

## Policy for the Prescribing, Administration and Monitoring of Oxygen in Adults

Approved By	Policy and Guideline Committee
Trust Reference	<b>B27/2010</b>
Date Approved	13 August 2010
Version	V6
Supersedes	V5 – December 2022
Author / Originator(s)	Dr Caroline Baxter, Consultant Respiratory Physician Mrs. Sue Mason, Head of Nursing – RRCV, Padma Parthasarathy Respiratory ANP
Name of Responsible Committee / Individual	Andrew Furlong (Medical Director)
Most Recent Review	April 2025
Reviewed by	Padmavathi Parthasarathy (Respiratory ANP) Dr.Irene Valero-Sanchez (Respiratory Consultant)
Review Date	April 2030

### Review date and details of Changes made during the review

February 2025

Section 5.6. point e has been added to improve clarity on HCWs scope of practice in administering oxygen during emergency and also maternity care workers have been included

Section 9.3 has been amended to provide more clarity

Section 16.1 minor amendment has been made to provide more clarity

Section 16.3 minor amendment has been made to improve safety

## Table of Contents

1	Introduction.....	3
2	Policy Aims .....	3
3	Policy Scope.....	3
4	Roles and Responsibilities .....	4
5	Principles of Prescribing, administering and monitoring oxygen .....	5
6	Indications for Oxygen Therapy .....	8
7	Contra-indications for Oxygen Therapy .....	8
8	Cautions in Oxygen Therapy.....	8
9	Transfer and transportation of patients receiving oxygen.....	10
10	Peri-operative and immediately post operatively .....	10
11	Nebulised therapy and oxygen.....	10
12	Normal Oxygen saturations .....	11
13	Summary Oxygen Administration protocol (and weaning protocol).....	11
14	Humidification .....	14
15	Health and Safety issues.....	14
16	Education and Training Requirements.....	14
17	Process for Monitoring Compliance .....	14
18	Development, Consultation and Dissemination Process .....	14
19	Document Control, Archiving and Review of this Policy .....	14
20	Equality Impact Statement .....	15
21	Legal Liability.....	15
22	References .....	16
	Appendix (A) Table 1 Critical illnesses requiring high levels of supplemental oxygen.....	17
	Appendix (B) Table 2 Serious illnesses requiring moderate levels of supplemental oxygen if the patient is hypoxaemic.....	18
	Appendix (C) Table 3 Conditions for which patients should be monitored closely but oxygen therapy is not required unless the patient is hypoxaemic .....	19
	Appendix (D) Table 4 COPD and other conditions requiring controlled or low-dose oxygen .....	20
	Appendix (E) Chart 1 Oxygen prescription for acutely hypoxaemic patients .....	21
	Appendix (F) UHL Oxygen Prescription.....	22
	Appendix (G) Administering Acute Oxygen Therapy.....	23
	Appendix (H) EQUIPMENT USED IN THE DELIVERY OF OXYGEN.....	24
	Appendix (I) Flow chart for oxygen administration on general wards in hospitals.....	32
	Appendix (J) HUMIDIFICATION .....	33
	Appendix (K) MONITORING OF PATIENTS .....	34
	Appendix (L) HEALTH AND SAFETY .....	35
	Appendix (M) How to Guide for the use of Portable Oxygen Cylinders in UHL.....	36
	Appendix (N) Air outlet cover .....	37

## 1 Introduction

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The administration of supplemental oxygen is an essential element of appropriate management for a wide range of clinical conditions; however, oxygen is a drug and therefore must be prescribed in all but emergency situations. Failure to administer oxygen appropriately can result in serious harm to the patient. The safe implementation of oxygen therapy with appropriate monitoring is an integral component of the Healthcare Professional's role.

## 2 Policy Aims

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The aim of this policy is to ensure that oxygen is prescribed, administered and monitored appropriately and safely.

- a) All patients who require supplementary oxygen therapy receive therapy that is appropriate to their clinical condition and in line with national guidance (BTS Guideline; Thorax, 2017)
- b) Oxygen will be prescribed according to a target saturation range. The system of prescribing target saturation aims to achieve a specified outcome, rather than specifying the oxygen delivery method alone
- c) Those who administer oxygen therapy will monitor the patient and keep within the target saturation range.

This policy covers the rationale for the oxygen policy and details the accepted policy for oxygen administration prescription and monitoring. It includes appendices of relevant materials to support this.

## 3 Policy Scope

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- 3.1. This Policy is local adaptation of the BTS Guidelines for Emergency Oxygen Use in Adult Patients (2017) and supports the NPSA Rapid Response Report No. NPSA/2009/RRR006, NHS/PSA/D/2016/009: Oxygen safety in Hospitals & NHS/PSA/W/2018/009: Risk of harm from inappropriate placement of pulse oximeter probes
- 3.2. This policy is for use within general adult wards and departments and covers all personnel who may administer oxygen to include any Registered Nurse, Doctor, Registered Sick Children's Nurse, or Physiotherapist, and must be used in accordance with the Leicestershire Medicines Code (6th Edition)

### 3.3. Exclusions from this policy include:

- a. Patients admitted to specialist areas with a specialised oxygen prescribing policy approved via the appropriate clinical governance forum (see 3.4).
- b. Patients receiving oxygen as part of palliative care or patients on the end of life care pathway (in which case, the prescriber should tick the box 'target saturations not indicated' on the drug chart).
- c. Patients admitted for Long Term Oxygen Therapy (LTOT) assessment.
- d. Patients under 16 although general principles may be agreed by specialist areas

### 3.4. Specialist areas including emergency department

- a. Where specific clinical guidelines are required for oxygen administration within specialist areas, they must be approved via the appropriate clinical governance forum. They should reflect wherever possible the principles within this policy. Patients transferring from specialist areas must be transferred with a prescription for their oxygen therapy utilising target saturation, if the clinical indication is ongoing. If a patient transfers from an area not utilising the target saturation system, their oxygen should be administered as per the transferring area's prescription until the patient is reviewed and transferred over to the target saturation scheme, which should occur as soon as possible.
- b. Patients requiring oxygen in the Emergency Department prior to medical review should be treated in accordance with the Emergency Department Oxygen PGD (Patient Group Direction) which should be available on trust intranet.

## 4 Roles and Responsibilities

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### 4.1. Medical Director is responsible for:

- a. Monitoring the overall compliance with this policy on an annual basis
- b. The Medical Director is the executive lead

### 4.2. CMG Senior Managers/Matrons are responsible for:

- a. Ensuring all their staff are made aware of this policy and undertake training as appropriate
- b. Monitoring and auditing compliance with this policy and procedures

### 4.3. Ward Sisters / Consultants / Heads of Service are responsible for:

- a. Ensuring all their staff are made aware of this policy and undertake training as appropriate
- b. Adhering to the procedures within this policy for prescribing, administration and monitoring of oxygen in adults

#### **4.4. Ward / Clinical Staff are responsible for:**

- a. Ensuring they undertake training as appropriate to enable compliance with this policy
- b. Adhering to the procedures within this policy for prescribing, administration and monitoring of oxygen in adults

#### **4.5. Oxygen Champions:**

The BTS has appointed oxygen champions in all Trusts to help introduce the Guideline, these are:

- a. Dr. Ire Valero-Sanchez, Consultant Respiratory Physician
- b. Dr. Neil Greening, COPD Consultant Respiratory Physician
- c. Padma Parthasarathy Respiratory ANP
- d. David Gaskell Clinical Specialist Physiotherapist

## **5 Principles of Prescribing, administering and monitoring oxygen**

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### **5.1. Identifying appropriate target saturation**

Guidance on identifying appropriate saturations for patients is provided for the medical staff and other prescribers in appendices a-e (table 1-4 and chart 1 in the guideline). In summary oxygen should be prescribed to achieve a target saturation of 94-98% for most acutely unwell patients or 88-92% for those at risk of hypercapnic respiratory failure.

