

REMOVED CLOTHING SEARCH

PROCEDURE

- **On every occasion that a removed clothing search is carried out a record, including the reason for carrying out the search and the name of the person authorising it, must be made in the patient's electronic notes, the daily 24-hour report book**

PROCEDURE

- Patient is to be informed that a removed clothing search is required. The patient's consent should be sought before a search is undertaken. If a patient refuses guidance can be found in the policy.
- Patient to be escorted to a single room on the patient's ward that has been prepared for this procedure: windows closed, curtains/blinds drawn, a dressing gown available
- Two nursing staff of the same gender as the patient will be present during the procedure; at least one of the staff will be qualified. One staff should be in the room, reassuring the patient and passing removed clothing to the other staff who should be on the corridor outside the room, visible to other ward staff, but also to the procedure being undertaken
- The staff conducting the search should wear disposable gloves
- The patient must never be completely naked at any time. Staff will not touch the patient's body or inspect intimate orifices.
- All clothing above the waist will be removed and searched and a visual check of the patient's upper body made, including a check of mouth/ears, nostrils and hair. The patient will then re-dress.
- All clothing below the waist will be removed. After a visual check of the lower body, the patient will be handed the dressing gown to wear whilst the removed clothing is checked. This done, the patient will re-dress.
- Removed clothing must be thoroughly searched paying particular attention to seams, linings, cuffs, collars, waistbands, shoes and pocket items.
- Where one item is missing from a ward (e.g. cutlery) and several patients are to be searched, the floor area of the room should be checked between searches. Searched patients should be housed in a room which has previously been checked.

Patient's refusal to co-operate

- If a patient refuses to co-operate with a removed clothing search the person authorising the search should be involved in resolving the situation. The patient should be kept under observation and isolated from other patients. The patient should be told what is happening and why, in terms appropriate to his/her understanding. If consent is refused, the patient's consultant should be contacted