



Dealing with Bomb Threats, Suspicious Packages and Vehicles Procedure

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1 Introduction

As part of NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde commitment to provide a safe environment for patients, staff and visitors, this procedure details the actions that should be taken if a bomb threat is received or a suspicious package identified. The following definitions apply:

Bomb Threat - Bomb threat is where the organisation receives information relating to the potential placement of an explosive device, For example:

- A telephone call or letter alleging that a bomb has been placed in a specific location or area;
- The discovery of item(s) suspected of being or containing an explosive device, of which no warning has been received, includes letter bombs and car bombs; or
- A suspicious package or vehicle found on NHS premises.

Suspicious packages - Includes "white powder". White Powder is the term used to describe an incident involving potential exposure to an unknown substance.

2 Purpose of this Procedure

The aim at all times must be to ensure that effective procedures are in place and are clearly understood to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of patients, the general public and staff. It is imperative that all staff understand what to do in the event of a threat to ensure the safety of themselves, their colleagues, patients and the general public.

3 Accountability, Responsibility and Compliance

The Chief Executive remains responsible for Health, Safety and Wellbeing. In addition to the responsibilities laid down in the management procedure, there are further specific duties inherent within this procedure. These are detailed below;

3.1 Senior Managers Reporting Directly to Directors

Senior Managers reporting directly to Directors shall:

- Implement the procedures and precautions when dealing with bomb threats/suspicious packages; and
- Report all threat incidents to the responsible Director during working hours and Tactical Director out of hours.
- The most senior member of staff on site will fulfil the role of duty manager Appendix 7

3.2 Line/Ward/Departmental Managers

Line/Ward/Departmental Managers shall:

- Ensure that all staff receive the necessary information and training and clearly understand the procedures for bomb threats and suspicious packages;
- Where appropriate, co-ordinate and direct patients, the general public and staff in the event of such an incident; and
- Complete a Datix Incident Report Form.

3.3 Employees

Employees shall:

- Ensure that they understand what to do in the event of a bomb threat or suspicious package and the appropriate actions to take; and
- Participate in training and evacuation as required in accordance with organisational protocols.

4 Procedures

4.1 Bomb Threats/Suspicious Packages - Clinics/Small Hospitals/Health Centres

Where possible the information gathering form shown in Appendix 1 should be completed for all telephone threats by the person receiving the call. The received threat should always be escalated to the relevant manager as a matter of urgency who will undertake the action determined in Appendix 2.

4.2 Bomb Threats/Suspicious Packages - Larger Premises

Switchboard operators should complete Appendix 1 and undertake action detailed in Appendix 6.

Should a telephone threat be received by a member of staff other than the switchboard operator, they should make the initial 2222 call informing switchboard of situation, complete the information gathering form at Appendix 1 where possible and notify the relevant manager as a matter of urgency who will undertake the action determined in Appendix 3.

Guidance on suspicious packages can be found at Appendix 5

5 Information, Instruction and Training

Good training is essential in the event of a need to search and evacuate and also every employee will need to know what to do. All staff should be made aware of the evacuation assembly points. Telephonists, secretaries and any other persons likely to answer a telephone should be instructed on how to handle a bomb threat call (Appendix 1).

Key staff such as Senior Managers or their nominated deputies need to know and understand their role, be regularly trained and comply with their instructions. Training needs must be determined through local risk assessments. Managers are required to put in place procedures to ensure that staff are replaced when they leave or are temporarily absent, so that there are no lapses of cover.

Training should be undertaken at local induction for staff to ensure that they are fully aware of the procedures for dealing with a bomb threat, suspicious package or vehicle. The frequency of refresher training should be determined by departmental training needs analysis.