### **5.2. Prescribing oxygen on the prescription chart**

An oxygen section on the prescription chart/electronic prescription has been designed to assist prescription and administration. Oxygen must be prescribed in the designated section of the hospital prescription chart (Appendix f) and the appropriate target saturation should be circled on the chart (or if target saturations are not indicated the relevant box should be ticked). In the area where the electronic prescribing system is being used, oxygen should be prescribed conveniently at the time of admission to hospital using the "Admissions bundle". This allows the efficient prescription of oxygen at the same time as thromboprophylaxis and MRSA risk management.

### **5.3. Administering oxygen**

Once the target saturation has been identified and prescribed, guidance regarding the most appropriate delivery system to reach and maintain the prescribed saturation is provided for those administering oxygen in Appendix (g), (h) and (i).

#### 5.4. Humidification

This must only be used if specifically requested by the doctor or physiotherapist in the following circumstances:

- If the flow rate exceeds 4 liters per minute for several days
- Patients with a Tracheotomy or tracheostomy (“neck-breathing patients”)
- Patients with Cystic Fibrosis
- Patients with Bronchiectasis
- Patients with a chest infection retaining secretions  
(warm humidification should be used)

#### 5.5. Monitoring and recording oxygen

- a) The patient's oxygen saturation and if the patient is requiring oxygen, the oxygen delivery system must be recorded in the electronic observation device alongside the NEWS score and other physiological variables.
- b) All patients on oxygen therapy must have regular pulse oximetry measurements. The frequency of oximetry measurements will depend on the condition being treated and the stability of the patient. Critically ill patients must have their oxygen saturations monitored continuously and recorded every few minutes whereas patients with mild breathlessness due to a stable condition will need less frequent monitoring.
- c) Oxygen therapy should be increased if the saturation is below the desired range and decreased if the saturation is above the desired range (and eventually discontinued as the patient recovers). See section 13 and appendix (i) for more details
- d) Any sudden fall in oxygen saturation should lead to clinical evaluation of the patient and in most cases, measurement of blood gases.
- e) Patients on oxygen must have their saturations recorded on the adult observation chart/electronic device and according to the Monitoring of Patients guidance (appendix k).
- f) Patients should be monitored accurately for signs of improvement or deterioration.
- g) Nurses should also monitor skin colour for peripheral cyanosis and respiratory rate. If peripheral circulation in the fingers is poor ear lobe oximetry can be monitored. But using appropriate probe is essential in order to get accurate reading. If an oximeter probe intended for the finger is attached to the ear (or vice versa), or a

probe intended for an adult is attached to a baby or a child (or vice versa) can produce a reading up to 50% lower or 30% higher than the real value which can lead to inappropriate management of the patients. Dedicated labelled ear lobe probes should be available in all clinical areas and used appropriately.

- h) Oxygen saturations of less than 90%, with or without oxygen, noisy or labored breathing or respiratory rate of less than 8 or more than 25 must be reported immediately to the medical team.
- i) If a patient shows an elevated NEWS purely due to oxygen administration with saturation above target range but is otherwise clinically stable, their nurse should reduce the concentration or flow of oxygen and repeat the NEWS measurement after about 5 minutes. It is not necessary to call a doctor to assess the patient just to reduce the oxygen saturation into the recommended range if there are no clinical concerns.

## 5.6. Emergency situations

- a) In the emergency situation an oxygen prescription is not required. Any registered health care professional can commence oxygen therapy in an emergency. Oxygen should be given to the patient immediately and documented in the patient's record. Once a patient is stabilised if the oxygen is to be continued it must then be prescribed on the prescription chart.
- b) All peri-arrest and critically ill patients should be given 100% oxygen (15 l/m reservoir mask) whilst awaiting immediate medical review. Patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and other risk factors for hypercapnia who develop critical illness should have the same initial target saturations as other critically ill patients pending the results of urgent blood gas results after which these patients may need controlled oxygen therapy or supported ventilation if there is severe hypoxaemia and/or hypercapnia with respiratory acidosis.
- c) All patients who have had a cardiac or respiratory arrest should have 100% oxygen provided along with basic/advanced life support.
- d) A subsequent written record must be made of what oxygen therapy has been given to every patient alongside the recording of all other emergency treatment.
- e) In emergency, unregistered health care professionals such as Healthcare Support workers (eg Health care workers and maternity care workers) who have been trained on Oxygen therapy/delivery can start/attach the piping for oxygen delivery under the instruction and direct supervision of a registered health care professional, however overall responsibility and accountability will lie on the

registered health care professional.

## 6 Indications for Oxygen Therapy

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6.1 The rationale for oxygen therapy is prevention of cellular hypoxia, caused by hypoxaemia (low PaO<sub>2</sub>), and thus prevention of potentially irreversible damage to vital organs. Therefore, the most common reasons for oxygen therapy to be initiated are:

- a) Acute hypoxaemia (for example pneumonia, shock, asthma, heart failure, pulmonary embolus)
- b) Ischaemia (for example myocardial infarction, but only if associated with hypoxaemia (abnormally high levels may be harmful to patients with ischaemic heart disease and stroke).
- c) Abnormalities in quality or type of haemoglobin (for example acute GI blood loss or carbon monoxide poisoning).

6.2 Other indications include:

- a) Pneumothorax – Oxygen may increase the rate of resolution of pneumothorax in patients for whom a chest drain is not indicated.
- b) Post-operative state (general anaesthesia can lead to decrease in functional residual capacity within the lungs (especially following thoracic or abdominal surgery) resulting in hypoxaemia (Ferguson 1999). There is some evidence to suggest a decreased incidence of post-operative wound infections with short-term oxygen therapy following bowel surgery.

## 7 Contra-indications for Oxygen Therapy

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There are no absolute contraindications to oxygen therapy if indications are judged to be present. The goal of oxygen therapy is to achieve adequate tissue oxygenation using the lowest possible FiO<sub>2</sub>. Supplemental O<sub>2</sub> should be administered with caution in patients suffering from paraquat poisoning (BNF 2005) and with acid inhalation or previous bleomycin lung injury.

## 8 Cautions in Oxygen Therapy

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### 8.1 Oxygen administration and carbon dioxide retention

In patients with chronic carbon dioxide retention, oxygen administration may cause further increases in carbon dioxide and respiratory acidosis. This may occur in patients with COPD, neuromuscular disorders, morbid obesity or musculoskeletal disorders. There are several



factors which lead to the rise in CO<sub>2</sub> with oxygen therapy in patients with hypercapnic respiratory failure and details are in the BTS guideline.

## **8.2 Other precautions/ Hazards/ Complications of oxygen therapy**

- a) Drying of nasal and pharyngeal mucosa
- b) Oxygen toxicity
- c) Absorption atelectasis
- d) Skin irritation
- e) Fire hazard
- f) Potentially inadequate flow resulting in lower FiO<sub>2</sub> than intended due to high inspiratory demand or inappropriate oxygen delivery device or equipment faults

## **8.3 Oxygen tubing & oxygen wall outlets**

Oxygen tubing is needed to connect flow meters and regulators to the patient delivery device. It is important to ensure that all tubing is connected correctly at both ends. Special attention must be paid to the correct identification and differentiation of oxygen outlets from compressed air outlets. The National Patient Safety Agency has reported frequent adverse events related to oxygen use, including four reports of instances where an oxygen mask was connected in error to a compressed air outlet instead of an oxygen outlet. Compressed air outlets are often used to drive nebulisers in hospitals because they are quieter than electrical compressors. However, the flow meter looks very similar to an oxygen flow meter and is often mounted beside an oxygen flow meter, so it is very important to ensure that air flow meters are clearly labelled. Air flow meters are never required in an emergency and should be removed from wall sockets or covered by a designated “hood” when not in use, an example is shown appendix n. There have also been reports of cases where twin oxygen outlets were in use and the wrong one had been turned on or off.

As an example, one patient tried to turn off their air flow outlet after finishing a dose of nebulised treatment but accidentally turned off the oxygen flow to a neighbouring patient with serious consequences.

