

# NHS Trust fined after it failed to manage hand-arm vibration risks

- NHS Trust fined £40,000 after several employees developed serious and irreversible hand-arm vibration-related conditions.
- The court heard how failures to assess and control vibration exposure left staff at risk of lifelong ill health.
- One long-serving employee described losing her career, independence and financial security as a result.

An NHS Trust has been fined £40,000 after several employees were diagnosed with Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS) and Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS), following prolonged exposure to vibration from work equipment.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) began an investigation into Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust after an employee was diagnosed with HAVS – a serious, lifelong condition characterised by persistent numbness and tingling in the fingers, reduced sensory perception and impaired manual dexterity.

The investigation found the Trust failed to carry out a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks posed by the use of vibrating tools. There were no records to demonstrate the level of vibration exposure employees faced, and the Trust also failed to eliminate exposure or reduce it to as low as reasonably practicable.

also, It became clear that employees had not been provided with suitable and sufficient information, instruction or training about the risks associated with vibration exposure.

HSE also identified that the Trust had failed to report that two other employees had been diagnosed with HAVS and that one employee had been diagnosed with Carpal Tunnel Syndrome (CTS).



Sally Elliott worked in the plaster-cast department for more than 25 years

One affected employee, Sally Elliott, who worked in the plaster-cast department for more than 25 years, described how she was never warned about the risks of vibration exposure.

"I never, for one minute, suspected that the issues I was experiencing were being caused by the tools I used in my workplace," she said.

"I was never given any information on the risks of HAVS and I knew nothing about the potential symptoms."

She went on to explain how her symptoms gradually worsened, affecting both her work and everyday life:

"Every aspect of daily life is impacted due to the numbness, weakness, pins-and-needles in my fingers and hands. From getting up to going to bed anything that I need to do with my hands is affected."

After being diagnosed with advanced stage 3 vascular and sensorineural HAVS, she was no longer able to continue in her role and has remained off work since October 2023.

"I gave my all to Chesterfield Royal Hospital and enjoyed my job," she added.

"I took seriously my duty of care to patients, and I feel the Trust failed in their duty of care to me. I feel let down and I am suffering the consequences through no fault of my own."

The HSE investigation concluded that Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust failed to properly assess the risks associated with hand-arm vibration and failed to adequately control employees' exposure.

HSE guidance clearly sets out the measures employers must take to assess and control vibration risks. Exposure should be eliminated where reasonably practicable or otherwise reduced to as low as reasonably practicable. Further guidance is available on the HSE website found here: [Hand arm vibration – Control the risks](#)

Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, of Chesterfield Road, Calow, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, pleaded guilty to breaching Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The Trust was fined £40,000 and ordered to pay full prosecution costs of £4,911 at Chesterfield Magistrates' Court on 12 January 2026

HSE Inspector Muir Finlay said: "The fine imposed on the Trust should underline to all employers that expose their workers to vibration that the courts and HSE take failures to follow the regulations extremely seriously.

"HSE will not hesitate to take action against those that do not do all that they should to keep people safe and healthy at work."

The HSE prosecution was brought by HSE enforcement lawyer Samantha Crockett

and paralegal officer Stephen Grabe.

### **Further information**

1. [The Health and Safety Executive](#) (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. We are dedicated to protecting people and places, and helping everyone lead safer and healthier lives.
2. More information about the [legislation](#) referred to in this case is available.
3. Further details on the latest [HSE news releases](#) is available.
4. Relevant guidance can be found [here](#).
5. HSE does not pass sentences, set guidelines or collect any fines imposed. Relevant sentencing guidelines must be followed unless the court is satisfied that it would be contrary to the interests of justice to do so. The sentencing guidelines for health and safety offences can be found [here](#).