

5 STEPS TO RISK ASSESSMENT

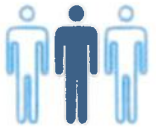
How Do You Do A RISK ASSESSMENT?



1

IDENTIFY THE HAZARDS (SARS-CoV-2)

One of the most important aspects of your risk assessment is accurately **identifying** those activities that have the potential to cause harm from exposure to SARS-CoV-2.



2

DECIDE WHO MIGHT BE HARMED AND HOW

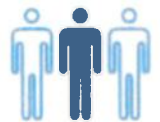
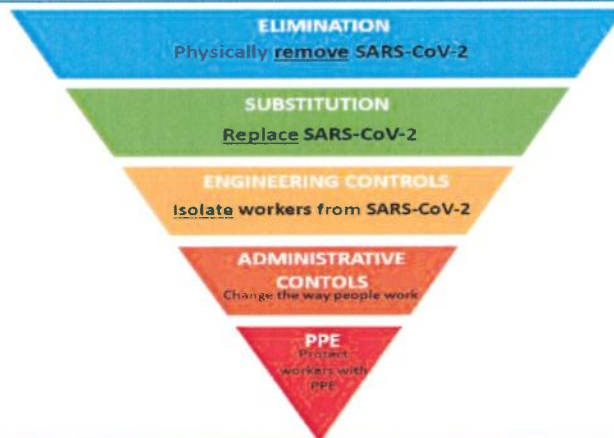
For each activity you need to be clear about **who** might be harmed. It will also help you identify the best way of characterising and controlling the risk.



3

EVALUATE THE RISKS AND DECIDE ON CONTROLS

Evaluate the risk and its impact on workers and the organisations by determining the **likelihood** and **consequence** of exposure to the SARS-CoV-2 and the consequence. For the likelihood, consider how often and for how long the worker would be in contact with the virus, and for consequence consider the severity of potential harm to the worker from the virus (mild versus severe symptoms like pneumonia). Decide on preventive action by using the hierarchy of controls to address and prioritise each risk.



2

RECORD SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS

Make a record of your significant findings and keep for **40 years** as per legal requirement.



3

REVIEW YOUR ASSESSMENT AND UPDATE IF NECESSARY

The risk assessment is a **living document** and must be kept current and regularly reviewed to ensure change is managed and controlled. It must be accessible to all workers and relevant authorities when requested.



