

# Patient Valuables

# Operating Procedure

## August 2024

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|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Document Title                                 | Patient Valuables                                                            |
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| Next Review                                    | August 2027                                                                  |
| Department Responsible                         | Finance                                                                      |
| Contact Details                                | Debbie Bozkurt                                                               |
| Summary of Contents                            | Provides guidance to staff for the recording of patient money and valuables. |
| Approved:<br>Director of Finance & Procurement | August 2024                                                                  |

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# **Patient Valuables Operating Procedure**

## **Guidance to staff responsible involved in the safekeeping of patient valuables.**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

NHS Western Isles employees have responsibility for items of personal property, valuables and cash surrendered for safekeeping. NHS Western Isles are not responsible for the loss of any items retained by the patient during their stay in hospital.

### **2. PURPOSE OF THIS PROCEDURE**

The document provides guidance for staff:

- To ensure inpatients property is correctly accounted for;
- To ensure there is adequate provision for the safekeeping of inpatients personal property and valuables surrendered to staff;
- To provide assurance that there is a system for safekeeping of personal property and valuables to inpatients and their representatives;
- To provide safeguards for staff against inappropriate and false accusation.

### **3. SCOPE**

This procedure provides guidance to any NHS Western Isles employee on the acceptance and monitoring of personal property and valuables following a patient's admission to hospital.

### **4. STANDARDS AND PRACTICE**

- 4.1 In line with good practice, the patient's representative should take all personal property and valuables home. The patient should keep only necessary items of clothing and personal hygiene products. NHS Western Isles will take responsibility for patients' property and valuables surrendered to the nurse in charge of the ward and the Valuables Received for Safekeeping (VRS) document is completed.
- 4.2 Where the patient and / or their representatives choose not to hand over their personal property and valuables for safekeeping, they must complete the appropriate section of the VRS.
- 4.3 A VRS (see Appendix 1) must be completed when a patient's personal property and valuables are surrendered. The patient and / or the patient's representative or two staff members should sign this. Once signed the VRS should be photocopied and the original given to the patient or their representative. The patient's personal property and valuables must be placed in a sealed bag or envelope and a copy of the signed VRS must be attached.

A patient ID label or the patient name, address and CHI number must be attached to the sealed bag or envelope separate from the VRS document. The sealed bag or envelope must be placed in the ward safe.

- 4.4 In the event of a significant amount of cash surrendered to the nurse in charge of the ward should contact the Finance department to agree on appropriate storage.
- 4.5 NHS Western Isles are not responsible for the loss of personal property and valuables unless they have been surrendered to the Board for safekeeping. This includes mobile phones, electronic devices, multimedia devices and jewellery. Any patient retaining personal electronic devices during their stay in hospital do so entirely at their own risk.
- 4.6 On discharge, any personal property and valuables held in safekeeping must be returned and the patient / patient's representative and staff member (see Appendix 2) must sign the Valuables Returned from Safekeeping form. Any cash signed over to the Finance Department must also be returned and the finance staff member handing over the cash should sign the document.
- 4.7 In the event of the death of a patient, all personal property and valuables retained by the patient should be accounted for using the same procedures as for the items held in safekeeping.
- 4.8 If deposited property has been lost, an immediate enquiry must be launched. If the lost property is not recovered or if the circumstances appear suspicious, staff should inform the Hospitals Manager and a Datix incident report raised. It is the Board's responsibility to inform the police if the loss is suspected to have resulted from a criminal action.
- 4.9 If undeposited property is lost, a search for the property should be instigated. If the lost property is not recovered or if the circumstances appear suspicious, staff should inform the Hospitals Manager and a Datix incident report raised. **The patient or their representative should be reminded that the Board does not accept liability for the loss of the property.** It is the responsibility of the patient or their representative to report the loss to the police if they feel the loss has resulted from criminal action.
- 4.10 If deposited property is damaged, enquiries to ascertain the cause should be carried out as soon as reasonably practicable and the patient should be advised of the damage. A Datix incident report should be raised. If the damage is suspected to have resulted from criminal action, the Hospital Manager and the police should be informed.
- 4.11 If undeposited property is damaged, enquiries should be carried out and the Hospital Manager should be alerted if criminal action is suspected. **The patient or their representative should be reminded that the Board does not accept liability for the loss of the property.**
- 4.12 Unclaimed property relates to those items left behind by patients or their representatives following the patients discharge, transfer or death. Lost property is items found on the Board's premises, potentially because the owner has lost them during their visit. Unclaimed and lost property must be returned to the rightful owner as soon as practicable. This is particularly important in the case of valuable items.

If the Board is unable to identify or contact the rightful owner, patient travel should collect the items. These items will be given to the police.

## 5. DISSEMINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

All persons involved in the administration of Patient Valuables, must be aware of these guidelines. The updated guidance document must be circulated to all ward managers.

## 6. MONITORING COMPLIANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS

Collection of income procedures will be monitored on an ongoing basis.

## 7. DEFINITIONS

**Personal Property:** for the purpose of this procedure document, property includes cash and any other personal property e.g. Glasses, Hearing Aids, False Teeth and items of clothing or accessories.

**Valuables:** for the purpose of this procedure document, valuables include any items of value (including, but not limited to, monetary value). Examples being credit/debit cards, mobile phones, portable electronic devices and jewellery.

**Deposited property:** this is the personal property and valuables, which the Board has been given for safekeeping, either following agreement with the patient or because the patient is incapacitated or otherwise unable to look after it.

**Undeposited property:** this is the personal property and valuables, which the patient retains with them whilst in hospital.

## 8. UPDATING AND REVIEW

This document will be reviewed and updated every 3 years.

| Revision Date | Version No. | Summary of Changes                                            | Changes Made by  |
|---------------|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| November 2015 | V.2         | Draft of Patients Valuables Procedure document                | Donnie Mackenzie |
| November 2017 | V.3         | Review and updating of information within procedure document. | Cheryl Martin    |
| January 2021  | V.4         | Review and updating of information within procedure document. | Corinne Maclean  |
| August 2024   | V.5         | Review and updating of information within procedure document. | Debbie Bozkurt   |

## Valuables Received for Safekeeping

(Must be completed on admittance to the ward)

**WARD** \_\_\_\_\_

**Patient Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Postcode:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CHI No:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Receipt:

Received from the above named patient the following items to be held for safekeeping:

(1.) \_\_\_\_\_

(2.) \_\_\_\_\_

(3.) \_\_\_\_\_

### Non Authorisation:

I do not wish my property to be held for safekeeping by the ward.

**Signed:**

**Date:** ----- / ----- / -----

\_\_\_\_\_

**Patient / Representative**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Ward Staff Member**

**Cash received for safekeeping by the Finance Department as detailed above.**

**Received by:**

**Date:** ----- / ----- / -----

\_\_\_\_\_

**Finance Staff Members**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Patient / Representative**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Ward Staff Member**

## Valuables Returned from Safekeeping

(Must be completed on discharge from the ward)

**WARD** \_\_\_\_\_

**Patient Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Postcode:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CHI No:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Returned:

Items returned to or on behalf of the above named from safekeeping are detailed as follows:

(1.) -----

(2.) -----

(3.) -----

**Signed:**

**Date:** ----- / ----- / -----

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**Ward Staff Member**

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**Patient / Representative**

**Cash returned from safekeeping by the Finance Department as detailed above.**

**Received by:**

**Date:** ----- / ----- / -----

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**Patient / Representative**

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**Ward Staff Member**

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**Finance Staff Member**