

Patient's Money/Valuables

1. Patient's Money / Valuables Policy

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Policy statement

All money/valuables belonging to patients which are not held in a hospital/ward safe while the patient is in hospital are deemed to be at the patient's risk.

Use of Ward Safe - where available (Duty Nurse Manager safe Mental Health)

The ward valuables safe is only to be used for short-term custody of money, credit cards and valuables (exception outlying hospitals that do not have a hospital safe). The following criteria applies:

- Not to be placed in this safe for longer than 48 hours.
- Nurse in Charge of the shift to hold the key (usually attached to the drug keys) or for areas with swipe card access, key to be placed in the Controlled Drug safe.
- Charge Nurse Manager of the ward to ensure ward safe is checked weekly.
- Unclaimed valuables - Charge Nurse Manager to ensure that the patient/relatives are contacted and arrangements are made for the valuables of discharged patients to be picked up. If valuables remain unclaimed they are taken to the Revenue Office/Hospital Accountant /Cashiers Office.

Use of Hospital Safe

(Exception outlying hospitals that do not have a hospital safe).
The hospital safe is to be used for:

- Long term custody (greater than 48 hours).
- Cash
- Credit cards
- Where staff are unwilling to keep a valuable item in the ward valuables safe (or Duty Nurse Manager safe for Mental Health).

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to streamline the process and documentation required for:

- Safe custody of patient's money/valuables by placement in a hospital/ward safe
- Return of patient's money/valuables to the patient or their authorised family on discharge/death
- Unclaimed money/valuables in safe custody

Definitions

Valuables

Any item with a money value over \$50 and/or any item considered valuable by the patient/family.

Patient Valuables Form

This form consists of a series of duplicate copies to be used for the Different stages during the process of handling patient's valuables.

- Top pink copy – to be retained in the patient's clinical record.
- Yellow copy – to be given to patient or given to authorised family member of deceased.
- Blue copy – attached to valuables envelope for items stored in Ward safe.
- White copy – attached to valuables envelope for items stored in hospital safe.

Scope

All inpatients admitted into a CDHB Facility.

Associated Documents

Patient Valuables Form Ref 2537 QF01137

Valuables Envelope Ref 2538 QE00010

Christchurch Hospital Revenue Office Patient Receipt Form

Procedure

1.1 On Admission

- On admission, where possible patients should be encouraged to give money/valuables to family to take home and remove from the hospital.
- Patients and their family should be reminded that any money/valuables stored at the bedside are done so at their own risk. This practice should be discouraged.
- If money/valuables are to be retained in the ward/Duty Nurse Manager/hospital safe, where possible, patient's need to identify on the Patient Valuables form which family member/friend is authorised to retrieve their money/valuables on their behalf if they are unable to do so.

1.2 Money/Valuables placed in Ward Valuables Safe /Duty Nurse Manager's safe (Mental Health)

The following procedure must be followed:

1. List all items to be kept in custody with a brief identifying description on the Patient Valuables form.
2. The patient/family member (if possible) and two staff members, one being a Registered Nurse, check the items are placed into the Valuables envelope and sign the Patient Valuables form. The blue copy is stapled to the envelope and the yellow copy is given to the patient/family member. The pink copy is retained in the patient's clinical record.

3. Place the envelope with the attached blue copy of the Patient Valuables form into the ward valuables safe.
4. If adding valuables to the patients envelope held in the ward safe during their hospital stay, steps 2 and 3 must be completed ensuring both the white, yellow and blue copies of the Patient Valuables form are completed.

For Mental Health, sums of money in excess of requirements for routine patient expenses are sent to the hospital cashier to place into the hospital safe or into a trust fund with a receipt issued.

1.3 Money/Valuables placed in Hospital Safe

The following procedure must be followed:

1. List all items to be kept in custody with a brief identifying description on the Patient Valuables form.
2. The patient/family members (if possible) and two staff members, one being a Registered Nurse, check the items are placed into the Valuables envelope and sign the Patient Valuables form. The white copy is stapled to the valuables envelope and the yellow copy is given to the patient/family members. The pink copy is retained in the patient's clinical record.

