

WELSH HEALTH CIRCULAR



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Issue Date: 14 October 2016

STATUS: INFORMATION

CATEGORY: POLICY

Title:

Revised guidelines for the transfer of the critically ill adult

Date of Review

Annually, or as required

For Action by:

Health Boards and Trusts

Action required by:

1 November 2016

Sender:

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Enclosure(s): see hyperlinks

Summary

1. The purpose of this Welsh Health Circular is to highlight the publication of the revised guidelines for the transfer of the critically ill adult produced by the critical care networks.
2. These guidelines replace the previous version, published by the Welsh Government, Designed for Life: Welsh Guidelines for the Transfer of the Critically ill Adult issued in 2009 under cover of a ministerial letter EH/ML/0010/09.

Action

3. Health Boards and NHS Trusts, where appropriate, are expected to work with the critical care networks to ensure adherence to the revised guidelines.

Background

4. The Welsh Guidelines for the Transfer of the Critically Ill Adult were first issued in April 2009. The guidelines set out the key actions to direct and guide the transfer of critically ill patients throughout Wales. The guidelines helped ensure continuity to the transfer services for the critically ill adult and ensure that patients received the best possible standard of care leading to improved quality of service and a reduction in inequalities of care across Wales.
5. Transferring a critically ill patient requires co-ordination from various agencies, including different parts of the health service, the ambulance service and, sometimes, the search and rescue (SAR) services. The guidelines provided clarification of the roles, the capabilities and the responsibilities of all the agencies involved in the transfer of critically ill patients. Since these guidelines were originally published there have been a number of changes to services; for example, to the contracting of search and rescue services and the introduction of the Emergency Medical Transfer and Retrieval Transfer Service (EMRTS). The guidelines have been updated to take account of these changes.

Revised Welsh guidelines for the transfer of the critically ill adult

6. The updated guidelines are set out in the Welsh Critical Care Network's Welsh guidelines for the transfer of the critically ill adult and are available on network's website. This document will replace the current Welsh Government Designed for Life: Welsh Guidelines for the Transfer of the Critically ill Adult. The guidelines attempt to harmonise this procedure by clarifying roles, capabilities and responsibilities.
<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sites3/page.cfm?orgid=753&pid=36561>
7. The revised transfer guidelines apply to Level 2 and Level 3 critically ill adults in the main, but Level 1 patients may need to be considered in some circumstances e.g. cardiac patients being transferred for Primary Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (PPCI). The levels of critical care are defined in the Delivery plan for critically ill adults.
8. The guidelines cover transfers outside of the Critical Care Department, whether they are an internal transfer (intra-hospital); for example, to the

CT scanner or an inter-hospital transfer (to another hospital); these are called secondary transfers. Such transfers may originate from the Critical Care Unit, the Emergency Department and, sometimes, the wards.

9. The Critical Care and Trauma Network, Health Boards, EMRTS, WAST and SAR must work in close collaboration to achieve the common goal of safe transfer of critically ill patients.
10. All acute hospitals must have in place a system to resuscitate, stabilise and transport critically ill patients regardless of what Level/Tier of care the hospital provides.
11. For further information or advice please contact Sue O'Keeffe, Critical Care and Trauma Network Manager (North) on 01745 448586 ext: 2282 or email: Sue.O'Keeffe@wales.nhs.uk.

Distribution to:

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