



Government of **Western Australia**  
WA Country Health Service

# Patient Property and Valuables

**Busselton Health Campus**



## Patient Property and Valuables Procedure

Effective: 29 September 2016

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### Purpose

To ensure safe management of patients' property and valuables within the Busselton Health Campus (BHC).

### Scope

This process applies to all emergency department patients, all inpatients, and all patients undergoing day procedures. This process does not apply to patients in the outpatient clinics. Whilst some property kept by the patient is done so at their own risk the health service has duty of care to assist patients to secure valuables or to care for personal items e.g. Dentures/Glasses.

### Outcome

Safe, efficient storage and transfer of patient valuables.

### Definitions

**Valuables** - items classified as valuable have a monetary value of more than \$200.00 or are a valuable document.

Valuables may include but are not limited to:

- cash
- credit / debit card / pensioner medical entitlement card.
- cheque book / bank books
- personal documents (e.g. driver's license, passport, wills)
- jewellery and watches
- portable electronic devices
- house /car keys
- handbag / wallet
- mobile phone and charging equipment
- medical devices and equipment.

### Admissions

#### Equipment Involved

- Property Book HA180 – Record of Patients Clothes, Money and Valuables.
- Valuables envelope
- Property bags
- Admission documentation specific to ward.

### Key Points

- Documentation of patient property and valuables is the responsibility of the admission nurse.
- Any property kept by the patient, inclusive of aids of daily living such as hearing aids, glasses, dentures etc. must be documented in the Property Book HA180.
- The health service in general is not responsible for any property misplaced or lost by the patient during their admission. The health service has a duty of care to assist patients to secure important items.
- On admission, the patient is offered the option of:
  - having their valuables, removed from the hospital by a relative or friend (this is the preferred option)
  - keeping their valuables at their own risk
  - placing their valuables in a valuables envelope and having the envelope stored in a designated locked cupboard/safe.
- The patient's preferred option is indicated on the relevant documentation specific to ward.

### Inpatient and Emergency Department process

- All clothing and property taken from the patient must be placed in the blue property bags and labelled with the patient's name.
- The bag is to be kept with the patient or given to the patient's relatives to take home.
- All property and valuables to be documented in the HA180 Record of Patients Clothes, Money and Valuables book.
- On discharge, ensure property is taken home with patient.
- Document in nursing notes if property is:
  - sent with patient to ward
  - sent home with relative.
- Document and record in the HA 180 Record of Patients Clothes, Money and Valuables book exactly what the patient has elected to keep with them.
- Patient and relatives will be informed that the health service does not take any responsibility for patient property or valuables that are kept with the patient.
- Staff will advise of the availability of a valuables safe which is in the Medical Record department (business hours), should the patient wish to avail themselves of it.
- Once documented in HA 180 Patients Clothes Money and Valuables Book, place the white copy in the medical record, give the yellow copy to the patient, and the green copy stays in the book.

### Valuables

The Administration Coordinator has overall management of valuables management including ensuring that unclaimed valuables are sent to the police each month.

If a patient requests valuables be held for safe keeping:

- All valuables to be documented in the HA 180 Record of Patients Clothes, Money and Valuables book.
- The patient places the valuables in specific valuables envelope HA180a and seals the envelope.
- If unable to do so two nurses will place the valuables into the envelope.
- An addressograph label is placed on envelope.
- If an addressograph is not available the patient's details can be hand written onto the envelope.
- Date and patient's ward/department also documented on envelope.
- The envelope is sealed and witnessed by two (2) people i.e. patient and nurse or two nurses.
- The valuables envelope is deposited in the safe in Medical Records.
- In the Medical Record Department, the clerical officer completes the HA71 Patient Valuables Book and adds the valuables envelope to the safe.

### Weapons, Illicit Substances and Alcohol

- If a patient is found to be in possession of weapons, illicit substances and / or alcohol, or are suspected to be in possession of such, staff are to contact their security unit. Under no circumstances are staff to dispose of any item or substance.
- Security staff will be responsible for contacting police where police assistance is deemed necessary.
- Nursing staff may have to contact the police if security not available
- Weapons may include firearms, illegal and controlled weapons, and dangerous items, i.e. cricket bats, razors, kitchen knives.
- Refer to the [Firearms Act 1973](#)
- Refer to the [Weapons Act 1999](#).

### Management of Large Amounts of Cash

- The nurses are to seal the cash along with a duplicate copy of the Property Book register into a valuables envelope HA180a then sign and label the envelope with a patient addressograph.
- A second person is to witness this process and is to co-sign the appropriate forms.
- The Ward nurse contacts the Hospital Coordinator (HC) on Ext 6555.
- The HC is to lock any valuables into the safe in Medical Records.
- The items will be returned to the patient on discharge.