It is also recommended to advise patients not to adjust their oxygen flow meter, especially if there are dual outlets

- Air flow meters should be removed from the wall sockets or covered with a designated air outlet cover (appendix n) when not in use. Special care should be taken if twin oxygen outlets are in use

## 9 Transfer and transportation of patients receiving oxygen

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- 9.1 Patients who are transferred across different areas must have clear documentation of their ongoing oxygen requirements and documentation of their oxygen saturations. Staff must ensure that adequate oxygen is provided during transfers and whilst patients are in diagnostic departments. Oxygen saturation should be monitored continuously by registered healthcare professionals for seriously ill patients who require escorted transfers.
- 9.2 Patients who are medically unstable and those requiring high dose oxygen therapy (Reservoir mask, Venturi mask above 35% or Humidified oxygen above 35% or simple mask above 5 l/min) whilst being transferred between different areas should be accompanied by a registered healthcare professional. The use of portable oxygen cylinders is shown in appendix (M)
- 9.3 Healthcare support worker may transfer stable patients with low Early Warning Score whose oxygen requirement is below 5l/mt via nasal cannula. Patients with the potential to deteriorate should be accompanied by registered healthcare professionals. The registered health care professional remains responsible and accountable for the patient transfer.
- 9.4 Clear instructions must be provided for the staff involved in the transfer of the patient, which must include delivery device and flow rate.
- 9.5 Staff must ensure there are adequate numbers of oxygen cylinders and that those are full when they leave the department/ward.
- 9.6 If a patient transfers from an area where the target saturation system is not used (see specialist areas 3.4) their oxygen should be administered as per the transferring area's prescription until the patient is reviewed and transferred over to the target saturation scheme, which should occur as soon as possible.

## 10 Peri-operative and immediately post operatively

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The usual procedure for prescribing oxygen therapy in these areas should be adhered to, utilising the target saturation. If a patient is transferred back to the ward on oxygen therapy and is not on the target saturation system, the need for ongoing oxygen therapy should be reviewed as soon as possible. If oxygen therapy is to be continued, it should be prescribed using the target saturation scheme unless there is an alternative time-limited instruction which is part of the Trust's Post-Operative care policy for selected patients.

## 11 Nebulised therapy and oxygen

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When nebulised therapy is administered to patients at risk of hypercapnic respiratory failure

(see section 8.1), it should be driven by compressed air. If necessary, supplementary oxygen should be given concurrently by nasal prongs at 1-4 litres per minute to maintain an oxygen saturation of 88-92% or other specified target range.

All patients requiring 35% or greater oxygen therapy should have their nebulised therapy by oxygen at a flow rate of >6 litres/minute.

## 12 Normal Oxygen saturations

- a) In adults less than 70 years of age at rest at sea level 96% - 98% when awake.
- b) Aged 70 and above at rest at sea level greater than 94% when awake.
- c) Patients of all ages may have transient dips of saturation to 84% during sleep.

## 13 Summary Oxygen Administration protocol (and weaning protocol)

ACTION	RATIONALE
All patients requiring oxygen therapy will have a prescription for oxygen therapy recorded on the patient's prescription chart. N.B exceptions- see emergency situations	Oxygen should be regarded as a drug and should be prescribed. BTS National guidelines (2017). British National Formulary (2018).
The prescription will incorporate a target saturation that will be identified by the clinician prescribing the oxygen in accordance with the Trust's oxygen guideline	Certain groups of patients require different target ranges for their oxygen saturation, see Tables 1-4.  Certain groups of patients are at risk of hyperoxaemia, particularly patients with COPD.
The prescription will incorporate an initial starting dose (i.e. delivery device and flow rate, not included in prescription)	To provide the nurses with guidance for the appropriate starting point for the oxygen delivery system and flow rate
The prescription chart should be signed at every medication round	To ensure that the patient is receiving oxygen if prescribed and to consider weaning and discontinuation
Once oxygen is in situ the nurse will monitor observations in line with appendix (k) on the bedside observation chart/ electronic device. All patients should have their oxygen saturation observed for at least five minutes after starting oxygen therapy. If a patient is receiving intermittent therapy, they may be monitored at least 8 hourly.	To identify if oxygen therapy is maintaining the target saturation or if an increase or decrease in oxygen therapy is required
The oxygen delivery device and oxygen flow rate should be recorded alongside the oxygen saturation on the bedside observation chart/ electronic device.	To provide an accurate record and allow trends in oxygen therapy and saturation levels to be identified.

Oxygen saturations must always be interpreted alongside the patient's clinical status incorporating the early warning score.	To identify early signs of clinical deterioration, e.g. elevated respiratory rate
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ACTION	RATIONALE
<p>If the patient falls outside of the target saturation range, the oxygen therapy will be adjusted accordingly</p> <p>The saturation should be monitored continuously for at least 5 minutes after any increase or decrease in oxygen dose to ensure that the patient achieves the desired saturation range.</p>	<p>To maintain the saturation in the desired range.</p>
<b>Saturation higher than target specified or &gt;98% for an extended period of time.</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Step down oxygen therapy as per guidance for delivery</li> </ul>	<p>The patient will require weaning down from current oxygen delivery system.</p> <p>See Appendix (i)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider discontinuation of oxygen therapy</li> </ul>	<p>The patient's clinical condition may have improved negating the need for supplementary oxygen</p>
<b>Saturation lower than target specified</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check all elements of oxygen delivery system for faults or errors.</li> </ul>	<p>In most instances a fall in oxygen saturation is due to deterioration of the patient however equipment faults should be checked for.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Step up oxygen therapy as per protocols in appendix (i). Any sudden fall in oxygen saturation should lead to clinical evaluation and in most cases measurement of blood gases</li> </ul>	<p>To assess the patient's response to oxygen increase, and ensure that PaCO<sub>2</sub> has not risen to an unacceptable level, or Ph dropped to an unacceptable level and to screen for the cause of deteriorating oxygen level (e.g. pneumonia, heart failure etc.)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor Early Warning Score and respiratory rate for further clinical signs of deterioration</li> </ul>	<p>Patient safety</p>
<b>Saturation within target specified</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue with oxygen therapy, and monitor patient to identify appropriate time for stepping down therapy, once clinical condition allows</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A change in delivery device (without an increase in O<sub>2</sub> therapy) does not require review by the medical team.</li> </ul>	<p>(The change may be made in stable patients due to patient preference or comfort).</p>
<b>Oxygen delivery methods</b>	
<p>The Trusts recommended delivery devices will be utilised to ensure a standardised approach to oxygen delivery, see Appendix (h)</p>	<p>Previous audits have demonstrated wide variations in delivery devices across clinical areas, potentially increasing the risk of adverse incidents</p>

## 14 Humidification

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Humidification may be required for some patient groups, especially “neck-breathing patients” and those who have difficulty in clearing airway secretions or mucus. See Appendix (J).

## 15 Health and Safety issues

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Health and Safety issues are covered in Appendix (L).

## 16 Education and Training Requirements

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- 16.1 All medical doctors, nurses, registered nursing associates and other **healthcare workers including maternity care workers involved in prescribing or administering or monitoring and recording oxygen must undertake training on the use of oxygen.**
- 16.2 Registered Healthcare Professional receive underpinning theory on Oxygen therapy and it's delivery as part of their Pre-registration programme.
- 16.3 **Healthcare workers (HCW) and maternity care workers (MCW) receive underpinning theory on the basics of Oxygen therapy during their Trust Induction programme. Competency assessment on recording Oxygen saturation is included in the annual HCW's NEWS assessment. HCWs can only accompany patients receiving supplemental oxygen therapy after completion of 'care certificate'.**
- 16.4 Oxygen Therapy in an emergency is included in Basic Life Support for all clinical staff.

## 17 Process for Monitoring Compliance

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- 17.1 University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust will participate in the national audits organized by the BTS.
- 17.2 Compliance of the policy will be monitored through monthly Nursing Metrics by the matrons.

## 18 Development, Consultation and Dissemination Process

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This document has previously been widely circulated and discussed with the Leicestershire and Rutland Respiratory Prescribing Group, the Clinical Practice Committee and respiratory physicians, pharmacy colleagues and anaesthetic colleagues.

