

ROOM SEARCH

PROCEDURE

- **Routine Room Searches should, wherever possible, be carried out by two nursing staff, in the presence of the patient who must be subject to a personal search prior to the room search being undertaken. However, nursing staff have the right to undertake the search without the patient present, if the patient refuses to co-operate or where there are other justifiable reasons for doing so (see also Appendix 7, Monthly Ward Search). All room searches should be recorded in the patient's notes, the daily 24 hour report book**

PROCEDURE

- The staff conducting the search should wear disposable gloves.
- On entry, examine area visually for adjustments or differences in the layout of bed(s), etc. Search the room systematically starting at the door, starting together and working around the room and then moving inwards, away from each other. Always work top to bottom. The two staff should overlap for a short period when meeting at the start point again.
- Remove bedding one layer at a time examining each sheet, pillowcase, quilt etc.
- Place examined piece on a chair or locker top, not on the floor.
- Examine mattress for any signs of severe wear or damage, i.e. tears or repairs.
- Examine bed, base, legs and headboard for signs of misuse or concealment of illicit material
- All furniture should be inspected for signs of abuse or concealment of illicit material.
- All patients' possessions are to be treated carefully and replaced in their appropriate position.
- If items belonging to a patient are removed, the patient should be given a receipt for the item, informed why they are being removed and where they are being kept (see also Policy Patients' Property and Possessions, their Storage and Recording, for advice on appropriate disposal)
- Beds must be returned to their normal state.
- Window frame, door and bars to be inspected.
- Prior to leaving the room, check the floor area carefully.
- Any discrepancies or signs of damage are to be immediately reported to member of staff in charge of the ward/ area who will record
- A record of the search should be entered in the ward's searches book and must include the names of the staff carrying out the search and the time taken to carry it out. A record should also be kept in the patient's notes. Both records should indicate the outcome of the search.