Torbay and South Devon NHS
NHS Foundation Trust

Pest Control Policy

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1 INTRODUCTION

The presence of pests can be offensive, present infection hazards, contaminate foodstuffs, damage materials and structure or be a nuisance. Once established, pests can be difficult and costly to deal with. Satisfactory standards of pest control in both clinical and non-clinical areas are an integral part of providing an optimum environment for the delivery of good quality patient care.

Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust recognises its legal obligation to take necessary measures to prevent the risk of pest infestation in all food storage, distribution and catering areas and to ensure good standards of pest control in all other areas of its sites.

The Trust and its contractors will adopt procedures to rid Trust owned and leased premises of existing infestation and thereafter, by pro- active work, maintain this position.

Information on common pests and their control is provided in (Appendix A).

2 PURPOSE

The Board of Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust is committed to safe, efficient, and effective management of pest control in all the Trust's premises. The Board is further committed to comply with all relevant legislation.

The Trust is committed to:

Comply with statutory requirements.
Maximise the pest control systems available to the Trust to avoid any pest.
Work together with suppliers in an effort to eliminate any existing pest infestation created in the Trust.
Promote a culture that recognises the importance of safe, effective, and efficient pest control management.
Provide a place of work, free from danger or risk of injury caused by any pest infestation.
Operate in a manner which minimises risks to employees, patients, the environment, and the community at large.
Continually strive to improve its performance with regard to pest control management through participation, commitment, and support of all its employees.
Liaise closely with other organisations to ensure continued good practice in its premises.
The scope of this policy is confined to pest control management arrangements of Torbay and South Devon sites.

The policy and procedures within this document encompass the activities and responsibilities of all Trust staff as well as all contractors and temporary workers who are engaged to work on Torbay and South Devon premises.

3 SCOPE & DEFINITIONS

The scope of this policy is confined to pest control management arrangements of Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust Services sites.

The policy and procedures within this document encompass the activities and responsibilities of all Trust staff as well as all contractors and temporary workers who are engaged to work on Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust premises.

- RID and RIDDANCE. – These terms are defined as eradication or achieving the best level of control that is technically and practicably possible.

- COSHH. – Control of Substances Hazardous to Health
- EPA. – Environmental Protection Act
- COPR. – Control of Pesticides Regulations
- RSPB. – Royal Society of Protection of Birds

4 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Trust is committed to preventing discrimination, valuing diversity, and achieving equality of opportunity. No employee will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, or on the grounds of trade union membership.

5 ACCOUNTABILITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Each employee and each department have a responsibility to ensure compliance with this policy. This includes staff that generates, handle or transport any waste type within the Acute & Community Hospital site.

5.1 Chief Executive

The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring that there are effective arrangements for Pest Control throughout the trust.

5.2 Workplace Director

The Workplace Director has the overall responsibility for:

- The management, implementation, and monitoring of this policy

5.3 Associate Director of Facilities Operations and Service Development

The Associate Director has the overall responsibility for:

- The management, implementation, and monitoring of this policy with the Workplace Director.
- Ensuring that adequate resources, including appropriate training for the role of authorized officer to be effectively undertaken, are available within the trust for the implementation of this policy.
- Fit for purpose contracts are in place so Trust premises can be Pest Free.

5.4 Head of Facilities

The Head of Facilities is responsible for:

- Strategic and operational development of pest control services.
- Identifying funding requirements and preparation of bids.
- Ensuring high standards of service provision and value for money are maintained.

5.5 Facilities Operations Manager

The Facilities Operations Manager is identified as Authorised officer for the Trust.

Is responsible for ensuring:

- The guidelines within this Policy are implemented.

- All guidelines produced by a member of staff in their department are met in this document.
- Responsible for monitoring the Pest Control contract and ensuring that the Trust's Facilities staff are adequately trained in the expectations of this policy.
- Procedures are put in place for a Major Incident.

Assess the contractors' written reports and to note:
- Action taken to combat pest infestation since the contractors last report.
- An assessment on the current situation, including any works required to be done to eliminate harbourage and improve hygiene.
- Any proposals for further action by the contractor.
- Safety measures to prevent anti pest devices/traps or compounds causing harm to patients, visitors or staff.

5.6 Environment and Waste Service Manager

The Environment and Waste Service Manager is identified as Authorised officer for the Trust in the absence of the Facilities Operations Manager.
The Environment and Waste Service Manager will be responsible for monitoring the performance of the Pest Control Contractor to ensure that the contract specifications and standards are being met and that the trust is receiving an effective service.