## 19 Document Control, Archiving and Review of this Policy

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This Policy will be available on Insite and archived through the Trusts SharePoint System This policy will be reviewed in 3 years or sooner in response to clinical need

## 20 Equality Impact Statement

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20.1 The Trust recognises the diversity of the local community it serves. Our aim therefore is to provide a safe environment free from discrimination and treat all individuals fairly with dignity and appropriately according to their needs.

20.2 As part of its development, this policy and its impact on equality have been reviewed and no detriment was identified.

## 21 Legal Liability

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The Trust will generally assume vicarious liability for the acts of its staff, including those on honorary contract. However, it is incumbent on staff to ensure that they:

- Have undergone any suitable training identified as necessary under the terms of this policy or otherwise.
- Have been fully authorised by their line manager and their CMG to undertake the activity.
- Fully comply with the terms of any relevant Trust policies and/or procedures at all times.
- Only depart from any relevant Trust guidelines providing always that such departure is confined to the specific needs of individual circumstances. In healthcare delivery such departure shall only be undertaken where, in the judgement of the responsible clinician it is fully appropriate and justifiable - such decision to be fully recorded in the patient's notes.

It is recommended that staff have Professional Indemnity Insurance cover in place for their own protection in respect of those circumstances where the Trust does not automatically assume vicarious liability and where Trust support is not generally available. Such circumstances will include Samaritan acts and criminal investigations against the staff member concerned.

Suitable Professional Indemnity Insurance Cover is generally available from the various Royal Colleges and Professional Institutions and Bodies.

For advice please contact: Assistant Director - Head of Legal Services on Ext 8585

## 22 References

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O'Driscoll, B.R., Howard, L.S., Earis, J. & Mak, V. (2017) British Thoracic Society Guideline for oxygen use in adults in healthcare and emergency settings. BMJ Open Respiratory Research, Available online at <http://bmjopenrespres.bmj.com/>

Summary guideline for prescribing oxygen emergency oxygen in hospital. Available on BTS website: [www.brit-thoracic.org.uk/emergencyoxygen/](http://www.brit-thoracic.org.uk/emergencyoxygen/)

Summary of prescription, administration and discontinuation of oxygen therapy. Available on BTS website: [www.brit-thoracic.org.uk/emergencyoxygen/](http://www.brit-thoracic.org.uk/emergencyoxygen/)

National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) Rapid Response Report No. NPSA/2009/RRR006: Oxygen safety In Hospitals

National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) Patient Safety Alert reference NO. NHS/PSA/D/2016/009 Reducing the risk of oxygen tubing being connected to air flowmeters

National Health Service (NHS) Patient Safety Alert (PSA) NO. NHS/PSA/W/2018/009 Risk of harm from inappropriate placement of pulse oximeter probes



## Appendix (A) Table 1 Critical illnesses requiring high levels of supplemental oxygen

**Table 1** Critical illness requiring high levels of supplemental oxygen

Section 8.10

The initial oxygen therapy is a reservoir mask at 15 L/min pending the availability of reliable oximetry readings.

For patients with spontaneous circulation and a reliable oximetry reading, it may quickly become possible to reduce the oxygen dose while maintaining a target saturation range of 94–98%.

If oximetry is unavailable, continue to use a reservoir mask until definitive treatment is available.

Patients with COPD and other risk factors for hypercapnia who develop critical illness should have the same initial target saturations as other critically ill patients pending the results of blood gas results after which these patients may need controlled oxygen therapy with target range 88–92% or supported ventilation if there is severe hypoxaemia and/or hypercapnia with respiratory acidosis.

	Additional comments	Recommendations
Cardiac arrest or resuscitation	Refer to resuscitation guidelines for choice of delivery device during active resuscitation. Give highest possible inspired oxygen concentration during CPR until spontaneous circulation has been restored.	Recommendation E1
Shock, sepsis, major trauma, drowning, anaphylaxis, major pulmonary haemorrhage, status epilepticus	Also give specific treatment for the underlying condition	Recommendations E2–E4
Major head injury	Early tracheal intubation and ventilation if comatose	Recommendation E5
Carbon monoxide poisoning	Give as much oxygen as possible using a bag-valve mask or reservoir mask. Check carboxyhaemoglobin levels. A normal or high oximetry reading should be disregarded because saturation monitors cannot differentiate between carboxyhaemoglobin and oxyhaemoglobin, owing to their similar absorbances. The blood gas PO <sub>2</sub> will also be normal in these cases (despite the presence of tissue hypoxia).	Recommendation E6

COPD, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease; CPR, cardiopulmonary resuscitation; PO<sub>2</sub>, oxygen tension arterial or arterialised blood gases.

## Appendix (B) Table 2 Serious illnesses requiring moderate levels of supplemental oxygen if the patient is hypoxaemic

**Table 2** Serious illnesses requiring moderate levels of supplemental oxygen if the patient is hypoxaemic

Section 8.11

The initial oxygen therapy is nasal cannulae at 2–6 L/min (preferably) or simple face mask at 5–10 L/min unless stated otherwise.

For patients not at risk of hypercapnic respiratory failure who have saturation below 85%, treatment should be started with a reservoir mask at 15 L/min and the recommended initial oxygen saturation target range is 94–98%. If oximetry is not available, give oxygen as above until oximetry or blood gas results are available. Change to reservoir mask if the desired saturation range cannot be maintained with nasal cannulae or simple face mask (and ensure that the patient is assessed by senior medical staff). If these patients have coexisting COPD or other risk factors for hypercapnic respiratory failure, aim at a saturation of 88–92% pending blood gas results but adjust to 94–98% if the PCO<sub>2</sub> is normal (unless there is a history of previous hypercapnic respiratory failure requiring NIV or IMV) and recheck blood gases after 30–60 min, see table 4.

	Additional comments	Recommendations
Acute hypoxaemia (cause not yet diagnosed)	Reservoir mask at 15 L/min if initial SpO <sub>2</sub> below 85%, otherwise nasal cannulae or simple face mask Patients requiring reservoir mask therapy need urgent clinical assessment by senior staff.	Recommendations D1–D3
Acute asthma pneumonia lung cancer		Recommendations F1–F3
Deterioration of lung fibrosis or other interstitial lung disease	Reservoir mask at 15 L/min if initial SpO <sub>2</sub> below 85%, otherwise nasal cannulae or simple face mask	Recommendation F4
Pneumothorax	Needs aspiration or drainage if the patient is hypoxaemic. Most patients with pneumothorax are not hypoxaemic and do not require oxygen therapy. Use a reservoir mask at 15 L/min if admitted for observation. Aim at 100% saturation. (Oxygen accelerates clearance of pneumothorax if drainage is not required.)	Recommendations F5–F6
Pleural effusions	Most patients with pleural effusions are not hypoxaemic. If hypoxaemic, treat by draining the effusion as well as giving oxygen therapy.	Recommendation F7
Pulmonary embolism	Most patients with minor pulmonary embolism are not hypoxaemic and do not require oxygen therapy.	Recommendation F8
Acute heart failure	Consider CPAP or NIV in cases of pulmonary oedema.	Recommendations F9–F10
Severe anaemia	The main issue is to correct the anaemia. Most anaemic patients do not require oxygen therapy.	Recommendations F11–12
Postoperative breathlessness	Management depends on underlying cause.	Recommendation J1

COPD, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease; CPAP, continuous positive airway pressure; IMV, invasive mechanical ventilation; NIV, non-invasive ventilation; PCO<sub>2</sub>, arterial or arterialed carbon dioxide tension; SpO<sub>2</sub>, arterial oxygen saturation measured by pulse oximetry.

## Appendix (C) Table 3 Conditions for which patients should be monitored closely but oxygen therapy is not required unless the patient is hypoxaemic

**Table 3** Conditions for which patients should be monitored closely but oxygen therapy is not required unless the patient is hypoxaemic

Section 8.13

If hypoxaemic, the initial oxygen therapy is nasal cannulae at 2–6 L/min or simple face mask at 5–10 L/min unless saturation is below 85% (use reservoir mask) or if at risk from hypercapnia (see below).

The recommended initial target saturation range, unless stated otherwise, is 94–98%.

If oximetry is not available, give oxygen as above until oximetry or blood gas results are available.

