

Policies, Procedures, Guidelines and Protocols

Document Details		
Title	Finance Procedure I8 : Security of Safes & Keys	
Trust Ref No	790-61033	
Local Ref (optional)		
Main points the document covers	Principles for the use of safes & other secure containers, together with their keys, and other physical security measures	
Who is the document aimed at?	Staff dealing with safes and their keys	
Author	Head of Financial Accounting	
Approval process		
Approved by (Committee/Director)	Associate Director of Finance	
Approval Date	19 August 2020	
Initial Equality Impact Screening	Yes	
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Lead Director	Associate Director of Finance	
Category	Finance	
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Required by CQC		
Required by NHLA		
Other		
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1	August 2014	Removal of section on computer data as covered by I/T procedures, minor amendments to terminology & removal of references to PCTs
2	August 2020	Minor amendment to terminology
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# Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust

## Finance Procedures

### Section I      Banks & Cash I8                Security of Safes & Keys

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#### 1 – Introduction

- 1.1 The Trust's Standing Financial Instructions (SFIs) require that secure facilities must be provided for the safeguarding of:
- a) Cash and cheques received and in the process of being paid into Trust bank accounts
  - b) Petty cash floats
  - c) Patients' valuables
  - d) Receipt books, agreement forms, and other means of recording monies due or received
  - e) Unused controlled stationery.
- 1.2 This procedure covers:
- a) General principles for the use of safes and similar secure containers, together with associated keys, and other physical security measures
  - b) Deposit of unofficial (non-Trust) funds and valuables in secure storage.

#### 2 – General security principles

- 2.1 The Trust makes use of various secure storage methods to safeguard assets. Safes (fireproof or otherwise), cashboxes, lockable filing cabinets, deed boxes, key cabinets, etc. may all be used, depending on the circumstances, location and type of items to be secured. The fundamental rule is that access to the contents of safes etc. should be easy for those who are authorised and impossible for those who are not.
- 2.2 The section below lists a number of points of best practice relating to the operation of safes and keys. Heads of Departments should ensure that these principles, together with any specific known circumstances, have been considered, and that all keyholders are aware of the security requirements.
- 2.3 It is also best practice that a written procedure is in place locally, adapted to the local circumstances.

#### 3 – Secure storage: issues for consideration

##### 3.1 Ownership and authorisation

- 3.1.1 One member of staff should be nominated as keyholder of the safe, controlling day to day access, and other key holders.
- 3.1.2 At least one deputy keyholder should be nominated to cover leave and other absence. A second deputy is desirable. A "handover" procedure should be in place to record the transfer of responsibility, and the amount of money present at the time (see paragraph 4 below).
- 3.1.3 Consideration should be given to action in the event of the unplanned absence of a keyholder e.g. sickness. In particular, access to keys should be possible,

and a record of the cash/property taken over should be made (see paragraph 4 below).

3.1.4 A log of keyholders should be kept, and keyholders should sign for custody of their keys. The log should also allow for the return of keys should a keyholder leave employment, or otherwise no longer be required as a key holder. An appropriately worded receipt should be supplied for returned keys, if requested.

3.1.5 At least one spare set of keys should be kept on the premises, in a secure location (possibly a key cabinet, or another safe) but not in the unit that they control.

### 3.2 Suitability for use

3.2.1 When installing a new secure location, or upgrading, the use to which it will be put should be considered. Use of key cabinets, lockable filing cabinets, deed boxes, security boxes, cash boxes should all be considered.

3.2.2 The use of fire resistant units should be considered for irreplaceable documents, as well as for computer media, which, being plastic based, melts at a much lower temperature than paper burns.

### 3.3 Day to day use

3.3.1 Arrangements should be made for portable units (e.g. cashboxes) to be secured within a safe outside of working hours, with the key either retained by the keyholder, or stored in a separate secure location. During working hours, the cashbox should preferably be retained in the safe except when being used, or kept out of sight (e.g. in a desk drawer).

3.3.2 Key cabinets should, if possible, be located out of sight of visitors entering the office. The key to the key cabinet itself should be subject to controls.

### 3.4 Maintenance and backup

3.4.1 Serial numbers of keys and locks, together with the make and model of the safe, should be recorded in a log. Department Heads should also be aware of any maintenance contracts in existence, or contact names of at least one safe repair company and locksmith, in case of emergency.

3.4.2 In the event of a keyholder losing a safe key, the on-site replacement should be used, and a further spare obtained as soon as possible. Enquiries should be made as to whether the incident may allow future unauthorised access to the safe; if so consideration should be given to changing either the complete safe, or the lock mechanism.

3.4.3 Where a safe is fitted with a combination lock, at least two members of staff should be aware of the combination, and it should also be recorded in a separate, secure location.

### 3.5 Written procedures

3.5.1 For each safe or cashbox, a local written procedure should be prepared, detailing use, access and keyholders, and taking account of the considerations above.

#### 4 – Transfer of responsibility for secure storage

- 4.1 In the event of the planned absence of the keyholder, a “handover” procedure should be in place, to transfer the responsibility for the contents of the safe/cashbox. Together the current and new keyholder should record the contents of the container, record the information in writing, and both sign. In the case of a petty cash float, the values for both vouchers and remaining cash should be recorded separately.
- 4.2 In the event of the **unplanned** absence of the keyholder, perhaps due to sickness, the secondary key holder should, together with a second appropriate person, count and record the contents as in paragraph 4.1 above, so that there is evidence of the starting position at which this key holder accepted responsibility.
- 4.3 An appropriate form, which may be modified depending on the local circumstances, is shown at Appendix A.

#### 5 – Unofficial Items lodged in Trust safes or cashboxes

- 5.1 From time to time the keyholder of a safe, cashbox or other lockable storage may be asked to hold unofficial items (personal cash, lottery syndicate funds & tickets, office collections etc). Such items shall not be accepted for deposit unless they are in clearly labelled, sealed envelopes or locked containers. It shall be made clear to the depositors that the Trust will not be held liable for any loss whatsoever, and a written indemnity must be obtained absolving the Trust from responsibility for any loss (format at Appendix B).
- 5.2 Refusal to accept deposits is at the discretion of the keyholder, and refusal will certainly be made if the deposit will take up physical space needed for Trust items.

#### References & associated documents

Local written procedures regarding safes and keys

Reviewed By \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Authorised By \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Finance Procedures

**Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust**

**Confirmation of cash balance/valuables/other contents  
in safe/cashbox/other secure container**

## Contents

= Total float £ \_\_\_\_\_

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# Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust

## Finance Procedures

### I8 Security of Safes & Keys

#### Appendix B Indemnity – Unofficial Items Deposited in Trust Safes/Cashboxes

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### Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust

#### Form of Indemnity

#### Unofficial items deposited in secure Trust storage

I confirm that I have requested the items listed below to be deposited in a Trust safe/cash box until I request their return. I understand that the Trust accepts no liability for the loss of/damage to personal property of any kind, and I accept full responsibility for the item(s).

Signature of depositor: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of depositor: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of deposit: \_\_\_\_\_

Details of deposited items (e.g. white envelope): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### **On return of deposited items**

Signature of depositor: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of depositor: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of return: \_\_\_\_\_