4



2



3



4

APPLYING THE HIERARCHY OF CONTROLS FOR COVID-19

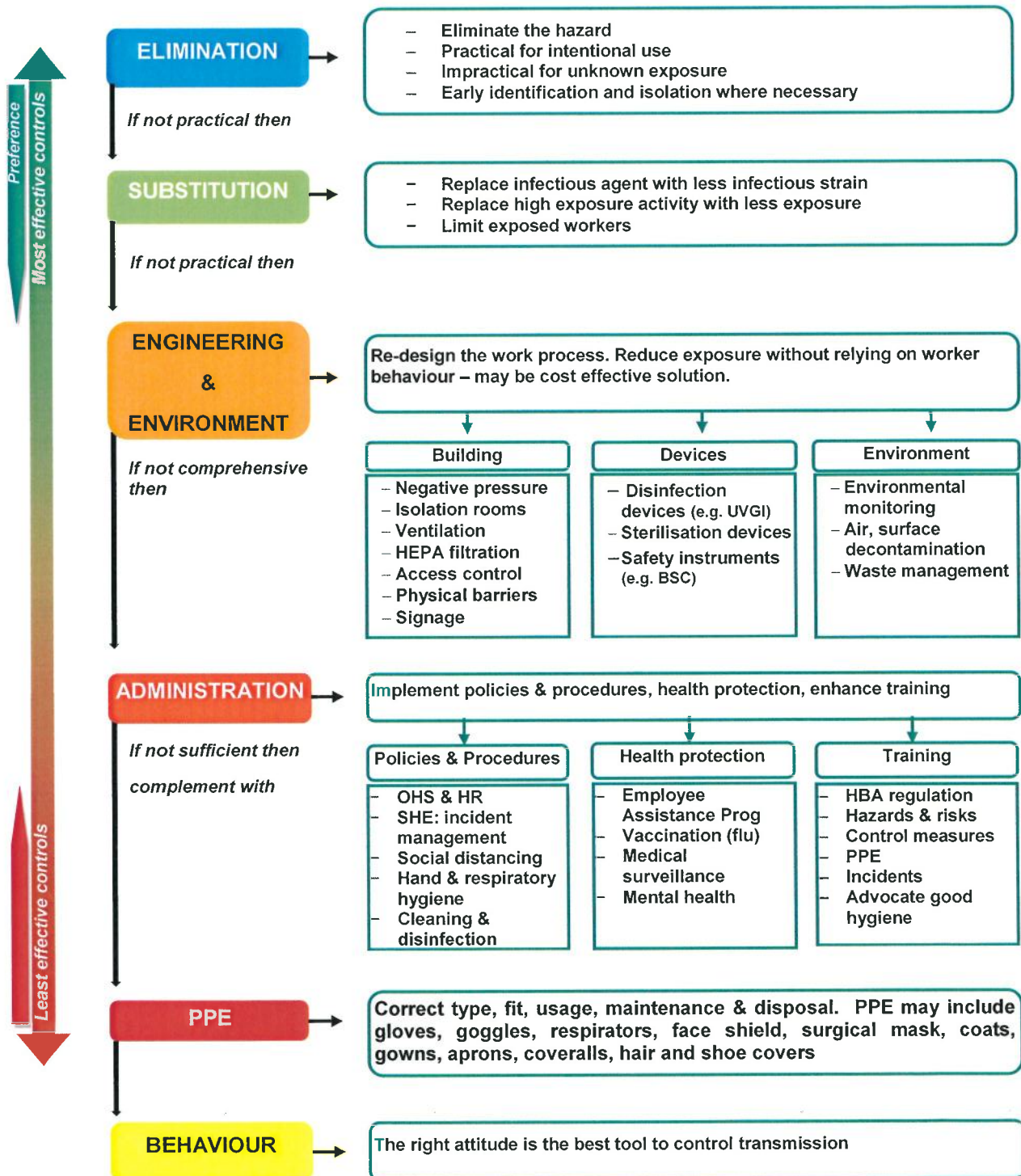


Figure 1. Flow diagram illustrating the fundamental pillars of the hierarchy of controls and possible recommendations.

RISK ASSESSMENT TOOL

Before completing this risk assessment please see guidance notes in section A – C below. Actions should be taken based on the risk score. Assign a priority (very high, high, medium or low) based on existing and required control measures, in consultation with your supervisor or relevant committee.

PART I	General aspects of the work environment and duties or activities of the worker		
COMPANY:	XYZ retail store	DATE OF ASSESSMENT:	13 April 2020
ASSESSOR NAME:	Joe Sopp	APPROVED BY:	Health & Safety Rep
SIGNATURE:		SIGNATURE:	
SCOPE OF WORK:	Assist customers with check-out process.		
REVIEW DATE:	Every two (2) years, after reportable incidents or change in scope of work. Next possible date: 13 April 2022		

PART II		LIKELIHOOD OF EXPOSURE TO SARS-CoV-2		
CONSEQUENCE OF EXPOSURE TO SARS-CoV-2	Unlikely Highly improbable	Possible May be experienced once every year by an individual	Likely Likely to be experienced once or twice a year by an individual	
Severe Fatal or permanent disability	Medium	High	Very high	
Moderate Medical attention >14 days and complete recovery	Low	Medium	High	
Negligible Near miss or unlikely to happen	Very low	Low	Medium	
Keep monitoring the process	Keep the process going, but monitor regularly and consider a control plan possible	Investigate the process and implement controls immediately	Stop the process and implement controls	

PART III									
Identification of risk and proposed preventative measures to reduce risk									
HAZARD	WHO MAY BE AT RISK	TASK or ACTIVITY	ROUTE OF EXPOSURE	HEALTH EFFECTS	FINAL RISK LEVEL = C x L				
					EXISTING CONTROL MEASURES	PROCEED WITH EXISTING CONTROLS			
EXAMPLE: SARS-CoV-2	Cashier	Ring up sales, bagging items, requesting prices, handling nose payment/cash	Contact: mouth, eyes, COVID-19	Training, surgical mask, hand washing	YES	NO	ADDITIONAL CONTROL MEASURES Plastic screen	ACTION BY Facilities manager	DUE DATE 20/04/20

