

Quick Guide: Safe Bathing, Showering and Surface Temperature Policy

This policy applies where there is a risk to vulnerable patients. Those patients that should be considered particularly at risk and vulnerable include:

- Babies
- Children
- The elderly
- Those with reduced mental capacity, reduced mobility and anyone with sensory impairment, or who cannot react appropriately, or quickly enough to prevent injury to themselves or find themselves unable to alert others to react on their behalf.

Managers must:

- Identify competent persons to carry out risk assessment who will consult with staff and staff side representatives whilst undertaking these tasks.
- Ensure, through the risk assessment process that all hazards which contribute to scalds and burns 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.
- Any risks which cannot be adequately controlled locally should be escalated to the appropriate senior manager.
- Ensure all staff have read and understood/been trained in the Procedure for Bathing and Showering Patients. This should be recorded.
- 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 Safe Bathing, Showering and Surface Temperature Policy. This should be recorded.
- 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 Safe Bathing, Showering and Surface Temperature Policy and report on this through the Quarterly Review programme.
- Where bathing of babies/children takes place by their parents, guardian or others then signage will be displayed in the bathing area highlighting the need to undertake a pre bathing water temperature check.
- Provide thermometers and jugs for testing of water temperatures for staff to use

Staff must:

- Co-operate and assist staff identified to carry risk assessments
- 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
- Report any recorded temperature(s) if they exceed 44o C without delay to the Estates Department/PFI provider. Locking, closing or sealing off from use that bath/shower/radiator or pipe work until it has been confirmed that the necessary repairs have been carried out and the water is at the correct temperature.
- Follow the Procedure for checking Bath and Shower Temperatures. This will ensure that the temperature of the water does not exceed 38°C.
- Ward staff must also notify those bathing the child of the need to check the water temperature and provide the parent/guardian/carer with a thermometer.
- Ensure the temperature of the water will be documented in the nursing notes/care plan following the procedure