

Date 18/04/2025
Your Ref
Our Ref 9904

Enquiries to Richard Mutch
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Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION – PLASTIC BIN LINERS

I write in response to your request for information in relation to plastic bin liners.

Question:

- 1a. Are plastic bin liners used on psychiatric inpatient wards run by your Trust?
- 1b. If they are not allowed, when were they prohibited?
- 1c. How many incidents of inpatient self-harm involving plastic bin liners have there been in the last five years (specifically 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 & 2024)?
- 2d. How many inpatient deaths involving plastic bin liners have there been in the last five years (specifically 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 & 2024)?

Answer:

a.	There was a SOP agreed titled "Standard Operating Procedure for the Removal of Plastic Bin Liners In Adult Mental Health In-patient Service at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital" and circulated on 27th March 2018. The use of plastic bin liners is risk assessed as part of the environmental ligature risk assessment for each room within each ward and a patient risk assessment also carried out.
b.	
c.	There were no adverse events reported.
d.	There were no adverse events reported.

Question:

- 2a. Are other types of plastic bags (i.e. not bin liners) allowed into psychiatric inpatient wards run by your Trust?
- 2b. If they are not allowed, when were they prohibited?
- 2c. How many incidents of inpatient self-harm involving plastic bags (excluding bin liners counted above) have there been in the last five years (specifically 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 & 2024)?
- 2d. How many inpatient deaths involving plastic bags (excluding bin liners counted above) have there been in the last five years (specifically 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 & 2024)?

Answer:

a.	The SOP detailed in response to question 1 does not specify the management or
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Chair Professor John Connaghan CBE
Chief Executive Professor Caroline Hiscox
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b.	assessment of other plastic bags that are not bin liners however the SOP is being reviewed and will include this.
c.	Information is not recorded in a way that would allow this question to be answered from DATIX.
d.	Information is not recorded in a way that would allow this question to be answered from DATIX.

I hope the information provided helps with your request.

If you are unhappy with our response to your request, you do have the right to request us to review it. Your request should be made within 40 working days of receipt of this letter, and we will reply within 20 working days of receipt. If our decision is unchanged following a review and you remain dissatisfied with this, you then have the right to make a formal complaint to the Scottish Information Commissioner within 6 months of receipt of our review response. You can do this by using the Scottish Information Commissioner's Office online appeals service at www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal. If you remain dissatisfied with the Commissioner's response you then have the option to appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law.

If you require a review of our decision to be carried out, please write to the FOI Reviewer at the email address at the head of this letter. The review will be undertaken by a Reviewer who was not involved in the original decision-making process.

FOI responses (subject to redaction of personal information) may appear on NHS Lothian's Freedom of Information website at: <https://org.nhsllothian.scot/FOI/Pages/default.aspx>

Yours sincerely

ALISON MACDONALD
Executive Director, Nursing
Cc: Chief Executive