If patients have COPD or other risk factors for hypercapnic respiratory failure, aim at a saturation of 88–92% pending blood gas results but adjust to 94–98% if the PCO<sub>2</sub> is normal (unless there is a history of respiratory failure requiring NIV or IMV) and recheck blood gases after 30–60 min, see table 4.

	Additional comments	Recommendations
Myocardial infarction and acute coronary syndromes	Most patients with acute coronary artery syndromes are not hypoxaemic and the benefits/harms of oxygen therapy are unknown in such cases. Unnecessary use of high concentration oxygen may increase infarct size.	Recommendation F13
Stroke	Most patients with stroke are not hypoxaemic. Oxygen therapy may be harmful for non-hypoxaemic patients with mild–moderate strokes.	Recommendation F14
Hyperventilation or dysfunctional breathing	Exclude organic illness. Patients with pure hyperventilation due to anxiety or panic attacks are unlikely to require oxygen therapy. Rebreathing from a paper bag may cause hypoxaemia and is not recommended.	See section 8.13.3
Most poisonings and drug overdoses (see table 1 for carbon monoxide poisoning)	Hypoxaemia is more likely with respiratory depressant drugs, give antidote if available, for example, naloxone for opiate poisoning. Check blood gases to exclude hypercapnia if a respiratory depressant drug has been taken. Avoid high blood oxygen levels in cases of acid aspiration as there is theoretical evidence that oxygen may be harmful in this condition. Monitor all potentially serious cases of poisoning in a level 2 or 3 environment (high dependency unit or intensive care unit).	Recommendation F15
Poisoning with paraquat or bleomycin	Patients with paraquat poisoning or bleomycin lung injury may be harmed by supplemental oxygen. Avoid oxygen unless the patient is hypoxaemic. Target saturation is 85–88%.	Recommendation F16
Metabolic and renal disorders	Most do not need oxygen (tachypnoea may be due to acidosis in these patients)	Recommendation F17
Acute and subacute neurological and muscular conditions producing muscle weakness	These patients may require ventilatory support and they need careful monitoring which includes spirometry. If the patient's oxygen level falls below the target saturation, they need urgent blood gas measurements and are likely to need ventilatory support.	Recommendation G4
Pregnancy and obstetric emergencies	Oxygen therapy may be harmful to the fetus if the mother is not hypoxaemic.	Recommendations H1–H4

COPD, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease; IMV, invasive mechanical ventilation; NIV, non-invasive ventilation; PCO<sub>2</sub>, arterial or arterialised carbon dioxide tension.

## Appendix (D) Table 4 COPD and other conditions requiring controlled or low-dose oxygen

**Table 4** COPD and other conditions requiring controlled or low-dose oxygen therapy

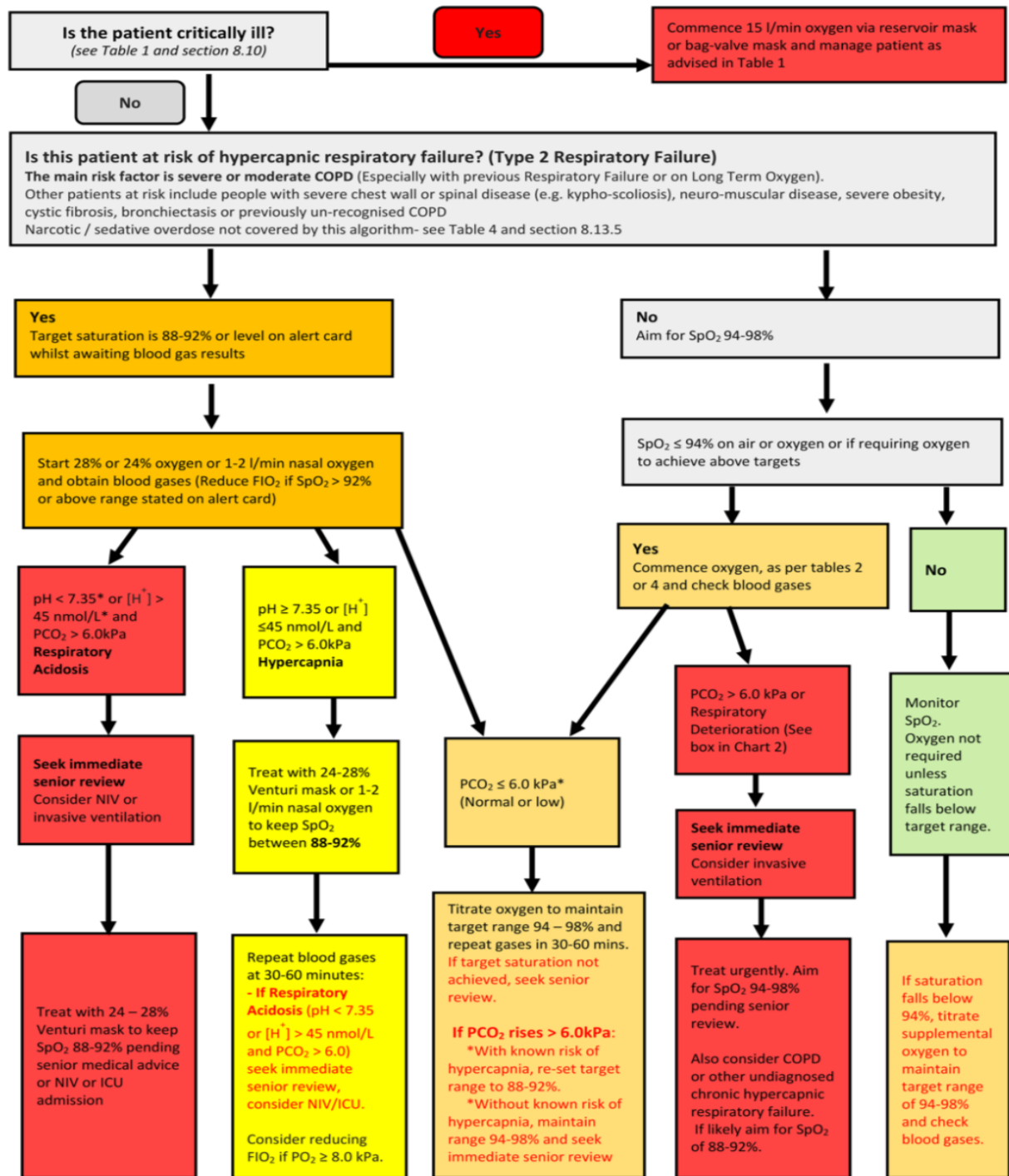
Section 8.12

Prior to availability of blood gases, use a 24% Venturi mask at 2–3 L/min or 28% Venturi mask at 4 L/min or nasal cannulae at 1–2 L/min and aim for an oxygen saturation of 88–92% for patients with risk factors for hypercapnia but no prior history of respiratory acidosis. Adjust target range to 94–98% if the  $PCO_2$  is normal (unless there is a history of previous NIV or IMV) and recheck blood gases after 30–60 min.

	Additional comments	Recommendations
COPD and other conditions causing fixed airflow obstruction (eg, bronchiectasis)	May need lower range if acidotic or if known to be very sensitive to oxygen therapy. Ideally use 'alert cards' to guide therapy based on previous blood gas results. Increase Venturi mask flow by up to 50% if respiratory rate is above 30 breaths/min.	Recommendations G1–G2 and section 8.12.1
Exacerbation of CF	Admit to regional CF centre if possible, if not discuss with regional centre or manage according to protocol agreed with regional CF centre. Ideally use 'alert cards' to guide therapy. Increase Venturi mask flow by up to 50% if respiratory rate is above 30 breaths/min.	Recommendations G1, G3, G6
Neuromuscular disease, neurological condition and chest wall deformity	May require ventilatory support. Risk of hypercapnic respiratory failure	Recommendations G1, G4, G6
Morbid obesity		Recommendations G1, G5, G6

CF, cystic fibrosis; COPD, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease; IMV, invasive mechanical ventilation; NIV, non-invasive ventilation;  $PCO_2$ , arterial or arterialised carbon dioxide tension.