The Environment and Waste Service Manager will:
- Develop the specification for pest control services.
- Undertake the procurement of the pest control contract, making recommendations to the Head of Facilities for contract award to suitably qualified contractor(s).
- Monitor to ensure that the contractor achieves its contractual obligations.
- Ensure that the contractual arrangements deliver high standards of pest control and value for money.

5.7 Department Supervisors

The Supervisor will:
- Receive investigate and initiate appropriate action on all reports of the evidence of pests or sightings of pests.

Act as the main link between Trust staff and the Pest Contractor in respect of pest control issues.
Provide technical advice in respect of local requirements during the preparation of the pest control contract specifications and adjudication of tenders.
Liaise with Pest Control Contractor, Environmental Health Officer of the relevant local authority and appropriate personnel within the Trust on matters relating to pest control.
Disseminate information and implement pest awareness training within the Trust, calling on advice from specialist sources when necessary.

5.8 Trust Employees

All sightings of pests or evidence of their existence should be reported to the Facilities Help Desk on extension 55331 at the earliest opportunity. The information required will include:

- the location, i.e. ward, department, clinic, etc.

- precise location, i.e. bathroom, office, etc.
- the type of pest if known.
- possible numbers and the frequency of sighting.
- the name of the person reporting.
- the date and time of sighting.

For the purposes of this document bank/agency staff and students/trainees are considered to be Trust staff, also included in this group should be staff not directly employed by the Trust.

5.9 Pest Control Contractor

The Trust will ensure that an appropriate pest control contract is in operation at all times.

The pest control contract will be monitored by the Authorised and Deputy Officers and records made available to the Infection Control team at all times.

The contractor will carry out pro-active work to monitor for evidence of pests and take corrective actions as necessary in order to keep Trust premises free from pests. The contractor will undertake a minimum of twelve routine visits per annum for Inpatient sites and six for office buildings.

The nominated contractor will carry out the work under the contract normally between the hours of 8am – 6pm Monday – Friday inclusive, excluding public holidays except where emergency treatment is required or where operational requirements dictate otherwise. In such circumstances, the Authorised Officer shall advise the Contractor accordingly. Night visits will be by arrangement.

All pesticides used by the Trust's pest control contractor will be approved in accordance with the Control of Pesticides Regulations (COPR) 1986 (as amended 1997), be strictly controlled and monitored and fully comply with the requirements of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002.

6 PROCEDURE

6.1 BASIC PEST CONTROL MEASURES

- Food should be covered or stored in pest proof containers.
- Spillages should be promptly removed.
- Waste should be stored in a manner suitable to prevent access by pests.
- Accumulation of static/ stagnant water should be avoided.
- Buildings should be of sound structure and well maintained, drains should be covered, and leaking pipe works repaired and damaged surfaces made good. Defects should be reported to the Estates Department.
- Cracks in plaster and woodwork, unsealed areas around pipe work, damaged tiles, badly fitted equipment and kitchen units are all likely to provide excellent harbourage and should be maintained in a suitable condition.
- Where fitted, fly screens should always be closed when windows are open.
- Doors to food preparation areas should be kept closed.
- Treatment with insecticides and rodenticides alone is seldom sufficient; attention must be paid to good hygiene and structural maintenance.

6.2 Reporting Procedure

All sightings of pests or evidence of their existence should be reported to the Facilities Dept at the earliest opportunity at:

Torbay Hospital: The Facilities Department helpdesk on 55331 at the earliest opportunity.

Community Sites: The lead hospital administrator should call the above number at the earliest opportunity.

The information required will include:

- the location, i.e. ward, department, clinic, etc.
- precise location, i.e. bathroom, office, etc.
- the type of pest if known.
- possible numbers and the frequency of sighting.
- the name of the person reporting.
- the date and time of sighting.

In the event that a satisfactory response is not received within 24 hours of the time of reporting the Authorised Officer should be contacted.

Action taken by the contractor following a notification will be recorded on their online portal.

7 MONITORING COMPLIANCE

All staff should note that non-compliance with this policy or protocols could lead to disciplinary actions being taken. All Managers have a responsibility to monitor compliance of the policy. Local instances of non-compliance, whether due to poor working practice or lack of resources, should be notified to the Patient Environment Manager whose responsibility it will be to investigate it.

The Head of Facilities will centrally monitor the performance and compliance by all staff with the policy and protocols and environmental legislation, taking into consideration instances of non-compliance escalated from the Facilities Managers, Site Clinical Manager, Building Manager or Operational Manager.

