



**Lindsey Lodge Hospice & Healthcare**

# **ASSISTED BATHING SERVICE POLICY**

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## **1. Policy statement**

Most people enjoy a bath as a relaxing, pleasant experience. It is easy to move from this thought process to see bathing as safe and not needing careful preparation and planning. In care services, there is clear risk from hot water, together with people's vulnerabilities, presenting hazards to be carefully considered and minimised (Quality Compliance Systems 2018).

Lindsey Lodge Hospice are now offering patients the opportunity to bathe in a safe environment.

This policy is based on the health guidance issued by the Health and Safety Executive (2012): Managing risks from hot water and surfaces in health and social care which provides guidance on how to meet employers' legal duty of care in respect of the risk of scalding and burning from hot water and hot surfaces.

Several organisations and other public bodies have been prosecuted by the Health and Safety Executive for non-compliance with their responsibility in terms of managing risks from hot water and surfaces in health and social care, where patients have either drowned or been scalded, the latter in some cases resulting in death.

The content of this policy is therefore not negotiable.

This policy also takes into account published guidance:

1. Health and Safety Executive 'Legionnaires Control' disease: the control of legionella bacteria in water systems – Approved Code of Practice and guidance on regulations
2. Health Technical Memorandum (HTM 04-01) – the control of Legionella Hygiene, 'safe hot water, cold water and drinking water systems'
3. The addendum to HTM 04-01 – Pseudomonas Aeruginosa for augmented care units

The aim of this policy is to set out the risks associated with regards to patient bathing and actions the staff at Lindsey Lodge Hospice are to take to mitigate the risks.

## **2. Scope**

This policy is relevant for all staff caring for patients known to Lindsey Lodge Hospice who are involved in the assisted bathing service for patients; and for all staff who are responsible for maintenance of water quality and temperature.

## **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

3.1 The Director of Patient and Nursing Services is the Registered Manager for Lindsey Lodge Hospice and as such has overall accountability and responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of the policies in use in Lindsey Lodge Hospice.

3.2 The Chief Executive and Director of Patient and Nursing Services are responsible for:

- Ensuring effective systems are in place to support appropriate risk assessment and care planning to manage those patients at risks as far as is reasonably practicable in relation to the assisted bathing service.

3.3 The Well-being Centre Manager and Senior Nurse (In-patient Unit) are responsible for:

- The practical implementation of this policy within Lindsey Lodge Hospice

- Ensuring their staff are aware of the policy and requirements which includes new starters on their local induction
- Ensuring appropriate risk assessment and documentation relating to assisted bathing is used for patients in their areas
- Ensuring that any incidents relating to assisted bathing are reported on the recognised incident reporting tool in accordance with the managing incidents policy
- Ensuring incidents in relation to assisted bathing are investigated appropriately
- Ensuring water flushing and recording in accordance within their area (this is supported by our contract with an external company)

3.4 Clinical Staff (nursing, allied health professionals, health care assistants, advanced assistants) are responsible for:

- Ensuring that this policy, its guidance, instructions and equipment requirements regarding safe bathing, are adhered to when bathing patients
- Ensuring any issues identified with the bathing service are reported immediately
- Ensuring any associated incidents related to safety are raised through the Lindsey Lodge Hospice reporting system
- Ensure ongoing environmental checks are undertaken to minimise hazards that could increase falls risk e.g. suitable levels of lighting, obstacles, wet floors etc...
- Ensuring cleaning and disinfection of the bath facility complies with the manufacturer's instructions
- Registered nurses and allied health professionals will have additional responsibility in completing moving and handling, reasonable adjustments and falls risk assessments and associated care plans to reflect patients' risk and care requirements with regards to assisted bathing
- That care delivery in relation to assisted bathing is delivered as directed by the patients care plan
- Adopting and demonstrating their care delivery the core principles of Lindsey Lodge Hospice

## 4. Implementation

4.1 Whilst in the bathroom, patients are at risk from:

- Scalding
- Slips, trips and falls
- Drowning

4.2 High risk category patients include:

- Older people (65+)
- Patients with confusion
- Some medical conditions e.g. neurological
- Post-operative patients e.g. orthopaedic surgery
- Patients with mental health problems
- Patients with learning disabilities

4.2.1 A patient may be deemed at risk even if he/she does not fall into the above categories; therefore, it is better to assume all patients are at risk

- 4.2.2 All patients must be individually assessed to ascertain their level of risk when accessing the bathing service
- 4.2.3 The patient's level of risk and actions to mitigate their risk will be recorded on their moving and handling risk assessment
- 4.2.4 Patients who lack capacity will have their individual needs assessed with actions required to mitigate risks associated with bathing recorded within their care plan. In some instances, patients may not have the capacity to make an informed decision regarding the bathing service policy 2018. Staff must ensure that patients who lack capacity are fully safeguarded and seek further advice regarding mental capacity assessment.
- 4.2.5 In line with Lindsey Lodge Hospice's moving and handling policy and slips, trips and falls policy patient risk assessments must be fully documented during their initial assessment to the hospice, monthly and/or when their condition changes.
- 4.2.6 Each patient will have an allocated slot time of 1 hour per bath with a charge of £11-00p per assisted bath. This costing takes into consideration; x2 care staff assisting, provision of toiletries, provision of towels, laundering and cleaning of the clinical area. Patients will pay for the bathing service after completion through Lindsey Lodge Hospice main reception where a bar code is available for the transaction. Staff may need to support with this transaction as appropriate e.g. a patient who is less mobile.
- 4.2.7 After each patient bath the bath tub must be cleaned and disinfected in compliance with the manufacturer's instructions. A full copy of the manufacturer's instructions is kept on the L: drive (L:\InfectionControl\2018\Decontamination).

