

Health monitoring requirements for the NSW coal industry

Committed to our purpose, 'To Protect'

Since it was introduced in February 2011, Order 41 has provided a clear set of guidelines for industry in regard to the completion of health assessments, and is recognised as a key part of the NSW coal mining health and safety scheme.

Our goal is to ensure that the health surveillance program in NSW continues to deliver the best possible evidence based outcomes for coal workers.

Order 43

Coal Services Health Monitoring Requirements for Coal Mine Workers Order No. 43 (Order 43) builds on the processes and systems that were established under Order 41 to protect the health and safety of workers in the NSW coal industry.

Order 43 came into effect on 1 July 2018.

The importance of health monitoring

As some occupational illnesses take many years to develop, regular health surveillance allows for early detection and intervention with the goal of ensuring that workers can continue to work safely.

A pre-placement medical assessment is required before an individual commences work or changes roles in the NSW coal industry. This includes a chest x-ray for new entrants to the industry. The medical and chest x-ray serve as a baseline for future health surveillance.

The periodic medical assessment ensures that workers' ongoing health is protected and monitored for any adverse health risks as a result of their employment.

In NSW, every coal worker must undergo periodic health surveillance (known as a periodic medical assessment) every three years.

Requirements for medical providers performing Order 43 medical assessments

The Order sets forth minimum qualifications for health professionals conducting Order 43 medical assessments.

Only an **approved medical practitioner** may conduct a pre-placement medical assessment.

An approved medical practitioner or registered nurse working under their supervision may complete a periodic medical assessment.

An 'approved medical practitioner' is a doctor who:

- Is registered by the Medical Board of Australia
- Has completed the NSW Coal Industry Order 43 Medical Practitioner Accreditation Course
- Has completed an approved course in spirometry interpretation*
- Has provided calibration statements/certificates for equipment that will be used to perform medicals
- Has provided evidence that their medical practice complies with Coal Services Order 43 service delivery and current Health Department guidelines regarding COVID-19

A 'registered nurse' means a nurse who:

- Is a registered nurse (Division 1) registered by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia
- Has completed an approved course in audiometry*
- Has completed an approved course in spirometry*

**The course must be conducted by one of the accredited training providers listed on the CS Health website.*

Our goal is to ensure that the health surveillance program in NSW continues to deliver the best possible evidence based outcomes for coal workers.

The NSW Coal Industry Medical Induction Program

The NSW Coal Industry Order 43 Medical Induction Program has been developed based on findings from the Senate Select Committee Inquiry and the Queensland Parliamentary Inquiry to provide an understanding of the health risks associated with coal mining and to better equip medical providers to monitor workers' health for early detection of occupational disease.

To ensure the NSW coal industry needs are met, all applications are reviewed before acceptance into the course is granted. Selection will be based on current providers and the demand for services in the practice's geographical location.

The program will include:

- Information about the primary purpose of the respiratory component of the health assessment scheme, in particular health protection, prevention and early detection of coal mine dust lung disease.
- Information about the spectrum of coal mine dust lung diseases.
- How to conduct and interpret spirometry testing.
- Information about coal dust and silica exposure associated with the coal mining industry in NSW.
- An introduction to the mining environment with a focus on inspecting those jobs 'at risk of dust exposure'.
- Training on how to complete each section of the health assessment and identify any abnormalities.
- Training in the use of clinical guidelines for follow-up and appropriate referral in cases where respiratory abnormalities are found.

Accreditation

Upon attending the course and all required document has been submitted to CS Health, each medical provider will be issued with an accreditation number and access to the External Order 43 Portal arranged.

Frequency

Accreditation will be an ongoing process, comprising the initial Order 43 Medical Practitioner Accreditation Course and an annual refresher course consisting of interactive eLearning modules and a live zoom session.

Program information

Who should attend?

General practitioners with unrestricted registration with the Medical Board of Australia.

Course duration

- Accreditation course is a one-day, face-to-face session held on a Friday (8.00am to 4.00pm).
- Spirometry training is a face-to-face course, held on the Thursday afternoon immediately prior to the accreditation course (12 noon to 4.00pm).

Course cost

- Accreditation course: \$550 per person (plus GST - paid to CS Health)
- Spirometry course: \$330 per person (plus GST - paid directly to training provider)

Location

The course is held at the Hunter Valley Mines Rescue station located in Singleton, NSW.

Course schedule

- Accreditation courses are scheduled for the months of March and October and are restricted to 15 participants per course.
- Refresher program will be conducted over the months of May and June.

For more information about accreditation, please call 1800 274 633 (option 3).

To be considered to become an approved medical provider, please complete and submit the enquiry form on www.coalservices.com.au

