

# Confidential Waste Procedure

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# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 All employees working in the NHS are bound by a legal duty of confidence to protect personal information they may come into contact with during the course of their work. This is not just a requirement of their contractual responsibilities but also a requirement within the common law duty of confidence and the Data Protection Act 1998.
- 1.2 This document provides guidelines to NHS Orkney Staff and those undertaking NHS Orkney business ie students from all disciplines, auditors, volunteers, Locums etc and in particular Porters for the transport, storage and disposal of confidential waste

# 2 Responsibilities

- 2.1 **Chief Executive** - has overall responsibility for strategic and operational management, including ensuring that NHS Orkney's policies and procedures comply with all legal, statutory and good practice guidance requirements.
- 2.2 **Head of Estates** - responsible for the management of this procedure in compliance with the data protection act 1998
- 2.3 **All staff**– responsible for disposing of confidential waste in line with NHS Orkney's organisational and departmental policies and this procedure.
- 2.4 **Portering services** – responsible for collecting confidential waste from departments within the Balfour site and external NHS Orkney premises, transporting it to the secure collection point, correct destruction of documents and overseeing uplift and disposal of destroyed waste.

# 3 Definitions

## 3.1 Confidential Waste

- 3.1.1 Confidential information within the NHS is commonly thought of as health information; however, it can also include information that is private and not public knowledge or information that an individual would not expect to be shared. Information can relate to patients and staff (including temporary staff), external contractors and NHS Orkney business
- 3.1.2 Under this procedure, Information for destruction may be held on paper, film, micro film, carbon paper and CD/DVD
- 3.1.3 Waste that needs to be disposed of as sensitive and confidential fall into the following categories

### **3.2 Documents and records containing personal/ patient identifiable information**

3.2.1 Person-identifiable information is anything that contains the means to identify a person, e.g. name, address, postcode, date of birth, NHS number, care plan, staff payroll number, questionnaires or other data collected under an understanding of confidentiality, personnel records. This list is not exhaustive

### **3.3 Documents and records containing commercially sensitive information**

3.3.1 Commercially sensitive information is anything that relates to contracts, tenders, purchasing records, maintenance records, insurance records, Confidential and sensitive information can also relate to unpublished minutes from meetings, draft policies and procedures, etc.

### **3.4 Documents and records that DO NOT need to be disposed of as confidential waste**

3.4.1 Mission statements, charters, regulations, published policies and procedures, published surveys and questionnaires, press releases, magazines, published circulars, published minutes, leaflets, booklets, presentation materials, reference books. These documents should be disposed of as recyclable waste.

## **4 Procedures**

4.1.1 Confidential waste will be collected on a weekly and on request basis from wards and departments.

4.1.2 Boxes are provided by the Estates Department for each department to store confidential waste in prior to collection and disposal by Portering services. **DO NOT** mark boxes as confidential

4.1.3 When you require confidential waste to be collected, please log a call via the Estates helpdesk. You can find the link on the right hand side of the blog under 'links' and the heading, 'contact the help desk'.

4.1.4 All confidential waste paper shall be shredded on site in the facility provided by NHS Orkney and collected for final disposal by means of recycling.

### **4.2 Procedure for employees and departments**

- 4.2.1
- Check any waste that you throw away - anything that contains personal or sensitive information must be treated as confidential waste
  - Always consider anonymisation of personal identifiable information where possible. Information is said to be anonymised when identifiers; such as

name, address, full postcode and any other detail that might identify an individual are removed

- CDs, floppy disks, audio and video tapes that need to be disposed of as confidential should be bagged up separately and securely from paper waste. Please log a call for uplift of these types of waste.
- Confidential waste must be kept in a secure location pending collection by Portering Services
- Do not leave confidential waste in areas accessible to the public such as corridors, open plan offices, unlocked offices/ receptions or in view of members of staff/ visitors/ public who should not be privy to sensitive information.
- Please remove documents from folders, plastic/ paper wallets, box files, poly pockets, paper clips, treasury tags before being sent for destruction.
- Small amounts of very sensitive information may be shredded at department level.
- For collection of items already shredded at department level, please log a call with the estates helpdesk for uplift.
- Department staff may use the industrial shredder located in the incinerator room for disposal of confidential waste. Please contact Porters for access to incinerator room. Please ensure users exchange the bag if full.

### **4.3 Procedure for Porters**

- 4.3.1
- Porter should report to ward clerk/ member of staff in department to request collection of confidential waste.
  - Waste should be uplifted in box provided to wards and departments to avoid double handling.
  - Confidential waste boxes should be placed on a trolley or sack barrow with the lid securely closed.
  - Care should be taken to ensure confidential waste is kept secure at all times whilst uplifting from departments. Do not leave box unattended.
  - Items for disposal should be transported to incinerator room immediately and stored in the lockable filing cabinets.
  - Under no circumstances should confidential waste be left unsecure in incinerator room.
  - Porters will shred documents, break up cds/dvds and destroy film and tapes where necessary. Departments will log a call when these items require collection.
  - Paper waste will be bagged, ready for uplift and sent for recycling. Other waste will be bagged and disposed of in clinical waste.

### **4.4 Procedure for external transport of confidential waste to Balfour Hospital**

- 4.4.1
- The blue shredding collection boxes are kept in the incinerator room and are marked 'shredding'.

- Van Driver should report to receptionist/ member of staff in external department who requested the collection of confidential waste.
- Confidential waste should be loaded into the blue collection box and secured shut.
- Use of sack barrow may help with heavy loads.
- Load collection box into vehicle. Ensure box is secure and vehicle is locked when stationary and unattended whilst completing rounds.
- Do not leave collection box in plain view in vehicle.
- Never leave paper records and/or mobile devices/media containing confidential information unattended in vehicles for extended periods of time. If there is a need to leave confidential waste in an unattended vehicle then it must be locked away in the vehicle out of sight.
- Do not leave paper records and/or mobile devices/media containing confidential information in the vehicle overnight, wherever practicable the items must be removed from the vehicle and stored.
- On arrival at the Balfour site deliver the confidential waste to the incinerator room, remove from blue box and secure in lockable filing cabinet.