### Cashier's Role

- When an envelope is handed to the cashier, the cash is to be counted out by the cashier in the presence of the HC and a receipt raised and retained with the other records that relate to that patient's private property collection record.
- The cash is resealed in a valuables envelope and placed in the Cashier safe.
- The cashier is to record the deposit in the HA71 Patient valuables Book that is retained in the Medical Record Department.
- The items are to be returned to the patient on discharge.

### Storage of Clothing and Large Articles

- Place in an appropriately sized plastic bag and label with a patient addressograph. If any items are soiled, separate the soiled items and seal in a separate plastic bag before storing with other items. (Ward staff are to use discretion when deciding to return excessively soiled or damaged items).
- Store bagged clothing in the designated room in the ward/unit.

### Deceased Patient's Property

- Two nurses list every item (clothing, valuable and non-valuable) in the ward HA 180 Record of Patients Clothes, Money and Valuables book.
- The nurses then store the items in the Lost Property storage cupboard on the ground floor. The Main Reception staff retains a copy of the details of the deceased persons.
- The nurse contacts the next of kin to arrange collection of the property at Main Reception between 0730am – 5pm Monday to Friday.
- If not claimed within three months, the property is to be disposed of as per unclaimed property.

### Lost Property

- Complete a thorough search of the ward area where the item was reported lost/missing. If the item is not found, notify the HC on Ext. 6555
- A detailed investigation is to be undertaken by the Nurse Unit Manager and HC.
- The report/claim, detailing who conducted the investigation, findings and recommendations, to be sent to the Coordinator of Nursing.
- The Coordinator of Nursing is then to determine an outcome, taking into consideration all available information at the time.
- Options include:
  - if they believe there is clear evidence of hospital negligence, they can submit a claim to RiskCover who will make an independent enquiry. This may, or may not result in payment.
  - approval for payment for the loss and if they think there is a chance of making a successful claim for reimbursement, send it to RiskCover. The hospital may or may not get reimbursed.
  - pay for the loss and take no further action. This would be the most desirable option if there is insufficient evidence of negligence, but it would seem the hospital is responsible in some way (e.g. if a patient had to move rooms several times and the item was lost in transit).
  - advise the patient that the hospital is not responsible and they will not be reimbursed.

The Ward/Unit staff should **not** decline a claim and then tell the patient to submit it to our insurer. If there is no clear evidence of negligence, the hospital will not submit the claim.

### Found Property

- If the owner of the property is known (e.g. discharged patient), every effort should be made to contact the patient or next of kin for reclamation. ([Appendix 1](#))
- Send all found items to Main Reception to be stored in the Property cupboard.
- Valuables are to be sent to Medical Records for storage. Valuables are **not** to be held at ward/unit level.
- After hours, found property is to be handed to the HC who is to store them as per above.
- When a claimant identifies the property, it is to be returned by the HC maintaining the necessary documentation detailing the found item(s), claimant's signature and date of recovery.

### Unclaimed Items

- When non-valuable property remains unclaimed after a period of **two months**, the item(s), at the discretion of the Coordinator of Nursing, may either be disposed of, be given to a charity organisation or returned to the finder. If the finder claims possession, the finder must be prepared to return it to the rightful owner, should the person claim it at a later date.
- Valuable property not claimed after **one month**, will be handed over to the police by the Coordinator of Nursing or delegate. The police will issue a receipt which is then attached to the patient property form.

**This document can be made available in alternative formats  
on request for a person with a disability**

<b>Contact:</b>	Coordinator of Nursing and Midwifery (D.Anderson)		
<b>Directorate:</b>	Nursing and Midwifery Services	<b>TRIM Record #</b>	ED-CO-15-30912
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Your Ref :  
Our Ref :  
Enquiries to :

Name  
Address

## COLLECTION OF PROPERTY

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

The above mentioned property was handed in as Found Property to the Busselton Hospital on \_\_\_\_\_.

Inquiries indicate you maybe the rightful owner of the property.

The property may be collected between 0730am and 5pm Mon - Fri from the Reception area of the Busselton Health Campus

The property has been lodged under reference number \_\_\_\_\_.

When attending to collect this property, please ensure you bring proof of identity and this correspondence.

If you are not the owner of this property or do not wish to collect it, please advise Hospital Reception on 9753 6000

If no response is received by \_\_\_\_\_, the property will be disposed of at the discretion of the Coordinator of Nursing.

Yours faithfully,

Reception Clerk  
Busselton Hospital



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