### **4.3 Hot Water Temperature**

- 4.3.1 At Lindsey Lodge Hospice the recommended temperature for an unassisted bath fill/clean and to prevent Legionella is 46-50 degrees Celsius (as recommended by the HTM guidance)
- 4.3.2 An assisted bath fill is **36 degrees Celsius**.

### **4.4 Scalding**

- 4.4.1 At Lindsey Lodge Hospice the bath tub has a set temperature gauge to enable staff to monitor/set the temperature for an assisted bath fill.
- 4.4.2 Where this is not in place e.g. use of water from the sink, a 'caution hot water' sign is displayed adjacent to the hot water tap.
- 4.4.3 Record of checks in relation to the maintenance of the bath tub, including monitoring the thermostatic valve/temperature gauge must be maintained within the estates team.

#### **4.5 Bathing Temperature**

- 4.5.1 Although thermostatic valves are in place, it is a staff responsibility to ensure that the water is at a safe temperature before a patient is either partially or totally immersed in the bath. This must be done with a bath thermometer and the temperature must not exceed 43 degrees for an unassisted bath and 36 degrees for an assisted bath.
- 4.5.2 Staff should always use a thermometer before immersing patients in the bath.
- 4.5.3 Staff should always ask the patient if the temperature is satisfactory before immersing them in the bath.
- 4.5.4 If the bath water is found to be above 36 degrees and the temperature of the bath tub has been set at this, this must be reported immediately to the Director of Patient and Nursing Services/estates team.
- 4.5.5 NEVER add hot water whilst the patient is in the bath.

#### **4.8 Slips, trips and falls**

- 4.8.1 All bath facilities must, where possible, have non-slip surfaces. Lindsey Lodge Hospice does not use bath mats.
- 4.8.2 To minimise the patients' risk of falls, care must be assessed in accordance with their moving and handling and falls risk assessment and modified Barthel index as appropriate also in accordance with Lindsey Lodge Hospice's Slips, Trips and Falls policy.
- 4.8.3 All patients accessing the bathing service will be transferred into the bath tub using the bath hoist <insert name>. Patients should never transfer into the bath tub without the bath hoist.
- 4.8.4 Two staff members must always be present during the bathing service to minimise risk of injury.

#### **4.9 Drowning**

- 4.9.1 Patients identified at assessment as being at risk, must NEVER be left unaccompanied in the bathroom.
- 4.9.2 All patients when bathing must always be supervised.
- 4.9.3 Care staff must respond immediately to an alarm and treat it as a potential emergency.
- 4.9.4 Whilst it is essential to recognise the patients' rights to privacy and dignity, safety must be the priority.

## **5.0 Training**

5.1 All staff must receive training as part of their local induction in the process of bathing patients to ensure the process is carried out in accordance with the bathing service policy 2018. This should include:

- Use of bath tub functions e.g. how to fill, empty, use shower hose
- Testing the water temperature using a bath thermometer
- Safety aspects e.g. reducing falls risk, use of bath hoist, use of bath aids
- Supervision of the patient
- Cleaning and decontamination of the bath tub

5.2 Any problems or faults with the equipment during delivery of the bathing service, for example, problems with regulation of water temperature, faulty equipment, inadequate cleanliness must be immediately reported to their line manager or nurse in charge

5.3 Staff must be clear on the flushing of water outlets procedures as identified in the Lindsey Lodge Hospice infection control procedures.

## **6.0 Measuring Performance**

6.1 Compliance with this policy will be monitored via the Lindsey Lodge Hospice reporting process in relation to assisted bathing incidents.

6.2 Water quality testing will be monitored in compliance with the external company standards.

## **7.0 Audit**

7.1 Audits of patients accessing the assisted bathing service will be completed through collection of qualitative feedback and monitoring of incident reports

7.2 One registered staff member of the Well-being team (manager, deputy, registered nurse) will support in the delivery of the service by completing regular assisted baths in collaboration with the health care assistants/advanced assistants to monitor service delivery

## **8.0 Review**

The Director of Patient and Nursing Services and Well-being Centre Manager will review the bathing service policy yearly or sooner if required following changes to any national guidance, changes required to clinical practice or following audit findings, for example, cost-effectiveness and impact on staffing resources

## 9.0 References

- Health and Safety Executive (HSE) (2012) Managing the risks from hot water and surfaces in health and social care
- Health and Safety Executive ‘Legionnaires Control’ disease: the control of legionella bacteria in water systems – approved code of practice and guidance on regulations
- Health Technical Memorandum (HTM 04-01) – the control of Legionella Hygiene ‘safe hot water, cold water and drinking water systems and the addendum to HTM 04-01 – Pseudomonas Aeruginosa for augmented care units
- Lindsey Lodge Hospice core values
- Quality Compliance Systems (2018)

## 10.0 Related Lindsey Lodge Hospice Policies

- Water systems process (in accordance with external company)
- Infection control policy
- Estates maintenance policy
- Slips, trips and falls policy
- Moving and handling policy
- Managing incidents policy
- Flushing procedure for Arjo Jacuzzi Bath (full document on the L: drive)

Lead Author: Sarah Hodge				
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