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Shared Services
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Specialist Estates Services

Specialist Estates Services Notification 18/03

28 February 2018

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 2017

Dear Colleague

ESTATE IN WALES. FIRE STATISTICS REPORT: FIRE INCIDENTS AND UNWANTED FIRE SIGNALS 2017

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 2017 and 31st December 2017, a total of 64 fire incidents and 1859 UwFS were reported to NWSSP – Specialist Estates Services. The number of reported fire incidents decreased by 3% compared with the previous year's figures and the number of UwFS decreased by 0.9%.

With regard to the fire incidents the most prominent cause is attributed to electrical failure, followed by arson related incidents primarily occurring in the mental health sector.

In terms of UwFS, although a decrease was seen in 2017, while welcome, it is what can only be termed as minimal and the overall level of UwFS is still too high. Prominent causes include; cooking, other environmental effects and system faults.

Accordingly, 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 16/04, Health Boards and Trusts should address the following actions:

- Ensure that electrical appliances and fixed wiring and equipment are tested and maintained in accordance with the relevant standards.
- Review the fire safety management arrangements for Mental Health facilities with particular emphasis on control of ignition sources.
- Review the arrangements for accurate cost reporting for fire incidents using the Specialist Estates Services online reporting system.
- 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: Reducing false alarms in healthcare premises*' 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.
- Review the provision of manual call points particularly in Mental Health facilities with a view to providing additional protection to the call points or, subject to risk assessment, changing them to key operated call points where actuations are occurring as a result of operation by patients.
- Ensure that the named '*responsible person*' for the 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.
- 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 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.
- Continue to monitor and manage the occurrence of UwFS in line with the performance scoring facility, outlined in 'WHTM 05/03 *Part H: Reducing false*

alarms in healthcare premises' and the online incident reporting system as required by WHEN 10/03.

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 e-mail gareth.lloyd6@wales.nhs.uk.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'NH Davies', written in a cursive style.

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

Director Specialist Estates Services

NWSSP Specialist Estates Services, 3rd Floor, Companies House, Crown Way, Cardiff CF14 3UB