

Share with Pride

Fatigue management when
on night-shift on-call duty



Main effects of fatigue

- Find it hard to concentrate, make clear decisions or take in and act on information
- Have more frequent lapses of attention or memory
- React more slowly (for example, to hazards arising in the workplace)
- Make more errors
- Occasionally fall asleep at work
- Have little motivation or interest in work
- **Increased risk of being involved in an accident, particularly when driving**

How to recognise when you're fatigued

Likely level of fatigue	Signs / symptoms
Early warning signs of fatigue which should prompt people to look out for more conclusive evidence of fatigue	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fidgeting• Rubbing the eyes
Signs of moderate fatigue suggesting performance is being affected. Take these seriously - it is not necessary to fall asleep to make a critical error	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Frequent yawning• Staring blankly• Frequent blinking
Signs of severe fatigue. Liable to brief uncontrollable “micro-sleeps”, risk of errors very high.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nodding head• Difficulty keeping eyes open & focussed• Long blinks

Issues with being on-call

- Reactions are slower when you have just woken up potentially leading to poor judgement of situations
- Subconsciously listening out for a ringing phone inhibits proper sleep
- Interruptions lead to broken sleep – which can be as disruptive as no sleep
- Being on call can disrupt others in your household

How to manage fatigue

- Have a robust on-call rota in place allowing staff to plan their diaries in advance
- During on-call week switch to working a night shift pattern
- Organise diaries to avoid meetings and other appointments during the on-call week
- **Arrange site visits and safety tours during on-call week giving valuable opportunity to visit site and engage with staff**

How to manage fatigue

- Set out-of-office on your email advising people that you are on-call working night shift hours and will be unable to respond in normal office hours
 - Agree with line-management a nominated deputy to look after your day job
 - **RESIST TEMPTATION TO CARRY OUT NORMAL DUTIES AND & BE AVAILABLE DURING OFFICE HOURS**
- Ensure adequate rest period at shift switch over points