7.1 Contract Performance

Regular meetings will be held when required and will involve:

- review of current activity/ performance
- service issues/ complaints received.
- service improvements.
- action plan as agreed.

7.2 Contract

The Trust will ensure that an appropriate pest control contract is in operation at all times. the pest control contract will be monitored by the Authorised Officer against a pest control contract specification.
This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if any changes in legislation or guidance occur.

7.3 Visiting Pets

In principle pets should not be brought into healthcare settings, except for guide dogs/canine helpers or as part of the national Pet Therapy Scheme. However, there may be occasions when a visiting pet is beneficial to a particular in-patient and under these exceptional circumstance's agreement must be sought from the infection prevention control team, matron or out of hours the manager on call and a risk assessment should be carried out.

7.4 Guide Dogs/Canine Helpers

In most cases there is no restricted access for guide dogs/canine helpers but a common-sense approach, should be adopted to meet the needs of the owner and maintain a clean and safe environment.

7.5 Pet Therapy

The importance of Pets as Therapy within the rehabilitation setting is acknowledged, however it is important that agreement must be sought from the infection prevention and control team, matron or out of hours the manager on call and a risk assessment should be carried out. The following guidelines must be adhered to at all times:

- The visiting dog must be approved as part of the Pets as Therapy scheme. This ensures the dog has been passed as fit by a vet, has received all necessary vaccinations and is appropriately trained.

- A member of staff should be designated as the responsible person for the duration of the visit.

- Staff must ensure that there are no patients or staff in the setting who suffer from a dog allergy.

- Patients with open wounds and alert organisms should not pet the animals.

- Staff should feel assured the dog is healthy at the time of the visit, is on a leash and is under control.

- The dog should be taken to a designated area and not allowed in any food preparation area or clinical rooms. The day room should be used for visiting in patient areas.

- The dog can only be fed and watered outside the building.

- If the dog vomits, urinates or defecates, the responsible person should ensure that this is appropriately removed, and the area cleaned thoroughly with detergent and water. Personal protective clothing should be worn, disposable paper roll/cloths used and disposed of correctly.

- All persons in contact with the dog must ensure they wash their hands using soap and water after contact.

- The room where the dog has visited should undergo its normal daily clean.

8 REFERENCES

- The Environmental Protection Act 1990 (as amended)
- The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 (as amended)
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Controlled Waste Regulations 1992
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2004 (as amended)
- Environmental Protection (Duty of Care) Regulations 1991
- Control of Pesticides Regulations (COPR) 1986 (as amended 1997)
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
- Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1994
- Health Technical Memorandum 07-01

APPENDIX A – INDIVIDUAL PESTS

Houseflies

Significance

Houseflies can transmit intestinal worms or their eggs and are potential vectors of disease such as dysentery, gastro enteritis, typhoid, cholera and tuberculosis. They will frequent and feed indiscriminately on any liquefiable solid food, putrefying material or food stored for human consumption.

Control

Flies have rapid, prolific breeding habits and high mobility. In order to break the life- cycle, control measures should be directed against larvae and adult flies.

Hygiene/ Management

Satisfactory hygiene is necessary to limit potential breeding sites and food sources. Entry of flies into buildings can be prevented by 1.12mm mesh fly screen, air curtains, bead screens or self-closing door equipment with rubber seals.

COCKROACHES

Distribution

Cockroaches are common in premises associated with the production or handling of food. Gregarious and nocturnal they spend the day hiding in cracks and crevices around areas such as sinks, drains, cookers, the backs of cupboards and in refrigeration motor compartments. They favour buildings with service ducts and complex plumbing installations which allow them to travel freely.

Significance

Cockroaches are potential vectors of diseases such as dysentery, gastroenteritis, typhoid and poliomyelitis. Their diet is omnivorous and includes fermenting substances, soiled dressings, hair, leather, parchment, wallpaper, faeces and food for human consumption. The latter may be contaminated either by the mechanical transfer of causative agents of disease from the insect's body or by transmission in the faeces.

Control

Monitoring and control is essential although successful control of cockroaches is a complex subject and depends very much upon tailoring control measures to the species concerned. Infestations can be difficult to control as cockroach's eggs are poorly penetrated by insecticides. Consequently, surveillance of the area by the pest control contractor may need to be prolonged.

Hygiene/ Management

A high standard of hygiene will deny sources of food and hiding places.