## Appendix (E) Chart 1 Oxygen prescription for acutely hypoxaemic patients



**Figure 1** Chart 1 - Oxygen prescription for acutely hypoxaemic patients in hospital. Any increase in FIO<sub>2</sub> must be followed by repeat blood gases in 1 hour (or sooner if conscious level deteriorates). \*If pH is < 7.35 ([H<sup>+</sup>] > 45 nmol/L) with normal or low PaCO<sub>2</sub>, investigate and treat for metabolic acidosis and keep SpO<sub>2</sub> 94-98%. ABG, arterial blood gas; COPD, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease; FIO<sub>2</sub>, fraction of inspired oxygen; ICU, intensive care unit; NIV, non-invasive ventilation; PaCO<sub>2</sub>, arterial carbon dioxide tension; PCO<sub>2</sub>, carbon dioxide tension; PO<sub>2</sub>, oxygen tension; SpO<sub>2</sub>, arterial oxygen saturation measured by pulse oximetry.

## Appendix (F) UHL Oxygen Prescription

If your area uses EPMA please choose protocol appropriate to your clinical area and prescribe VTE prophylaxis, MRSA treatment and oxygen. When prescribing oxygen choose appropriate target saturation

If your area uses prescription chart, please use oxygen therapy column shown below

13		OXYGEN THERAPY										
DRUG	OXYGEN	OXYGEN SHOULD NOT BE WITHHELD WHILST AWAITING A PRESCRIPTION, IF IT IS REQUIRED										
CIRCLE TARGET OXYGEN SATURATION 88 - 92% 94 - 98% Other <input type="text"/>		DATE	DATE ADMINISTERED									
PRN / Continuous (refer to O <sub>2</sub> guideline)			09									
Tick here if saturation not indicated <input type="checkbox"/>			14									
Signature:			18									
Date:			22									
Print name:												

## Appendix (G) Administering Acute Oxygen Therapy


ACTION	RATIONALE
1. Ensure patency of airway	To promote effective oxygenation
2. The type of delivery system used will depend on the needs and comfort of the patient. It is the nurse's role to assess the patient and use the prescribed system.	To provide accurate oxygen delivery. Most stable patients prefer nasal cannula to masks.
3. Ensure oxygen is prescribed on prescription chart/e-meds. In some situations, a patient group direction may be in place to allow designated nurses to administer oxygen. In these cases, the doctor must review the patient's condition within the stated time and prescribe oxygen accordingly.	To ensure a complete record is maintained and expedite patient treatment. The exception to this action would be during an emergency situation where the resuscitation guideline should be followed.
4. Ensure that the oxygen dose is clearly indicated. If nasal cannula or reservoir masks are being used check that the flow rate is clearly indicated	In accordance with the administration of medicines policy.
5. Inform patients and or relative / carer of the combustibility of oxygen	Oxygen supports combustion therefore there is always a danger of fire when oxygen is being used.
6. Show and explain the oxygen delivery system to the patient. Give the patient the information sheet about oxygen.	To obtain consent and co-operation.
7. Assemble the oxygen delivery system carefully as shown in Appendix (h)	To ensure oxygen is given as prescribed
8. Attach oxygen delivery system to oxygen source	To ensure oxygen supply is ready
9. Attach oxygen delivery system to patient according to manufacturer's instructions	For oxygen to be administered to patient
10. Turn on oxygen flow in accordance with prescription and manufacturers instruction	To administer correct % of oxygen
11. Ensure patient has either a drink or a mouthwash within reach	To prevent drying of the oral mucosa
12. Clean oxygen mask as required with general purpose detergent and dry thoroughly. Discard systems after use.	To minimise risk of infection (single patient device)

## Appendix (H) EQUIPMENT USED IN THE DELIVERY OF OXYGEN

### (Choose the appropriate delivery device)

1. Oxygen source (piped or cylinder)
2. Flow meter
3. Saturation monitor
4. Oxygen Delivery system - (see appendix j for advice on use of each device);

### (H1) Nasal cannula


DEVICE	DESCRIPTION	PURPOSE
<p data-bbox="204 683 395 712"><b>Nasal Cannulae</b></p> 	<p data-bbox="587 683 847 748"><b>Uncontrolled oxygen therapy</b></p> <p data-bbox="587 824 943 1070">Nasal cannulae consist of pair of tubes about 2cm long, each projecting into the nostril and stemming from a tube which passes over the ears and which is thus self-retaining.</p>	<p data-bbox="970 683 1374 1106">Cannulae are preferred to masks by most patients. They have the advantage of not interfering with feeding and are not as inconvenient as masks during coughing and sneezing. It is not advisable to assume what percent oxygen (FI02) the patient is receiving according to the Litres delivered but this is not important if the patient is in the correct target range.</p>
<p data-bbox="204 1496 304 1525"><b>ACTION</b></p>	<p data-bbox="815 1496 959 1525"><b>RATIONALE</b></p>	
<p data-bbox="204 1541 767 1675">1.(When using nasal cannula). Position the tips of the cannula in the patient's nose so that the tips do not extend more than 1.5cm into the nose.</p>	<p data-bbox="815 1541 1369 1675">Overlong tubing is uncomfortable, which may make the patient reject the procedure. Sore nasal mucosa can result from pressure or friction of tubing that is too long.</p>	
<p data-bbox="204 1691 783 1787">2. Place tubing over the ears and under the chin as shown above. Educate patient re prevention of pressure areas on the back of the ear.</p>	<p data-bbox="815 1691 1326 1756">To allow optimum comfort for the patient. To prevent pressure sores.</p>	
<p data-bbox="204 1803 751 1850">3. Adjust flow rate, usually 2-4 l/min but may vary from 1-6 l/min in some circumstances.</p>	<p data-bbox="815 1803 1369 1850">Set the flow rate to achieve the desired target oxygen saturation.</p>	



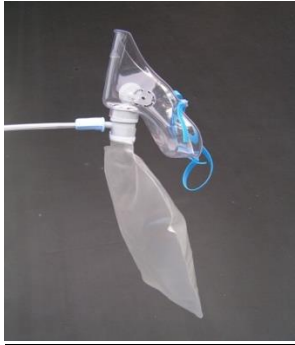
## (H2) Fixed performance mask (Venturi mask and valve)

DEVICE	DESCRIPTION	PURPOSE
<p><b>Venturi mask</b></p>  <p><b>Venturi devices come in different colours for %</b></p> <p>Blue = 24% White = 28% Yellow = 35% Red = 40% Green = 60%</p>	<p><b>Controlled oxygen therapy</b></p> <p>A mask incorporating a device to enable a fixed concentration of oxygen to be delivered independent of patient factors or fit to the face or flow rate. Oxygen is forced out through a small hole causing a Venturi effect which enables air to mix with oxygen.</p>	<p>This is a high-performance oxygen mask designed to deliver a specified oxygen concentration regardless of breathing rate or tidal volume.</p>
<p><b>ACTION</b></p>	<p><b>RATIONALE</b></p>	
<p>1. (When using Venturi mask) Connect the mask to the appropriate Venturi barrel attached firmly into the mask inlet.</p>	<p>To ensure that patient receives the correct concentration of oxygen</p>	
<p>2. Fasten oxygen tubing securely.</p>	<p>Correctly secured tubing is comfortable and prevents displacement of mask/cannulae.</p>	
<p>3. Assess the patient's condition and functioning of equipment at regular intervals according to care plan.</p>	<p>To ensure patient's safety and that oxygen is being administered as prescribed.</p>	
<p>4. Adjust flow rate. The minimum flow rate is indicated on the mask or packet. The flow should be doubled if the patient has a respiratory rate above 30 per minute.</p>	<p>Higher flows are required for patients with rapid respiration and high inspiratory flow rates. This does not affect the concentration of oxygen but allows the gas flow rate to match the patient's breathing pattern.</p>	

