 Department of Medicine	Doc. No:	SOP-Medicine-28
	Standard Operating Procedure	
Title: Working Alone, Unattended Experiments and Running Experiments Beyond Office Hours	Rev No:	002
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1.0 OBJECTIVE


This SOP provides a standardized practice and procedure for working alone, unattended experiments and running experiments beyond office hours in the Department of Medicine research laboratories.

2.0 SCOPE

This SOP is applicable to all staff and students working in the Department of Medicine research laboratories.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITY

- 3.1 PI shall ensure that working alone, unattended experiments and running experiments beyond office hours have been adequately assessed for all safety risks and there are appropriate control measures implemented before such experiments are allowed to commence.
- 3.2 PI shall identify the required safety training which the staff and students have to complete before they are able to commence with laboratory activities.
- 3.3 Staff and students working alone, setting up unattended experiments and running experiments beyond office hours shall ensure that the setup is according to the approved laboratory-specific SOPs and must seek approval from the PI before starting such experiments.
- 3.4 PI shall ensure that emergency response plans are in place for all the foreseeable emergency scenarios that could potentially occur in the laboratory.
- 3.5 PI shall ensure all staff and students working in the laboratory are responsible to read and understand his/her role and responsibilities, as well as the expected actions to be carried out in the event of emergency under the emergency response plans.

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4.0 DEFINITION

Normal office hours: (1) Monday-Thursday 8.30am–6.00pm, (2) Friday 8.30am–5.30pm

After normal office hours: (1) Out of normal office hours from Monday to Friday, (2) Anytime on Saturday and Sunday, and (3) Public Holidays

Working alone: Refers to carrying out work activities alone (either during office hour or after office hour) without immediate access to another person for assistance.

Unattended experiments: Experiments which are left unattended over an extended period of time.

5.0 SAFETY GUIDANCE


5.1 Working alone

Working alone in the laboratory, especially after office hours, should be avoided whenever possible. Academic Supervisor's approval shall be obtained before such work is carried out. Undergraduates shall not work unsupervised in the laboratory under NUS Safety Directive (Directive No. 0701) for "Access to and Supervision of Undergraduates in Laboratories for Project or Research Work".

Staff and students who are required to work alone, shall:

- a) Understand the hazards and risks associated with the activities involved and adhere to the standard operating procedures.
- b) Know the contacts of emergency personnel and emergency procedures.
- c) Ensure communication devices are in place and in working order and maintain adequate communication with Academic Supervisor or assigned buddy.
- d) Ensure the work area is safe before leaving the area.

Undergraduate students and attachment students shall have restricted access to lab after office hours. Under the circumstances that they have to work beyond the normal office hours, they shall not be allowed to work alone, and shall be supervised at all times. The NUS Safety Directive (Directive No. 0701) for "Access to and Supervision of Undergraduates in Laboratories for Project or Research Work" shall apply.

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5.2 Unattended experiments

Unattended experiments are experiments which are left unattended over an extended period of time. Such experiments can give rise to undesirable consequences, which may become difficult to control when no one is around to take timely action and mitigate the emergency situations. The following safety requirements shall be fulfilled for experiments which are left unattended.

- Risk assessment shall be conducted for unsupervised/unattended laboratory-specific based experiments. The risk assessment shall consider the controls in place to notify and mitigate any emergency situation arising from the experiment. PI shall review and endorse risk assessments before the staff and students are allowed to commence with laboratory activities. The assessment shall be revised whenever there are significant changes in the parameters of the experiment e.g. changes made to the duration of the experiment, type or quantity of the materials used, temperature or pressure, etc.
- PI's approval shall be obtained before such work is carried out and shall ensure that procedures for unsupervised/unattended experiments are followed by personnel working in laboratories under their supervision.
- Where the risk involving unattended experiments is higher (for example involving hazardous chemical reaction, high pressure or temperature), the hazards shall be communicated to inform others in the vicinity. This can be communicated through a note that has been posted near the experimental set-up that would contain information of the (1) hazards involved in the experiment, the (2) contact details of the person conducting the experiment, (3) duration of experiment and (4) Name of PI group. This information is found in Appendix 1 and should be placed next to the experiment setup. To have immediate access to lab specific risk assessments and SOPs.

5.3 Appendix 1

Unattended Experiments

Brief nature of experiment:

Principal Investigator: _____

Please tick if applicable

Biological Hazards:

Please Specify: _____

Chemical Hazards:

Poisons Please Specify: _____

PFM

Hazardous Substances

Explosive Precursors

Controlled Drugs

Gases under pressure

Radioactive Materials

Others: Please Specify: _____

Dates Posted are Valid

Date: _____ Time: -

The following people should be contacted in the event of an emergency:


Primary contact Name: _____ Mobile Number: _____

Secondary contact Name: _____ Mobile Number: _____

If a hazardous condition is suspected, notify Public Safety immediately!

Campus Security:	68741616
Office of Facilities Management	65161515
Police:	999
SCDF:	995

Special shut off instruction if applicable:

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6.0 EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

- In case of personal injuries, look for designated first aid kits, emergency showers and eye washes to apply wound aide.
- Seek medical attention when necessary at the University Health Centre during office hours or proceed to the Accident & Emergency units of National University Hospital after office hours.
 National University Hospital, Lower Kent Ridge Road, S119074
 Main Line (24 hours general enquiries) Tel: 67795555
 Emergency Tel: 67725000
- In the event of emergency, please call Campus Security and Police or SCDF.
 - NUS Campus Security (24hrs): 68741616
 - SCDF - Ambulance/Fire: 995
 - Police: 999

Other important contacts

 - OSHE Safety Officer Dr Christine Hu, Tel: 9789 0954
 - Department Safety Coordinator Adeline Chow, Tel: 9843 6830
 - Contact information of PI and group safety lead and/or nominated buddy
- Report via Accident and Incident Management System (AIMS) within 24 hours @https://inetapps.nus.edu.sg/osh/portal/eServices/ehs360_aims.html.

7.0 REFERENCES

- NUS Laboratory Biorisk Management Manual (NUS/OSHE/M/01)
- NUS General Laboratory Safety Manual (NUS/OSHE/M/06)
- Dept of Medicine ERP

8.0 REVISION HISTORY

Date Revised	Version No.	Author	Summary of Revisions
01-09-2022	002	Adeline Chow	Update of HOD: Prof Anantharaman Vathsala Section 3: Responsibility Section 5: Safety Guidance Section 6: Emergency Response Plan