ANTS

Black ants

Foraging worker ants cause a nuisance as they travel widely in search of food, following well-defined trails and clustering around the food source. Sweet foods are preferred. They are obviously an unpleasant sight and may damage food for human consumption.

Pharaoh's ants

These 2mm omnivorous light brown ants are half the size of the black ants. They cannot breed without artificial heat, are very persistent and pose a serious cross infection risk in hospitals. The ants may be found in wall cavities, heating pipes, behind sinks and ovens and therefore in laundry, linen rooms, clinical and residential areas. They are particularly attracted to sweet or light protein items.

Hygiene/ Management

Although frequently inaccessible and difficult to destroy, ant's nests must be eradicated. If infestation is to be successfully controlled, hormone treatment is required which sterilises the female ant.

Wasps

Wasp stings cause pain and distress. Some individuals are particularly sensitive. Wasp nests are only used for one season, so it may be possible to put up with the problem temporarily. They are often found in cavities in brickwork, in air bricks and roof vents. The nest can be treated by the Trust's pest control provider; such work maybe best carried out in the evening or weekend as poisoned stupefied wasps can cause problems. Particular attention should be paid to areas around rubbish bins that should be kept in a hygienic condition.

Other Insect Pests

There are many other insect pests that occur sporadically in hospitals. The most common of these being flies of various species, crickets, silverfish and the stored product insects and mites which can be found infesting dried foods such as flour weevils.

Rats and Mice

These are the vertebrates with greatest potential for damage to food stocks and building fabric in hospitals. Modern rodenticides are extremely efficient in the eradication of mice and rats from hospitals.

Rodents have been known to gnaw through electric cables and cause fires. All sightings and other evidence of their presence should be reported to the Facilities Help Desk on ext. 55331.

The Trust will take reasonable steps to ensure that its building is rodent proofed by, for example, fitting collars where pipes pass through walls and by filling gaps in the building fabric, etc.
All food and organic waste should be kept in rodent proof containers.

Birds

The nuisance of birds can be controlled in the first instance by preventative measures, e.g. blocking of nesting holes and the application of devices to discourage perching. Netting and trapping can also be considered with the aim of immediate release away from the area/ location of capture. As a last resort birds may be culled by shooting with the approval of the Trust Chief Executive and local police authority. No attempt should be made to poison them. Whichever method is employed it should take into account whether the birds are currently in

a nesting season or whether they are protected by law. Advice should be sought from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB).

Squirrels

The most serious damage in urban areas arises where the squirrel enters the roof spaces of buildings by climbing the walls or jumping from nearby trees. Once inside, they chew woodwork, ceilings, insulation on electrical wiring, or tear up the loft insulation to form a drey. The best method of control is to proof the building/ loft. Prevention is better than cure. If a cure is required the best form of control is trapping with the use of a squirrel trap.

Foxes

Foxes in this country may occasionally spread disease such as toxocara and leptospirosis but the risk is believed to be small. More significantly foxes do cause nuisance in a number of ways. During the mating season the noise of barks and blood- curdling screams proliferate and in addition to the feeding habits described above there is damage to gardens caused when digging for food and of course the indiscriminate depositing of faeces. Killing foxes in urban areas is both unnecessary and unlikely to provide a long- term solution as other foxes move in to vacant territories.

Moles

Moles are a widespread species and are not protected by conservation legislation, with basic protection from cruelty under the Wild Mammals Protection Act 1996.

The mole is a common British mammal and, although not often seen, the results of its tunnelling are well known and may cause damage in a range of situations. In gardens and amenity areas, molehills and tunnels can be a nuisance. In agriculture, contamination of grass by soil may lead to poor quality silage being produced. There is also a risk of damaging grass-cutting machinery. Mole runs may disturb roots and adversely affect plant growth. Before carrying out any mole control, it is important to consider if such action is warranted or if the molehills and tunnels can be tolerated. Where control measures can be justified, there are two main methods, trapping or poisoning with aluminium phosphide. Please note that strychnine hydrochloride can no longer be legally purchased or used for mole control in the UK.

Bats

Bats are protected by The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. The penalties for contravention are severe. If bats are discovered in any of the Trust's buildings or on any of its land they must not under any circumstances be killed, expelled, stopped from gaining access, touched or disturbed. Contractors must be prevented from doing work anywhere near them. English Nature should be contacted for advice.

Badgers

Badgers in this country may occasionally spread disease but the risk is believed to be small. More significantly Badgers do cause nuisance in a number of ways. Their feeding habits cause damage to grounds and gardens caused when digging. Badgers are protected by the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc) Regulations 1994. The penalties for contravention are severe. If badgers are discovered on any of the Trust's land they must not under any circumstances be killed, expelled, stopped from gaining

access, touched or disturbed. Contractors must be prevented from doing work anywhere near them. English Nature should be contacted for advice.