Telephone Warning Check List

Checklist of actions to be taken on receipt of a threat:

- Immediately alert someone else if possible (so that your line manager may be informed) but DO NOT PUT THE CALLER ON HOLD OR CUT OFF THE CALLER
- Obtain as much information as you can
- Try to keep the caller talking (apologise for bad line, ask the caller to speak up, etc)
- Complete this form as you go along asking questions in sequence if necessary
- Keep TELEPHONE LINE OPEN (even though caller has disengaged)

The source of the call can often be detected by using modern technology

Message (exact words)
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Where is it?

What time will it go off?

What does it look like?

What kind of bomb is it (type of explosive)?

Why are you doing this?

WHO ARE YOU?

Name

Address.....

Telephone number

Time of call Date

When the call has finished give this sheet to the senior person within the premise at that time who will decide what to do.

The more information you get, the earlier it will be to decide whether the warning was genuine or not.

Now complete Part 2 of this form and when completed, give it immediately to your line manager

FURTHER INFORMATION

Details of call

Man	<input type="checkbox"/>	Woman	<input type="checkbox"/>	Child	<input type="checkbox"/>
Old/Young	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Known	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Speech

Intoxicated	<input type="checkbox"/>	Irrational	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rambling	<input type="checkbox"/>	Speech impediment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Laughing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Serious	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accent	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Distractions

Any noise on line?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Coin operational phone box	<input type="checkbox"/>
Operator?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Interruptions	<input type="checkbox"/>
Anyone in background?	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Other noises

Traffic	<input type="checkbox"/>	Talking	<input type="checkbox"/>	Typing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Machinery	<input type="checkbox"/>	Aircraft	<input type="checkbox"/>	Music	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Name of person receiving call