KEY: C – consequence (severe, moderate, negligible); L (unlikely, possible, likely)

DOWNLOAD DOCUMENT HERE: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1XVE8f1ZZj0tk1a_HwL0jbiGano_KnYz1aoCImYIsZs/edit#gid=0

A. RISK CHARACTERISATION

This is a process of understanding the nature of the hazard and determining the level of risk to exposed persons. Knowledge about the outbreak and virus is still evolving and thus it is important to keep updated with information from reliable sources like the National Department of Health, NIOH, NICD and WHO. Therefore, once a hazard like SARS-CoV-2 has been identified, the likelihood and possible severity of COVID-19 need to be assessed before determining how best to minimize the risk. The analysis includes an estimation of risk, and provides a basis for risk evaluation and decision about controlling the risk. Key points to consider when characterising the risk include:

- Possible sources of exposure, duration (minutes or hours per shift) and frequency (times per day, shift, week, month, year) of exposure, classification of agent (currently class 3), reservoir of the agent, stability in the environment, aerosol generation or splatter, transmission route and health effects.
- The actual and potential exposure of workers (i.e. how many workers may be exposed, what that exposure is or anticipated, individual susceptibility and how often they will be exposed).
- Work environment such as location of the work/task/activity carried out (e.g. indoors, outdoors, process plant, waiting area), layout or design of the workspace, condition of the facility.
- Any possible interactions with other activities in the area and if the task could affect others (e.g. cleaners, maintenance workers, visitors, etc.).
- The education, training and skill of workers that may be exposed.

B. RISK ASSESSMENT MATRIX

The risk assessment matrix is the tool which allows assessment of the risk to the business from each identified hazard which could have a significant impact on the health of the workforce and the reputation of the company. Ranking or prioritizing help to determine which risk is the most serious (based on likelihood and consequence of risk) and to control first. Employees who do the same job may have different exposures due to job profile, posture, working style, personal hygiene etc and exposure is controlled by considering these factors.

The process of ranking requires objective judgement and tolerance of risk. A risk matrix or scoring system can be helpful when evaluating and ranking the risk (Part III above). Practicality is needed when applying the likelihood categories. A detailed review of preventive controls only apply if the risk is medium, high or very high. Low risks are managed for continuous improvement through standard procedures.

C. RISK CONTROL THROUGH THE HIERARCHY OF CONTROLS

The employer has a duty of due diligence and is responsible for taking all reasonable precautions, under the particular circumstances, to prevent exposure in the workplace. Risk control may involve monitoring, re-evaluation, and compliance with the decisions taken. The hierarchy of control should always be considered when assessing the effectiveness of control. The higher in the hierarchy, the more effective the control usually is. Elimination of the hazard is always the preferred control however not possible for corona virus, and PPE being the least effective control as it is dependent on the user's behaviour. The need for PPE must be informed by the risk assessment. However, a combination of controls may be required to get the best results. The types of control vary in their effectiveness according to the control hierarchy. There could also be significant running costs with controls lower in the hierarchy such as personal protective equipment. An evaluation should be done to confirm if the hazard has been eliminated or if the risk is appropriately controlled. Ongoing or periodic monitoring should be done to ensure that the control(s) remain effective. It is important to keep documents or records detailing the process used to assess the risk, outlining any evaluations, or detailing how conclusions were made.

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS WHEN INCLUDING COVID-19 IN YOUR RISK ASSESSMENT

- Each hazard (e.g. SARS-CoV-2, TB) should be presented separately taking into account the interactions between the different risk factors identified.
- It is also important to check that the use of disinfectants to reduce exposure to coronavirus does not increase the risk of chemical exposure to employees.
- Individual susceptibility to health risks varies from person to person, based on their heredity, age (young versus elderly), sex, personal habits (smoking), life history to date, the state of their health at the time and other unclear factors.
- When assigning priority, other factors may need to be considered, for example, urgency, feasibility/sustainability of risk control measures, delivery and installation time and training availability.

NOTE: COVID-19 is emerging and knowledge of the disease is changing and growing regularly. It is imperative that you keep abreast of new knowledge to ensure that your risk assessment remains valid.