

Medical gas safety training

It is BOC's policy, as a minimum, to follow and recommend the guidelines of the NHS HTM 02-01 (Health Technical Memorandum), it is clear from the document that training has to be undertaken formally, regularly and recorded.

Why do staff need training in medical gases and safety?

- **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974**
"It is incumbent upon both owners and occupiers of premises to ensure that there is a management regime for the proper... Operational management of plant, equipment and systems."
- **Management of H&SAW Regulations 1992**
"A systematic assessment of risks in relation to the health and safety of their employees and others arising from work activities."
- **Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1992**
The aim of these regulations is to ensure safe work equipment and safety in its use. It includes "any machine, appliance, apparatus or tool", and clearly covers medical gas pipeline installations and equipment."
- **Control of Substances Hazardous to Health**
"The specific responsibilities for employers include assessment, protection and control, monitoring, health surveillance and information and training."
- **Pressure Safety Systems Regulations 2000**
Any management regime that aims to control work related risks and ensure safe working practices, first of all needs to identify the training needs and then instigate a programme of training delivery, monitoring and control.
- **Healthcare Technical Memorandum 02-01 Part B Section 7**
"7.3 It is essential therefore that personnel at all levels have a sound general knowledge of the principles and functions of MGPS1."

All of the stakeholders in the delivery of medical gas to the patient have their individual responsibilities as defined by their own operational policy, and therefore need training specifically in those duties.

Other specific paragraphs that need highlighting are:

"7.5 & 7.6 A training programme should be established for all staff responsible for MGPS. All training should be recorded and reviewed regularly."

7.7 The Executive Manager should ensure that all estates/nursing/medical staff have received this training before using the MGPS and that refresher courses are arranged appropriately.

- **Healthcare Technical Memorandum 02-01 Part B Section 7**
Any veterinary nurse or surgeon that plugs a flow meter into an outlet or uses a medical gas cylinder is using the MGPS. With regard to cylinders being used with patients, the relevant elements relating to this practice are:

Safety – main principles

8.18 "The main hazards associated with gas cylinders are: Careless storage, handling, dropping or impact can cause physical or personal injury. These hazards should be minimized: by the adoption of safe operating practices;"

Handling of cylinders

8.85 "Cylinders can be heavy and bulky and should therefore be handled with care only by personnel who have been trained in cylinder handling and who understand the potential hazards."

BOC would strongly recommend that medical gas safety training is undertaken on a regular basis, and in accordance with the best practice guidelines contained within HTM 02-01.

Our partnership approach not only achieves the requirement of your practice but also creates the foundations for you and your staff to ensure your own safety and the continuity of a safe system of life support to your patients.

1MGPS = Medical Gas Pipeline System.