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Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Cwm Taf Morgannwg
University Health Board



Freedom of Information Request: Our Reference CTMUHB_69_25

You asked:

I am submitting a Freedom of Information request regarding the disposal, decontamination, and sustainability practices of foam cushions and mattresses within Community Equipment Services.

Please would you be so kind to help us to gather the following information:

1. How do your Community Equipment Services (CES) dispose of foam cushions and mattresses? Landfill, incineration, or other method – please be specific. (If a third party takes care of this for you, please name them and explain the process of disposal.)
2. How do they decontaminate condemned cushions/mattresses before disposal?
3. How do they decontaminate cushions/mattresses between patient use?
4. Who is responsible for Infection Prevention at your Community Equipment Service?
5. Who is the Carbon Reduction & Sustainability Lead at your Community Equipment Service?

Our response:

Currently, there are 2 Community Equipment Service processes in place.

Process 1

RCT and Merthyr are managed by services within the Health Board.

Process 2

Bridgend Communities is contracted outside of the Health Board via Vision Products.

The responses have been separated in line with the two processes.

1. Disposal of items

Process 1

If a mattress or cushion is for disposal, they are placed inside either an orange or large clear disposal bag, which is then sealed and labelled with the contents, date and location. The items are then transported to the Royal Glamorgan Hospital and the Environment Waste and Fleet Management team arrange for them to be collected and disposed of via Stericycle or Veolia.

Process 2

Once a mattress or cushion has followed Vision Products scrapping policy, following a decontamination process, it is disposed of through waste management as collection by Amgen and transported to landfill.

2. Decontamination before disposal

Process 1

Condemned items are not decontaminated before disposal. They are securely bagged up in the orange disposal bag with all relevant information written on the outside. They are then stored until the drivers take them to the Royal Glamorgan Hospital for disposal via Stericycle.

Process 2

All equipment returned to Vision Products will be considered as contaminated and is decontaminated before any inspection, cleaning, servicing and or repair/scrapping following our infection control processes. All equipment is decontaminated within a sealed space with the use of an Ozone sanitiser on a timer.

3. Decontamination between patients

Process 1

Cushions and Mattresses are firstly inspected for odours, leaks, rips, damage, staining and porosity. The covers are cleaned using water, Hospec General Purpose Liquid Detergent and Clinell Wipes. If any slight stains/odours cannot be removed they are sent to the laundry department for cleaning. If the covers are porous/contaminated the items will be disposed of.

The internal foam internal surfaces are also inspected. If the internal foam is deemed to be contaminated, it will be condemned.

Process 2

All Cushions/Mattresses following decontamination, are manually inspected for damage, staining or odours. The covers are then manually cleaned using water and cleaning products. All cleaning chemicals used during this final cleaning process are selected and handled in accordance with COSHH Guidelines and a Chemical Register maintained in the Refurbishment Department.

Once this has been completed the internal mattress cells/foam is inspected and if either cover or internal cells/foam does not pass a rigorous quality inspection, they are then condemned for scrapping.

4. Responsibility

Process 1

Directorate Manager for Primary Care and Communities

Process 2

Service Manager for Vision Products

5. Carbon reduction and Sustainability

Process 1

This is managed by the Environment Waste and Fleet Management Department and supported by the Community Equipment Team. Our Head of Sustainability at CTMUHB.

Process 2

This is managed by Our Group Operations Manager and our Carbon Reduction and Sustainability Lead through Green Dragon.