

Information Governance

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Ref: FOI2017/4211

Date Received: 21st September 2017
Response Due: 19th October 2017

17th October 2017

Dear

INFORMATION REQUEST UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

We are now pleased to respond to your request for information under the FOI Act.

You asked:

This information relates to venous tourniquets used for phlebotomy procedures and not to surgical tourniquets used for exsanguination of limbs or extremities.

- 1) Does the trust use single use venous tourniquets, reusable tourniquets or both?

We use both. If the patient is low risk staff are allowed to use reusable tourniquets otherwise disposal are used which is more common place as stated in the SOP

Appendix 5 of blood sampling SOP

Tourniquet Selection Guidelines

There are numerous varieties of tourniquets available, including multiple use cloth tourniquets and single use tourniquets. Every tourniquet carries risks and inappropriate use can lead to patient harm, these harms include:

- Skin tears
- Bruising
- Cross infection/contamination

It is the responsibility of the user to know how to effectively apply and release the tourniquet to minimise any risks.

Best practice would suggest that single use tourniquets are always used and this is recommended by the Trust. It is however recognised that multiple use tourniquets may be used dependant on the situation. Where multiple use tourniquets are used it is the responsibility of the user to ensure they are kept clean.

Examples of Situations and Recommended Tourniquet Use

Situation	Recommended tourniquet	Comments
Standard phlebotomy procedures with low cross infection risks	Multiple use tourniquet (unless identified communicable infection)	Must be disposed of if it becomes blood stained
Clinic environments	Multiple use tourniquet (unless identified communicable infection)	Must be disposed of if it becomes blood stained
Isolated patients with high risk communicable infections	Single use tourniquet	
Situations where tourniquet will come in contact with bodily fluids	Single use tourniquet	

The above list is not exhaustive and is recommended that if there is any doubt a single use tourniquet should be selected.

2) *What is the annual spend/usage on each category of tourniquet?*

Reusable qty 200, £56

Single use qty 12,825, £2565.07

3) *How many reported incidences of tourniquets being inadvertently left on a patients arm have there been in the past 5 years?*

For the last 5 years (from 1 September 2012 to 31 August 2017) there have been 14 reported incidents.

4) *What is the value if any, of any litigation costs associated with any such incidences?*

We have three claims which relate to issues with tourniquets. Two of these claims are still under investigation and so there has not been any damages awarded at present. The third has settled with a damages payment of £5,000 made.

I trust that this information is helpful to you, however if you are not entirely satisfied with this response please do not hesitate to contact the Information Governance Department on 01257 488271. If we do not hear from you within 28 days we will assume that we have been able to accommodate your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Foster', written in a cursive style.

Andrew Foster
Chief Executive

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If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision, you should write to: Information Governance Department, Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust, Wrightington Hospital, Hall Lane, Appley Bridge, Wigan, WN6 9EP

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF