

Healthier Communities,
Outstanding Care



Sherwood Forest Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Mental Health Units (Use of Force)

Information for patients



This leaflet provides information about what could happen when people are distressed in hospital and the 'use of force'.

We hope that by raising this topic we can avoid ever having to use force while you are in hospital.

The use of force is rare and there is lots we can do together to avoid it.

Our commitment to you:

- We will do our best to ensure your stay in hospital is a positive and safe experience.
- We will offer you a calming space to support you during your treatment and recovery.
- Further information around your human rights and legal protections can be sought from the Liaison Psychiatry team based within the hospital or your own mental health team. Additional support with your mental health may be offered while you are a patient by the Liaison Psychiatry team.

Our expectations:

- We ask that you treat our staff with respect during your stay in hospital. Staff are not to be exposed to verbal, sexual, physical, or racial abuse, intimidating or threatening behaviour, or any type of physical assault.
- The Trust will support staff to pursue any act of violence or aggression through the criminal justice system
- There may be occasions when waiting times for treatment are extended; please be patient as other cases may take priority due to the nature of their condition.

About you

For us to provide you with the best treatment, we need to know a little bit more about how you would like to be cared for and managed if you become distressed:

- What helps you to remain calm?
- Who do you prefer talking to?
- Do you have any self-soothe techniques that can help in the de-escalation process?
- Is there anybody you would like to be contacted?
- Do you have any mobility / joint limitations?

Use of force

Interventions are only ever be used as a last resort. They are only used to protect you, or those in contact with you, from major harm. An example might be that you are harming yourself or someone else, and the risk means we need to stop it fast to prevent further injury or discomfort.

When force is used it will be fair to you and will support your human right to be safe while you are on our ward. If you feel force was used unfairly, you can speak to:

- A member of the clinical team.
- An advocate - staff can provide you with contact information.
- A member of staff from the Patient Experience Team (PALS), who can also advise you on how to make a complaint if you wish.

Physical restraint

This is when a staff member puts their hands on you to take control of your movement. Staff will always work with you to avoid this happening, but sometimes it might be necessary to keep you or those around you safe from harm.

Examples of physical restraint are:

- When you are seated, two people will support you to sit in a safe place - one person either side of you, also sitting, will talk to you about what you are finding difficult.
- When you are standing, a person either side of you will hold your arms and talk to you about what you are finding difficult.
- When you are lying down, usually four people will hold you on a bed (you will be facing up), and someone will talk to you about what you are finding difficult.

We will only ever use physical interventions as a last resort. We want to be open and honest with you and hope that we can work together to never have to use it. A calm and safe ward is something we should all expect.

Rapid tranquilisation

This medication can be offered to support you when you are struggling with difficult emotions. If you can, we will offer you medicine in tablet form. If you are very distressed, we might feel an injection of the same medication is the best option (e.g., if you are too distressed to take a tablet when offered it).

These medicines are not given very often to people and we will always try and work with you to reduce distress without medicines when possible.

There is legislation that allows the use of force in certain situations:

- **Criminal law Act 1967 – Section 3**

States a person may use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances in the prevention of crime.

- **Common Law**

States that we all have the right to self-defence or defence of another, if we use the minimum force that is proportionate to the seriousness of harm to be prevented. The force used must be:

- **Necessary**
- **Reasonable**
- **Proportionate.**

Being part of your team

The healthcare staff working to support you are called the Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT). This team includes everyone from doctors through to nursing staff, but the most important member of that team is you.

Nobody knows you better than you, so sharing who you are and what you feel you need is very important. This will help us to understand you and make feelings of frustration less likely, as these are often feelings that lead to incidents happening. Staff will always speak to you in a calm and professional manner.

In summary we will:

- Listen to you.
- Ensure that you are informed of all options available to you.
- Work with you to decide the best action to resolve the issue.
- Work with you to resolve your concerns as quickly as possible.
- Signpost you to other services who can help if we are unable to resolve your concern.

If your issues remain unresolved, or you would like to make a formal complaint, we can advise you on the complaints process and provide information on how to seek independent advice.

Making a complaint

If you wish to complain, please contact the Patient Experience Team, who provide a confidential advice and information service. They are dedicated to listening to those that use our services, their carer's and relatives. Your views are important to us and will enable the Trust to improve services.

King's Mill Hospital:

Telephone: 01623 672222

Email: sfh-tr.pet@nhs.net

Opening times: Monday to Friday, 8.30am-6pm and Saturday, 9am-1pm.

Newark Hospital:

Telephone: 01623 672222

Email: sfh-tr.pet@nhs.net

Opening times: Monday to Friday, 8am-5pm.

Unfortunately, there will be times when there is no-one is available to take your call, however, there is an answering machine service 24 hours a day. We recognise that it is not always easy to talk to an answer machine, however, please leave a message and a member of the team will get back to you as soon as they are able.

Alternatively, you can write to:

Patient Experience Team

Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
King's Mill Hospital
Mansfield Road
Sutton-in-Ashfield
Notts
NG17 4JL

The service is confidential. The only exception to this is if you indicate that you or someone else is at risk, in which case the staff member may act with or without your consent in the interests of safety.

You will be asked to give permission for the staff member to share any information you give. If you are not the patient, consent of the patient must be determined. No action on behalf of the patient will be taken without consent. The staff member may discuss your difficulties with a colleague or supervisor in confidence to seek advice; this is so that they can be sure that the team gives you the best possible advice and support.

Further sources of information

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions

Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you. External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them. If you require a full list of references (if relevant) for this leaflet, please email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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