

## LRI Emergency Department

### Standard Operating Procedure for: Patient Property

<b>Staff groups SOP applies to:</b>	All Emergency Department Staff
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### 1.0 Background

An extremely high volume of patients attend the Emergency Department (ED) at Leicester Royal Infirmary every year. These patients often attend the ED following accidents, or with conditions requiring immediate emergency care. In this environment, the safe & effective management of patients' property can often be overlooked and, as a Trust, we see many claims for remuneration following the loss of property within the ED each year.

### 2.0 Scope

At present, the management of patients' property is guided by the existing *Lost Property Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)*, which was issued in July 2017. This SOP was introduced to address the lack of an appropriate system for the management of lost property in the ED.

The scope of this SOP is to provide a clear, appropriate, and agreed approach to management of patients' property in the ED, including property which remains with patients, as well as property found unaccompanied in the ED.

### 3.0 Aim

To keep patients' property safe, all staff must work to the same approach. Wherever possible, patients' property should remain with them at all times. However, where this is not possible, or where property is found unaccompanied in the ED, a clear process must be agreed which outlines the appropriate steps that staff should take to keep property safe on behalf of our patients.

#### 4.0 Staff responsibility for all property

- 4.1 On arrival to the ED, all patients must sign a *Property / Valuables Disclaimer* in the *Nursing Assessment & Notes* booklet. Where a patient is unable to do this themselves, whoever is accompanying them must do this (e.g. relative, carer, friend, etc.).
- 4.2 All staff must take reasonable steps to ensure that patients' property remains with the patient at all times. Where this is not possible, all staff must take reasonable steps to ensure that patients' property is kept in a safe place until it can be returned to the patient.
- 4.3 All staff must take reasonable steps to ensure that unaccompanied property is reunited with the patient, as soon as possible. If the patient is an inpatient, then property must be taken to them. If they have been sent home, then we must contact the patient to arrange collection.
- 4.4 Actions taken must be documented in the patients' notes.

#### 5.0 Procedure for management of unaccompanied non-valuable property

- 5.1 If the owner of unaccompanied non-valuable property cannot be identified, then the following procedure must be followed.
  - a) Place property in a smart safe property bag
  - b) Place a label on the bag, and note the following details on the label:
    - Where the property was found (location)
    - When the property was found (date & time)
    - What property is in the bag
  - c) Place the smart safe property bag in the **Patient Property Cupboard** in the ED Undercroft
- 5.2 ED Housekeepers must log all items in the **Patient Property Cupboard** in the **Lost Property Book** and place them in the **Lost Property Locker** in the ED Undercroft, which should remain locked at all times.
- 5.3 ED Housekeepers **OR** ED Support Workers must review the contents of the **Lost Property Locker** on a monthly basis. Items that have not been claimed after a month should be disposed of, as necessary.

#### 6.0 Procedure for management of unaccompanied valuable property

- 6.1 If the owner of unaccompanied valuable property cannot be identified, then the following procedure must be followed.

*During Bereavement Service Office Hours (Weekdays 9am – 4pm)*

- a) Place property in a smart safe property bag
- b) Place a label on the bag, and note the following details on the label:
  - Where the property was found (location)

- When the property was found (date & time)
- What property is in the bag
- c) Send the smart safe property bag to the **Bereavement Service Office**

*Out of Office Hours (Weekends, and weeknights 4pm – 9am)*

- a) Place property in a smart safe property bag
- b) Place a label on the bag, and note the following details on the label:
  - Where the property was found (location)
  - When the property was found (date & time)
  - What property is in the bag
- c) Sign the property into the **Valuable Property Book**
- d) Place the smart safe property bag in the **ED Safe**, located in the Store Room in the ED Undercroft

**Note:** *The key for the ED Safe is kept on the ED Nurse in Charge keys.*

- 6.2** The ED Safe must be checked by the ED Housekeepers every morning, and any property placed in the ED Safe overnight must then be taken to the **Bereavement Services Office**. The Bereavement Services team will give the person delivering the property an orange Discharge of Responsibility receipt, which must be returned to the ED Undercroft and stored in the **Valuable Property Book**.