Rabbits

Rabbits can cause great damage by burrowing under buildings and putting at risk the foundations of buildings, however there are strict guidelines on their removal so please contact the authorised officer for advice. This also applies to any suspected myxomatosis cases.

Deer

Since October 2007, all wild deer with the exception of Muntjac (Muntiacus reevesi) are protected by a close season.
The best long-term solution to reduce the damage caused by deer is to achieve an adequate cull each year and so reduce the local deer population. This is best achieved through a wider, co-coordinated cull undertaken by a local Deer Management Group rather than on an ad-hoc basis by individuals. However, legislation makes provisions for actions that can be taken in exceptional circumstances where problems cannot readily be resolved through normal deer management.

APPENDIX B – AUTHORISED OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PEST CONTROL

- To appreciate the significance of the prevalent pests and the problems associated with them.

- To monitor the performance of the Pest control Contractor to ensure that the contract specifications and standards are being met and that the Trust is receiving an effective service.

- To receive, investigate and initiate appropriate action on all reports of pest evidence or sightings of pests.

- To assess the Contractor's written reports and to note:

    - The action taken to combat pest infestation since the Contractor's last report;
    - An assessment of the current situation, including any works required to be done to eliminate harbourage and improve hygiene;
    - Any proposals for further action by the Contractor.

- To form the main link between the Trust staff and the Contractor in respect of pest control issues.

- To liaise with the Pest Control Contractor, Environmental Health Officer of the relevant local authority, the Infection Control team and other appropriate personnel within the Trust on matters relating to pest control.

APPENDIX C. RAPID EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT *(For Use When Writing Policies)*

Policy Title (and number)	***Pest Control Policy***	**Version and Date**	***V1.1 8th May 2024.***
Policy Author	***Tony Hopkins***		

An equality impact assessment (EIA) is a process designed to ensure that a policy, project or scheme does not discriminate or disadvantage people. EIAs also improve and promote equality. Consider the nature and extent of the impact, not the number of people affected.

EQUALITY ANALYSIS: How well do people from protected groups fare in relation to the general population?
PLEASE NOTE: Any 'Yes' answers may trigger a full EIA and must be referred to the equality leads below

Is it likely that the policy/procedure could treat people from protected groups less favorably than the general population? (see below)

Age	Yes ☐ No☒	Disability	Yes ☐ No☒	Sexual Orientation	Yes ☐ No☒
Race	Yes ☐ No☒	Gender	Yes ☐ No☒	Religion/Belief (non)	Yes ☐ No☒
Gender Reassignment	Yes ☐ No☒	Pregnancy/ Maternity	Yes ☐ No☒	Marriage/ Civil Partnership	Yes ☐ No☒

Is it likely that the policy/procedure could affect particular 'Inclusion Health' groups less favorably than the general population? (substance misuse; teenage mums; carers[1]; travellers[2]; homeless[3]; convictions; social isolation[4]; refugees)	Yes ☐ No☒

Please provide details for each protected group where you have indicated 'Yes'.

VISION AND VALUES: Policies must aim to remove unintentional barriers and promote inclusion

Is inclusive language[5] used throughout?	Yes ☒ No☐
Are the services outlined in the policy/procedure fully accessible[6]?	Yes ☒ No☐
Does the policy/procedure encourage individualised and person-centered care?	Yes ☒ No☐
Could there be an adverse impact on an individual's independence or autonomy[7]?	Yes ☐ No☒

If 'Yes', how will you mitigate this risk to ensure fair and equal access?

EXTERNAL FACTORS

Is the policy/procedure a result of national legislation which cannot be modified in any way?	Yes ☒ No☐

What is the reason for writing this policy? (Is it a result in a change of legislation/ national research?)

The Linen and Laundry policy is required as part of regulations concerning dirty linen that is removed from site. This policy specifies what the Trust needs to do to maintain national compliance.

Who was consulted when drafting this policy/procedure? What were the recommendations/suggestions?

ACTION PLAN: Please list all actions identified to address any impacts

Action	**Person responsible**	**Completion date**

AUTHORISATION:
By signing below, I confirm that the named person responsible above is aware of the actions assigned to them

Name of person completing the form	Tony Hopkins	**Signature**	
Validated by (line manager)	Karen Robertson	**Signature**	