Number of telephone on which call was received

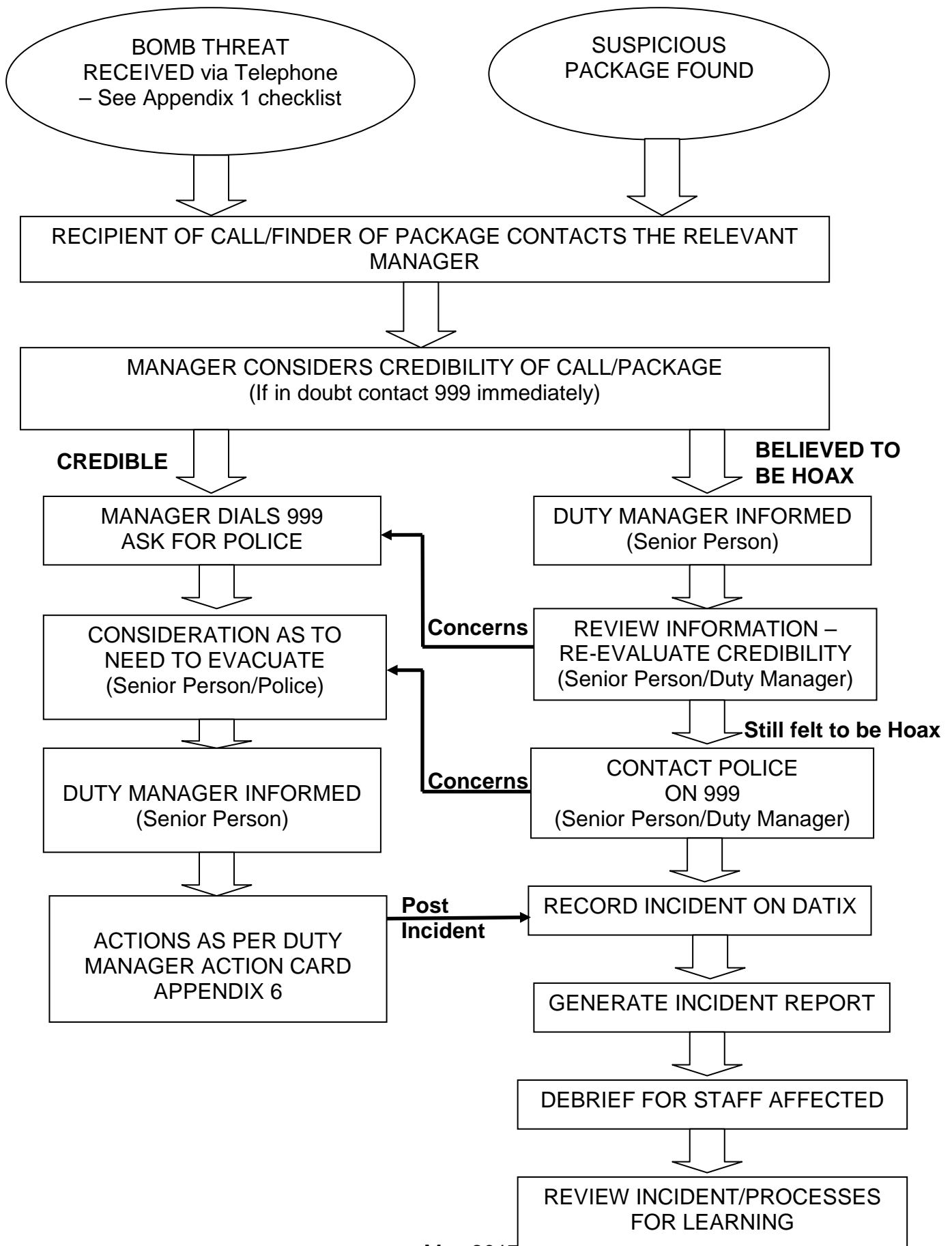
Time of police informed

By whom

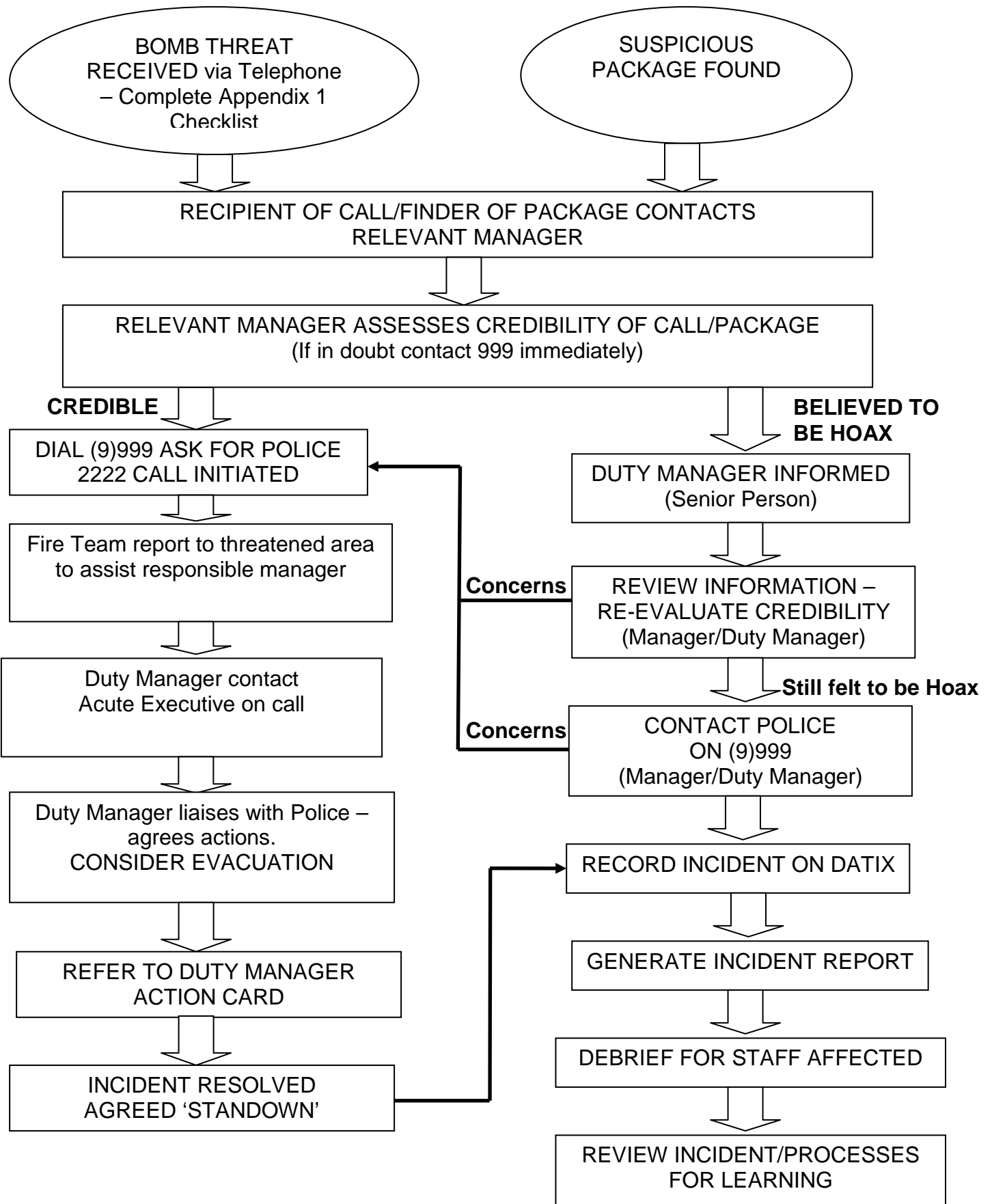
Now give this sheet to your line manager

