



The Role of AP(D) Guidance document for IHEEM Authorized person – Decontamination

This procedure outlines the role and needs of an AP(D) as defined in the NHS guidance documents as issued throughout the United Kingdom to date. The attached interview guidance and question format is designed as a common standard of the process as to be used by the IHEEM registered AE(D)'s.

At this stage, the Registration Board have discussed the methods and need for this paper and procedure. It is the responsibility of each individual AE(D) to ensure due process is carried out, and that the methods given in the interview format is followed as best as possible. There will be instances where deviations are undertaken depending on the individuals and organisations involved. These should be recorded as an extension of the papers provided.

It is the responsibility of each AE(D) to keep a record of the AP(D)'s that they have recommended for appointment.

These appointments are based on each candidates job responsibilities in that particular organisation, experiences, equipment experiences and any educational courses undertaken or recommended to be undertaken by the AE(D) in question.

The role period will be given on a certificate with the dates and time of operation clearly stated with a maximum of three years before re-assessment.

Authorized Person (Decontamination)

The AP(D) will be an individual possessing adequate technical knowledge and having received appropriate education and training, appointed in writing by the Designated Person of the Health Trust/ Board or organisation in conjunction with the advice provided by the AE(D)). The locally appointed AP(D) will be responsible for the practical implementation and operation of their management's safety policy. This will include the engineering aspects and procedures around the decontamination equipment within their own organizations.

Guidance is given in the HTM 01.01 Part A.

Devolved Administration guidance should be used as required

The Role of the AP(D)

The AP(D) should be able to undertake the safe and effective management of the engineering aspects of the service.

The role of AP(D) is intended to provide the organization with an individual who, as part of the management infrastructure, will provide day to-day operational management responsibility for the safety of the system. This should be an internal appointment within the organization. It is, however, recognized that in some organizations there are so few items of decontamination equipment in use that a service provided by a third party may be adequate. In most organizations, the role of AP(D) would only be one of a number of areas of similar responsibility for the individual(s) concerned. However, any additional responsibilities should not reduce the importance of the role nor impair the ability of the AP(D) to carry out his/her duties effectively.

Where the scope and range of services dictates, healthcare organizations may wish to consider the appointment of more than one AP(D) with specific responsibilities or duties. This will ensure that appropriate cover is provided.

In these circumstances the organization could appoint a senior AP(D) or operational manager who is the core of responsibility. In any event, organizations will need to ensure that cover for this role is available during the absence of the AP(D) due to annual leave, sick leave etc. Larger organizations may be able to warrant the appointment of an AP(D) dedicated full-time to the role.

Advice should be taken from the appointed AE(D).

Note - If the estates role[s] are contracted out, it is recommended that the AP(D) function remains the responsibility of the healthcare organization and Health Board / Trusts or Healthcare organisations.

It is recommended that the AP(D) reports professionally to the Designated Person [ref; HTM 01.01 Part A].

All appointments will be kept on a register by each AE(D) for open audit as required. This position(s) will be monitored by the AE(D) on an annual basis via audit of the logs and reports available in the prescribed decontamination areas. Plus a personal review of the activities, CPD logs with any designated topics and developments.

Responsibilities

The AP(D) will also be responsible for:

A clear knowledge of all decontamination equipment installed and used within the Health Board or Trust establishments..

An understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the other Health care professionals working within the Health Board /Trust or organisation, These professions could be working in surgical directorates, sterile service departments, operating theatres, endoscopy, clinics and the community. This will include directly working with decontamination leads, SSD managers and Infection Prevention officers.

The AP(D) should manage or inspect the permit-to work system within each relevant facility and departments that include decontamination equipment and plant.

Equipment under the role

An asset register, and testing programs should be maintained of the type equipment in use, and logged by the AP(D) – such as;

- Porous load sterilizers
 - Washer disinfectors
 - AER's
 - Ultrasonic baths
 - Bench top autoclaves
 - Bench top washer disinfectors
 - Laboratory sterilizers
 - Pharmaceutical sterilizers and washers
 - Gas sterilizers [gas plasma, EO etc]
- the engineering management of decontamination equipment - site specific only;
 - line management and/or appointment of the CP(D)s on each site or organization;
 - the safe and effective systems of work for all installed decontamination equipment within his/her area of responsibility;
 - the acceptance criteria for operational and performance testing as decided with the relevant users of all installed decontamination equipment;

- liaison with the AE(D), Decontamination Lead and other interested professionals;
- authorizing the use of decontamination equipment after major repair or refurbishment and after quarterly or annual tests;
- operation of the permit system – *[if applicable to the Health board or department policies]*
- ensuring the continued local registration of the CP(D)s, as appropriate;
- liaising with the User, and other technical support personnel, to enable them to discharge their responsibilities for management of decontamination effectively.

Qualifications

The AP(D) as specified in the HTM, should be qualified to at least Higher National Certificate (HNC) level, or *equivalent* in an engineering discipline. He/she should have knowledge of the specific equipment installed onsite or within their Health Board or Trust, and not simply a generic overview of decontamination equipment. The AP(D) should have received appropriate training and be conversant with periodic testing.

He/she should have completed an accredited course for CP(D)s and successfully passed the examination.

Courses undertaken at Eastwood Park or equivalent must be presented as CPD on testing regimes.

These could be quarterly or annual test courses on porous load or bench top sterilizers, washer disinfectors and AER's.

CDP logs are also part of the responsibility of this role, and it is a requirement that such a log is kept and maintained to prove consistent updating and learning of the topics relevant to the post.

It is recommended to attend a relevant AP(D) course as a requirement of the post and should be undertaken within a maximum of a 18 month period from the date of the appointment.

Other previous courses, such as test person courses will be taken into account, this will depend on how each person or structure is to be adopted.

In some circumstances, depending on local needs, the AP(D) can perform the role of the CP(D) – subject to the necessary skills, education and experience. However, the reverse cannot apply.

Procedures

- Assess the proposed candidate, attend site and have an informal interview to see if the nomination is appropriate
- Request the Healthcare Organisation for a senior management representative to attend the formal interview for them to make the appointment on the AE(D)'s recommendation, or further experiences are required.
- Set dates.
- Interview and make the formal recommendations.
- Set parameters of responsibilities and then issue the letter and certificate.
- Keep a local register.

General notes for the AE(D) during this procedure

- It is recommended that the AE(D) carrying out this interview should keep a competency matrix as used for the proposed AP(D) as a matter of record for the recommendation of the appointment.
- There will be occasions when the assessing AE(D) may have to use their instinct and experience to make a professional judgement if required. This would be the case if the candidate was not known to the AE(D) for example. This would be the case if the experience level was not sufficient, but the paper work and courses were more than satisfactory. [or visa versa]
- In the above, the AE(D) can recommend the appointment with conditions applied such as attending various courses or working with other professions to view and understand their work and standards.
- Ask questions around fault finding/investigations/problems in working in these areas to test their depth of knowledge.
- A 70% pass mark area should be utilized for the assessment.
- The AE(D) in question should review these appointments on at least an annual basis.
- The attendance of a neutral third party should be allowed to be present if it was deemed a need for the candidate who may have a problem on their site with senior management and any conflicts of interest declared.
- The AE(D) could outline the benefits of IHEEM and seminars/journal and the AE(D) framework procedures if deemed progression for that candidate. Membership could be recommended to ensure we can progress the roles for the future.