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Shared Services
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Specialist Estates Services

Specialist Estates Services Notification 17/04

3 March 2017

For action by:

Board Level Directors (Fire), NHS Health Boards and Trusts

For information only:

Chief Executives
Estates/Facilities Directors and Managers
Fire Safety Managers
Fire Advisors

Copy to: Head of Capital, Estates and Facilities,
Department of Health and Social Care, Welsh Government

Attached documents:

NHS Estate in Wales. Fire statistics report: Fire incidents and unwanted fire signals 2016

Dear Colleague

ESTATE IN WALES. FIRE STATISTICS REPORT: FIRE INCIDENTS AND UNWANTED FIRE SIGNALS 2016

The attached report reviews the fire incidents and unwanted fire signals (UwFS) reported by the NHS health boards and Trusts in Wales through the online Fire and UwFS Incident Reporting System, as mandated in WHC (2006) 74 and WHTM 05-03 Part H: *Reducing false alarms in healthcare premises*.

During the twelve month period between 1st January 2016 and 31st December 2016, a total of 66 fire incidents and 1876 UwFS were reported to NWSSP – Specialist Estates Services. The number of reported fire incidents increased by 12% compared with the previous year's figures and the number of UwFS increased significantly by 21%.

The increase in UwFS seen in 2016 can, in part, be attributed to improved reporting procedures. However, an element of under reporting of UwFS incidents, at certain sites is still evident, which undermines the accuracy of the annual report in terms of the actual position. Consequently health boards and Trusts should give high priority to the need to review their reporting procedures as indicated below.

The report emphasises the necessity for healthcare organisations to continue with their endeavours to mitigate these adverse incidents. In particular, reiterating the actions previously identified in SESN 15/03, health boards and Trusts should address the following:

- Although there has been an improvement in the reporting procedures, health boards should ensure all incidents throughout the estate are accurately investigated and reported in accordance with WHTM 05-03 Part H and, where applicable, influence future fire management procedures. This should include continually reviewing the reporting procedures to ensure that **all** incidents are reported through the online incident reporting system.
- Ensure that the named 'responsible person' for detection and alarm systems as referenced in BS 5839-1 *Fire detection and alarm systems for buildings. Code of practice for system design, installation, commissioning and maintenance* has robust maintenance regimes in place for all detection and alarm systems, in accordance with BS5839.
- Review the provision of manual call points, particularly in mental health wards, with a view to providing additional protection to the call points or changing them to key operated call points where actuations are occurring as a result of operation by patients.
- Ensure that there are efficient methods in place for the isolation and control of fire alarm systems where contractors are at work to prevent unnecessary actuation of the alarm system through the activities of contractors.
- Continue to monitor and manage the occurrence of UwFS in line with the performance scoring facility, outlined in WHTM 05-03 Part H and the online incident reporting system as required by WHEN 10/03.
- Continue to promote a greater awareness for staff, patients, visitors and contractors of the adverse practices that cause fires and UwFS, especially in staff areas and mental health facilities, with particular emphasis on the necessity of controlling ignition sources as detailed in SESN 15/06.
- Ensure that electrical appliances and fixed wiring and equipment are tested and maintained in accordance with the relevant standards.

For those with access to NHS Wales intranet, the full report is available from the Publications page of the NWSSP-SES intranet site and may be viewed [HERE](#).

Any enquiries on the content of this letter or the Fire and UwFS Incident Reporting System should be addressed to Gareth Lloyd, Fire Safety Advisor on 02920 904119 or email gareth.lloyd6@wales.nhs.uk.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "NH Davies". The letters are cursive and somewhat stylized.

NH Davies BSc (Hons), Dip Proj Man (RICS), MBA, MCIQB, FIHEEM

Director Specialist Estates Services

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