### (H3) Simple face mask (variable flow)


DEVICE	DESCRIPTION	PURPOSE
<p><b>Simple face mask</b></p>  <p>Variable Percentage (Delivers unpredictable concentrations that vary with flow rate)</p> <p><i>Nasal cannulae should be used for most patients who require medium dose oxygen but a simple face mask may be used due to patient preference or if the nose is blocked</i></p>	<p><b>Uncontrolled Oxygen therapy</b></p> <p>Mask has a soft plastic face piece; vent holes are provided to allow air to escape. Maximum 50%-60% at 15ltrs/minute flow.</p>	<p>This is a variable performance device. The oxygen concentration delivered will be influenced by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the oxygen flow rate (liters per minute) used, leakage between the mask and face;</li> <li>the patient's tidal volume and breathing rate.</li> </ol> <p><b>NOT to be used for CO<sub>2</sub> retaining patients.</b></p>
<b>ACTION</b>		<b>RATIONALE</b>
<p>(If using simple face mask) Gently place mask over the patient's face, position the strap behind the head or the loops over the ears then carefully pull both ends through the front of the mask until secure.</p>		<p>Ensure a comfortable fit and delivery of prescribed oxygen is maintained.</p>
<p>Check that strap is not across ears and if necessary, insert padding between the strap and head.</p>		<p>To prevent irritation.</p>
<p>Adjust the oxygen flow rate. Must never be below 5L/min</p>		<p>Flows below 5L/m may not give enough oxygen and cause increased resistance to breathing, particularly if the patient has a high inspiratory flow rate, and may also cause CO<sub>2</sub> re-breathing due to insufficient wash-out of expired gases from the mask</p>

#### (H4) Reservoir mask (non re-breathe mask)

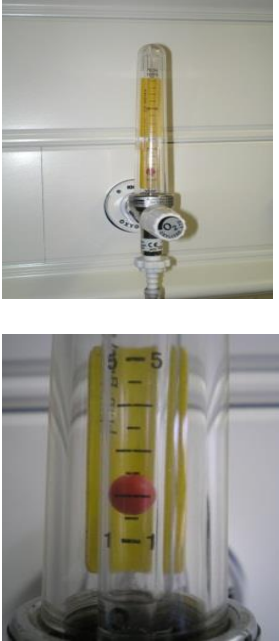
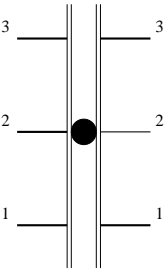
DEVICE	DESCRIPTION	PURPOSE
<p><b>Reservoir Mask (Non-rebreathe Mask)</b></p> 	<p><b>Uncontrolled oxygen therapy</b></p> <p>Mask has a soft plastic face piece with flap-valve exhalation ports which may be removed for emergency air-intake. There is also a one-way valve between the face mask and reservoir bag.</p>	<p>In non re-breathing systems, the oxygen may be stored in the reservoir bag during exhalation by means of a one-way valve. High concentrations of oxygen 80-90% can be achieved at relatively low flow rates.</p> <p><b>NOT to be used for CO2 retaining patients except in life-threatening emergencies such as cardiac arrest or major trauma.</b></p>
<b>ACTION</b>		<b>RATIONALE</b>
<p>1. (Non-Rebreathe Reservoir Mask) Ensure the reservoir bag is inflated before placing mask on patient, this can be maintained by using 10-15 litres of oxygen per min.</p> <p>2. Adjust the oxygen flow to the prescribed rate. To ensure the optimal flow of oxygen to the patient. Inadequate flow rates may result in administration of inadequate oxygen concentration to the patient.</p>		<p>To ensure the optimal flow of oxygen to the patient.</p> <p>Inadequate flow rates may result in administration of inadequate oxygen concentration to the patient.</p>

**In disposable reservoir, oxygen flows directly into the mask during inspiration and into the reservoir bag during exhalation. All exhaled air is vented through a port in the mask and a one-way valve between the bag and mask, which prevents re-breathing.**

## (H5) Tracheostomy mask for patients with tracheostomy or laryngectomy

DEVICE	DESCRIPTION	PURPOSE
<p><b>Tracheostomy mask</b> Variable Percentage (Delivers unpredictable concentrations that vary with flow rate)</p> 	<p><b>Uncontrolled Oxygen therapy</b></p> <p>Mask designed for “neck breathing patients”. Fits comfortably over tracheostomy or tracheotomy. Exhalation port on front of mask.</p>	<p>This is a variable performance device for patients with tracheostomy or tracheotomy. The oxygen concentration delivered will be influenced by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a.</b> the oxygen flow rate( litres per minute) used.</li> <li><b>b.</b> the patient’s tidal volume and breathing rate.</li> </ul> <p><b>Use cautiously at low flow rates in CO2 retaining patients as there may be no alternative.</b></p>
ACTION		RATIONALE
<p>Gently place mask over the patient’s airway, position the strap behind the head then carefully pull both ends through the front of the mask until secure.</p> <p>Adjust the oxygen flow rate to achieve the desired target saturation range. Start at 4 l/min and adjust the flow up or down as necessary to achieve the desired oxygen saturation range.</p>		<p>Ensure a comfortable fit and delivery of prescribed oxygen is maintained.</p> <p>To ensure that the correct amount of oxygen is given to keep the patient in the target range.</p>

## (H6) Oxygen Flow Meter

DEVICE	DESCRIPTION	PURPOSE
<p><b>Oxygen flow meter</b> Delivers oxygen to the patient.</p> 	<p>Device to allow the patient to receive an accurate flow of oxygen, usually between 2 and 15 litres per minute.</p> <p>May be wall-mounted or on a cylinder.</p> <p><b>Take special care when using twin oxygen outlets or if there are air outlets which may be mistaken for oxygen outlets.</b></p>	<p>To ensure that the patient receives the correct amount of oxygen.</p>  <p><b>Correct Setting for 2 l/min</b></p>
<b>ACTION</b>		<b>RATIONALE</b>
<p>Attach the oxygen tubing to the nozzle on the flow meter.</p> <p>Turn the finger-valve to obtain the desired flow rate. The CENTRE of the ball shows the correct flow rate. The diagrams shows the correct setting to deliver 2 l/min.</p>		<p>To ensure that the patient receives the correct amount of oxygen.</p>

## H7) High Flow Nasal cannula

### DEVICE DESCRIPTION

Soft nasal cannula which delivers heated humidified oxygen through a blended oxygen delivery system such as Dragar.

There are 3 components:

1. patient interface,
2. gas delivery device(s) to control flow and  $F_{IO_2}$
3. humidifier.

The nasal prongs are held in place on the upper lip with an elastic over-ear head band. There is a larger diameter flex tubing proximal to the prongs and an around-the-neck elastic that connects to support the weight of the connecting tubing. They are available in large, medium, and small sizes

Used in level two and above (Critical care, SHDU, MHDU, NHDU)



High flow nasal cannulae, flow generator and humidifier system

### Controlled oxygen therapy

Oxygen is generally delivered in flow rates in excess of 30L /min therefore providing controlled oxygen therapy

The flow rate however can be reduced as the patient improves, therefore at rates below 30L/min the flow will be insufficient to deliver oxygen to meet the patients peak inspiratory flow and the oxygen concentration will therefore become variable.

## **PURPOSE**

The HFNC can effectively be used to treat patients with moderate levels of hypoxemic respiratory failure.

HFNC could be considered as an initial appliance in certain settings (eg, ED), as flow could be titrated based on response over a full range without having to change to other devices. It could also be viewed as an alternative delivery interface for situations in which hypoxemia or dyspnea was not corrected after a trial of low-flow cannula, NRB and/or air-entrainment mask with  $F_{IO_2} > 0.4$ .

HFNC systems offer independent adjustment of  $F_{IO_2}$  and flow. This allows greater flexibility to match the needs of acutely ill patients. Higher flow can match the inspiratory flow demands of tachypnoeic patients, which can prevent secondary air entrainment at the facial interface

A small amount of airway distending pressures, similar to CPAP, can be achieved with HFNC, however, this is difficult to measure and not predictable.

Heated and humidified gas from HFNCs may improve comfort and allow greater tolerance. It also has the advantage of easier speech, eating, drinking, and allows frequent expectoration.