From 0830 – 1615 hours weekdays

1. The valuables envelope and the white copy of the Patient Valuables form, is delivered to Revenue Office (Christchurch Hospital), Cashiers Office (TPMH) Duty Nurse Manager safe (Burwood) for safe custody.
2. All valuables received are immediately receipted and placed in the hospital safe. The receipt is given to the patient/staff member who has brought the valuables. If the receipt has been given to a staff member, upon return to the ward, the receipt is to be given to the patient or attached to the Patient Valuables form in the clinical notes.

After-Hours

1. The valuables envelope and the white copy of the Patient Valuables form are given to the Duty Nurse Manager to be placed in the Duty Office safe overnight (Christchurch and Burwood Hospitals).

2. At Christchurch a Revenue Clerk clears the Duty Office safe each weekday and receipts the items deposited. The Revenue Clerk will then contact the relevant Ward Clerk to collect the receipt.
3. At Burwood the valuables remain in the Duty Office safe until claimed by patient or family.
4. At PMH and Ashburton the valuables envelope and the Patient Valuables form are placed in the ward safe overnight and a note left for the Charge Nurse Manager to take to Cashiers office when they are next open.
5. Inform the patient and/or family that any amount of money above \$200 will be returned in the form of a cheque.

1.4 Return of Money/Valuables from the Ward safe during their hospital stay or upon discharge

- No money/valuables are returned without the yellow copy of the Patient Valuables form. If the form has been lost, the money/valuables can only be issued to the patient whose name they are lodged under with proof of identification or to the authorised family member as stated on the form.
- When returning valuables, the valuables envelope is retrieved from the ward safe by the nurse and unsealed in the presence of the patient or authorised family member and a witness (another staff member).
- Complete the relevant section of the Patient Valuables form (ensure white, yellow and blue copies of the form are completed) to document transfer of the money/valuables. The yellow copy of the Patient Valuables form is to be given to the patient or authorised family member receiving the money/valuables and the pink copy of the Patient Valuables form is to be retained in the patient's clinical record.

1.5 Return of Money/Valuables from the Hospital Safe during their hospital stay or upon discharge

- No valuables are returned without the receipt issued by the Revenue Office/Hospital Accountant/Cashiers Office. If a receipt has been lost, the valuables can only be issued to the patient whose name they are lodged under with proof of identification.
- When a patient is discharged, or requires some money and money has been deposited by the Revenue Office/Hospital Accountant/Cashiers Office, a patient's deposit account withdrawal authority (QF3) is to be completed and signed by the patient.
- **A withdrawal of cash in excess of \$200 is by 'Not Negotiable' cheque, or by other arrangements at the discretion of the Revenue Accountant, Christchurch Hospital/Hospital Accountant.**
- If the patient is to be discharged out of normal business hours alternative arrangements need to be made, e.g. transfer of the money/valuables to the Duty Office safe, otherwise the patient or the family should make contact with the Revenue Office/Hospital Accountant/Cashiers Office during normal working hours.

1.6 Return of Money/Valuables upon Patient Death

- The patient's money/valuables will be released to the person authorised (if any) by the patient at the time the valuables were placed in safe keeping.
- If the patient did not authorise someone, then the family/whānau/friend should sign the Returning of Patient Valuables section of the Patient Valuables form, the yellow copy of which is returned to the individual signing it and the front pink copy placed in the patient's clinical record.

1.7 Unclaimed money/valuables from the Hospital Safe

- If the money/valuables have not been claimed within four weeks of the patient's discharge/death, the Revenue Office/Hospital Accountant/Cashiers Office will make contact with the patient/family from the contact details available in the patient's clinical record, informing them that they will hold the item/s for six weeks from the date of the phone call and that the patient/family should make arrangements for retrieving the same. This contact will occur via phone call and by follow-up letter (a copy of which should be placed in the patient's clinical record).
- If the money/valuables have not been claimed within six weeks of the phone call being made, the items will be disposed off with the funds allocated to the Patient Volunteers Fund which is used for the benefit of patients during their hospital stay.

Policy Owner: CDHB Directors of Nursing