Quick Guide: Environmental Ligature Policy and Procedure

Managers must:

- Identify competent persons to carry out risk assessment and inspections who will consult with staff and staff side representatives whilst undertaking these tasks.
- Ensure, through the risk assessment process that all environmental ligature and suffocation hazards are assessed, that control measures are identified, implemented and reviewed annually, when there is significant change or upon receipt of any relevant safety alerts. This is in addition to the requirement for individual patient clinical risk assessments.
- Communicate the results of risk assessment process to ensure that all staff are fully aware of the findings and of the control measures in place to eliminate or minimise the risks. This should be recorded.
- Ensure Ligature inspections are undertaken by a team led by an experienced member of staff on a quarterly basis (or more frequently if determined by risk assessment) and assessments reviewed.
- Any risks which cannot be adequately controlled locally should be escalated to the appropriate senior manager.
- Ensure actual and near miss events are reported on DATIX, thoroughly investigated and are reviewed to identify any trends.
- Ensure staff have read and understood their responsibilities within the Environmental Ligature Risk Policy. This should be recorded.
- Ensure that all staff are familiar with the system for reporting Estates/PFI requests and ensure all requests are actioned and do not present additional hazards.
- All documentation e.g. records of assessments, requests to estates/PFI providers and training should be retained for 10 years NHS Lothian's Retention and Destruction of Records Operating Procedure.
- Review the implementation of the Environmental Ligature Risk Policy and report on this through the Quarterly Review programme.

Staff must:

- Ensure good housekeeping.
- Ensure constant vigilance and observation to identify and report any potential ligature and or suffocation hazards appropriate to their client group and typical identified risks and report any concerns to managers.
- Co-operate and assist staff identified to carry risk assessments and inspections
- Report actual and near miss events on DATIX
- Read and understand the policy, risk assessment(s) and any relevant procedural controls.
- Attend any training identified through the risk assessment process