and thermostats will be used to control and limit the temperature of the hot water used in Sunlight Care. Hot and cold water systems should be maintained to keep cold water, where possible, at a temperature below 20°C, and stored hot water at 60°C and distributed so that it reaches the outlets at 55 °C within one minute.
3. Pipework will be inspected for corrosion.
4. Water systems will be monitored, maintained and checked to ensure that the system is microbiologically safe.
5. Records shall be kept of the actions taken to ensure and maintain all water systems.

Control of Exposure

To establish if the circulating hot water or the distributed cold water is under control, samples will be taken regularly from separate hot and cold-water outlets which are not blended. This will ensure the sample is representative of the water flowing around the system and not just of the

area downstream of the mixing valve. The taking of samples and the results obtained will be recorded and analysed.

People exposed to significant occupational risk of infection will be advised about the nature of the risks and the means of controlling exposure. Staff should report any relevant symptoms that may indicate a possible infection.

Action in the Event of an Outbreak

The primary concern of Sunlight Care is to ensure the protection of susceptible residents. Any detection of legionella will be investigated and, if necessary, the system resampled to aid interpretation of the results in line with the monitoring strategy and risk assessment.

There will be an immediate review of the control measures and risk assessment carried out to identify any remedial actions, including possible disinfection of the system. Retesting will take place a few days after disinfection and at frequent intervals thereafter until a satisfactory level of control is achieved.

If there is any outbreak of legionella the residents and their relatives will be informed as will the Local Authority, the Care Inspectorate and all other relevant bodies. Sunlight Care will respond positively to all guidance and advice it receives, and act promptly to remove the risk.

Selection, Training and Competence of Staff

Persons carrying out control measures associated with the management of legionella will receive appropriate in-depth training, so they are able to perform their duties competently.

Risk Assessment and Analysis

Sunlight Care will carry out a risk assessment to identify and assess whether there is a risk posed by exposure to legionella from the hot and cold-water system or any work associated with it.

The risk assessment will consider all aspects of operation of the hot and cold-water systems and while there will be common factors, the individual characteristics of each system will be taken into account.

The periods of operation, maintenance, treatment and subsequent management of each individual aspect of operation will be reviewed and validated to ensure Sunlight Care's procedures are effective.

There will be an assessment of the competence of those associated with risk management, including their training records. The roles and responsibilities of any employees, contractors and consultants employed to manage and maintain the hot and cold-water systems will be reviewed regularly.

There will be an assessment of the validity of the schematic diagram of the system, which will include all parts of the system where water may be used or stored.

There will be a regular examination of tanks for configuration, flow pattern, protection against contamination, materials used in the tanks, the condition, the temperature, and the size in comparison to water consumption and cleanliness or contamination.

There will be an assessment of the potential for the water system to become contaminated with legionella and other material.

Sunlight Care will consider the effectiveness of control measures, such as the chemical and physical water treatment measures, the disinfection and cleaning regimes, any remedial work and maintenance carried out, the evidence of corrective actions being implemented, and the evidence of proactive management and follow-up of previous assessment recommendations or identified remedial actions.



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