## **ACTION RATIONALE**

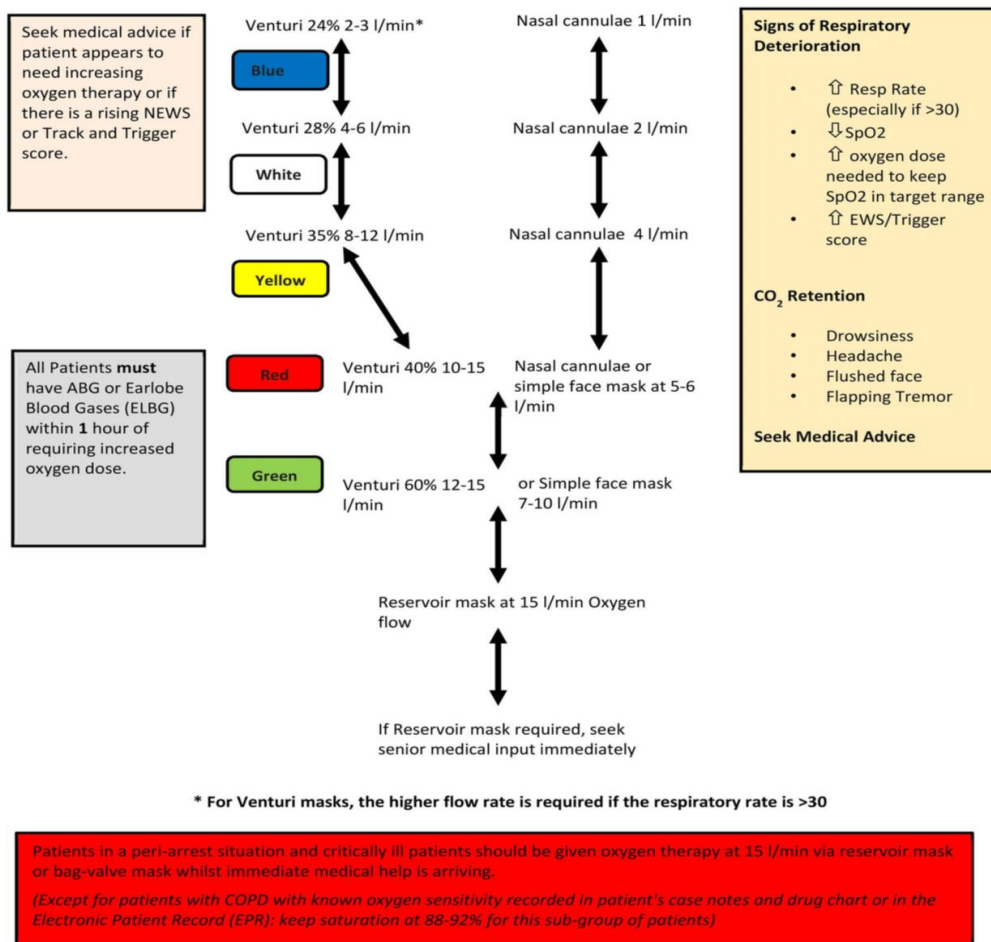
1. Set up high flow nasal cannula in line with delivery device and humidification
2. Adjust the air/oxygen flow of the delivery device to meet the prescribed percentage of oxygen and delivery flow.
3. Inadequate flow rates may result in administration of inadequate oxygen concentration to the patient.

## Appendix (I) Flow chart for oxygen administration on general wards in hospitals

See patient's drug chart and Chart 1 and tables 1-4 for starting dose and target saturation  
Choose the most suitable delivery system and flow rate

Titrate oxygen up or down to maintain the target oxygen saturation.

The table below shows available options for stepping dosage up or down.  
The chart does NOT imply any equivalence of dose between Venturi masks and nasal cannulae.  
Allow at least 5 minutes at each dose before adjusting further upwards or downwards  
(except with major and sudden fall in saturation – falls  $\geq 3\%$  also require clinical review)  
Once your patient has adequate and stable saturation on minimal oxygen dose, consider discontinuation of oxygen therapy.



**Figure 2** Chart 2 - Flow chart for oxygen administration on general wards in hospitals. \*For Venturi masks, the higher flow rate is required if the respiratory rate is  $>30$ . ABG, arterial blood gas; COPD, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease; EPR, electronic patient record; EWS, early warning score; NEWS, National Early Warning Score; SpO<sub>2</sub>, arterial oxygen saturation measured by pulse oximetry.



## Appendix (J) HUMIDIFICATION



This should only be used if specifically requested by the doctor or physiotherapist in the following circumstances.

1. If the flow rate exceeds 4 litres per minute for several days
2. Tracheotomy or tracheostomy patients (“neck-breathing patients”)
3. Cystic Fibrosis patients
4. Bronchiectasis patients
5. Patients with a chest infection retaining secretions

Can be given by warm or cold humidifier systems  
(warm humidifier systems are mainly used in critical care areas)

## Appendix (K) MONITORING OF PATIENTS

Action	Rationale
1. Observe the following <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Monitor arterial oxygen saturation levels according to Trust Oxygen policy</li> <li>b. Visual observations of skin color for central cyanosis (blue lips)</li> <li>c. Respiratory rate</li> <li>d. Any sign of respiratory distress should be immediately</li> </ul>	In order to accurately monitor the patient for signs of improvement or deterioration
2. If the arterial oxygen saturation is above or below the target saturation the observer (often a Health Care Assistant) must inform the registered staff who are responsible for the patient care, to administer oxygen (usually a Nurse)	Patient safety
3. Check the patient's mouth, nose & behind the ears	To identify signs of infection and pressure sores as soon as possible
4. Record all observations on appropriate Chart, hourly if on continuous oxygen, 8-hourly if on intermittent oxygen	To ensure adequate record keeping

## Appendix (L) HEALTH AND SAFETY

Action	Rationale
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Inform patients and carers about the combustibility of oxygen</li><li>2. Oxygen should be stored in an area designated as no smoking</li><li>3. Electrical appliances should be kept at least five feet away from the source of oxygen</li><li>4. Avoid grease or oil coming into contact with apparatus</li><li>5. Store unused cylinders in a dry well-ventilated place</li><li>6. Appropriate racking should be used where available</li></ol>	<p>Oxygen supports combustion, there is always a danger of fire when oxygen is being used</p> <p>Oxygen can be potentially dangerous when in contact with sources of ignition and flammable material</p>

Appendix (M) How to Guide for the use of Portable Oxygen Cylinders in UHL

**HOW TO GUIDE** FOR THE USE OF **PORTABLE OXYGEN CYLINDERS** IN UHL

**STEP 1.**

**Check the OXYGEN Cylinder to see if it is FULL or EMPTY**

If the Arrow is pointing into the **RED** then the Cylinder is **EMPTY**

Check that the cylinder contains **OXYGEN** and not air (or any other gases)



If the Arrow is pointing into the **GREEN** then the Cylinder is **FULL**.

**A full cylinder delivering 15 l/min will be empty in approximately 20 minutes**

**STEP 2.**

**SWITCH ON using the OPEN / CLOSE Valve**

Remove the cover by pulling at the **Plastic Handle** this will reveal the **OPEN / CLOSE VALVE**.



For **Oxygen** to flow you **MUST TURN** the **OPEN / CLOSE VALVE ANTI Clockwise**.

**STEP 3.**

**ACCESS the OXYGEN Outflow ports to connect tubing**

Pull down the **Hinged Plastic Cover** to reveal the **OUTFLOW PORTS**.



Outflow port for connection to **OXYGEN TUBING**.

Outflow port for connection to **Ventilator or Flow meter**.

**STEP 4.**

**SET the OXYGEN FLOW RATE**



Integral Flow Meter is situated on the top of the Cylinder



Integral Flow Meter **TURN CLOCK WISE** to deliver **OXYGEN** Range **0 – 15 L / min**

**Remember to regularly monitor the clinical progress of your patient:** use pulse oximetry and if oxygen saturations do not respond to treatment consider rechecking the equipment and checking that oxygen is flowing. **USE a CAGE to safely hold the oxygen cylinder** Oxygen must always be prescribed. **Remember: oxygen supports combustion – keep away from sparks, shocks, naked flames and electronic equipment.**

## Appendix (N) Air outlet cover

