

Great Western Hospitals



NHS Foundation Trust

Keeping you safe at work



Your guide to reporting verbal or physical abuse

We want staff to feel safe and secure at work

Our staff work extremely hard 365 days a year and are dedicated to providing high-quality care to every patient. Any form of verbal or physical abuse against staff will not be tolerated and every member of staff should be assured that action will be taken to protect them.

Incidents of violent or aggressive behaviour should not be accepted as “part of the job”. We want you to feel confident in reporting any incident and know that you have the full support of the Trust, our in-house Security Team and the local police.

What is a security incident?

Any incident where a member of staff is threatened, verbally abused or physically assaulted, by a patient, member of the public or another staff member. Other incidents include rude, intimidating or antisocial behaviour, theft and criminal damage.

How do I report an incident?

- Help us to help you by immediately reporting any incident. Try to do this immediately after the event and before going off duty.
- Inform your manager straight away.
- Report the incident via the Trust’s Electronic Incident Reporting System which is on the intranet. Your manager can help you do this.
- If the offender was a patient, don’t just record the detail in their medical notes. You must complete an Incident Report so that the Trust is aware of the incident.

Details required

- Exact location of incident (no generic terms).
- What was said (including expletives - word for word).
- What happened (precise actions).
- Any injury or damage should be photographed/recorded.
- What was the impact: pain, anxiety, stress, mental trauma, physical injury, counselling, time off work, replacement staff member or inability to provide service, add additional information to report as required.

- What precipitated the event/what caused it to happen.
- Identify assaults that are clinically related (due to patient's condition).
- Record details of police reports (officer details, crime or log reference number and outcome).

What happens next?

All security incident reports (reported via the Trust's Electronic Incident Reporting System - Ulysses) are sent to the Security Management Team and dependent upon the circumstances the following action will be taken:

Unacceptable behaviour letter (UBL)

If the risk or threat is low, the first action taken will be that our Security Management Specialist will send the offender a formal letter which includes:

- details of what happened
- consequences if their behaviour continues in the future. This includes the Trust's right to refuse to treat violent, drunk or abusive patients when they are responsible for their own actions and no lives are at risk
- a firm instruction that they change their behaviour, and the consequences if they do not.

Experience has shown that in most cases this letter has a positive effect and there are no further incidents or need for further action.

Prosecution

If the incident is more serious or a letter has not been effective, the Trust will not hesitate to seek prosecution through the police or the NHS Protect Legal Protection Unit, with your agreement. If a prosecution is sought your Security Management Specialist will support you through the whole process, including escorting you to court.

Common offences pursued include:

- **Malicious communications** – threats made via letter, over the phone or via email or text message
- **Harassment** – behaviour causing alarm or distress
- **Assault** - (physical or sexual)

Clinical incidents

Some assaults can be medically related, for example a patient or member of the public may have learning disabilities, dementia or be confused after an operation due to their medication. As a result formal action may not always be appropriate.

However it is important that these incidents are still reported. This is so the Security Management Specialist can work with Trust staff to analyse what happened, why it happened and what can be done to help prevent similar incidents in the future.

Lone working

Lone working is defined as working without close or direct supervision or working out of sight and earshot of other colleagues. Examples include working alone at home, on wards, travelling, domiciliary visits or in consultation rooms.

It is important that lone workers are kept safe and secure. Managers should take steps to protect their staff by:

- having a recent photograph of staff and an up to date physical description
- having up to date contact details for staff and next of kin
- keeping a record of the make, model, colour and registration number of vehicles staff drive
- having systems in place to monitor staff during their working day and keep in contact
- keeping a record of the patients staff are visiting and the route they are taking
- have a system so that if staff fail to report in an alarm is raised
- making sure staff phone in when working from home or if there is a change in their working day
- keeping a record of relevant training including conflict resolution, lone working and personal safety
- having risk assessments in place
- use lone working devices or systems in line with Trust policy and procedures.

Conflict Resolution Training

Violent behaviour not only affects staff personally, but it also has a negative impact on the standard of services and the delivery of patient care.

Conflict Resolution Training (CRT) is mandatory for all NHS frontline staff.

It forms part of a range of measures introduced to make the NHS a safer place to work.

Please ensure your training is up to date.

You can check your training requirements/status via the Electronic Staff Record (ESR) – Employee Self Service, via the Human Resources ESR page on the intranet.

To book training phone: 01793 605912 or
email: swindon.education@gwh.nhs.uk or
community.education@gwh.nhs.uk

Supporting you

The Trust is committed to supporting staff that have been exposed to stressful incidents in the workplace. The Occupational Health & Well-being Department have a variety of clinicians who can offer advice, guidance and support. Please find our departmental information on the Trust's intranet or contact us on the details below.

Occupational Health Department

Tel: 01793 604480 or 604481

Email: OccupationalHealthAdmin@gwh.nhs.uk

Staff Support Service

Staff Support Service provides a range of talking therapies to support your mental health and emotional wellbeing.

The Service offers counselling, stress management, personal/professional support, critical incident debriefing/defusing, cognitive therapy, signposting, general advice.

The Trust offers up to six sessions of therapy providing an opportunity to talk confidentially about work related or personal issues that may be causing distress. All sessions are offered in a neutral, non-judgemental and safe environment.

The Service is completely confidential.

Tel: 01793 815279 Email: staffsupport@gwh.nhs.uk

Where can I find out more about security related issues?

You can find out more about the support, training and advice available by contacting the Trust's Security Management Specialist via the following:

Safe website: www.securityandfraudexperts.org.uk

Linkedin Page: Safe - Security and Fraud Experts

Andy Wells



Tel: 01793 605538

Mobile: 07557 150308

Email: andrew.wells2@nhs.net

Great Western Hospital

Marlborough Rd

Swindon

Wilts

SN3 6BB

www.securityandfraudexperts.org.uk

Remember

If a crime has been committed, an Electronic Incident Report must be completed and a report made to Police (details of Police reference numbers must be included on the incident report):

Wiltshire Police: 101

Emergency dial: 999



NHS Protect leads on work to identify and tackle crime across the health service.

Visit: www.nhsprotect.nhs.uk