Be available for an interview by the police

**PROTOCOL FOR DEALING WITH BOMB THREATS, SUSPICIOUS PACKAGES:
CLINICS/SMALL HOSPITALS/HEALTH CENTRES**



**PROTOCOL FOR DEALING WITH BOMB THREATS/SUSPICIOUS PACKAGES:
LARGER SITES WITH 2222 EMERGENCY RESPONSE SYSTEMS**



ADVICE TO STAFF HANDLING MAIL

- Minimising the number of staff involved in the process of physically opening the mail, and
- Minimising the number of locations in each department where mail is opened

People who handle mail

- Examine unopened envelopes for foreign bodies or powder.
- Not open mail with their hands - use a letter opener
- Open mail with the minimum of movement to avoid spilling any contents.

In addition mail handlers should watch out for

- Any mail that has suspicious or threatening messages written on it.
- Mail with oily, greasy stains or discolouration on the paper.
- Mail that is lopsided, rigid, bulky or has a strange odour.
- Unexpected mail from foreign countries – e.g. air mail and special delivery.
- Improper spelling of common words, common names, places or titles.
- Excessive securing materials such as masking tape, string etc.

Dealing with a suspicious package

It is imperative that following the discovery of a suspicious package, especially an opened package, that exposure to staff and the environment be reduced to the practical minimum. The information bulletin "Suspicious Mail Alert" gives basic safety advice for unopened or opened mail. In the event of the receipt of suspicious mail, all staff must note the following instructions for their own and their colleagues' safety and to prevent general disruption:

Unopened Package

- Stop handling the item – place on the nearest flat surface
- Do not try to clear up any spillage
- Calmly evacuate the room, switching off any ventilation units or closing windows
- Close and secure room door
- Staff member(s) handling the package to wash hands thoroughly
- Inform line manager by telephone
- Contain all staff affected in a nearby pre-identified room with telephone
- Main witness to contact Public Health Protection Unit or Facilities Manager
- Restrict access to the immediate area of the mail handling room and isolation room (using appropriate Room Isolation Notices).
- Await further advice or instructions based on Police advice.

Opened Package

- Do not spill or further disperse contents, do not leave the room with the package
- Do not touch eyes, nose or any other part of the body
- Follow instructions in "Unopened Package" above



SUSPICIOUSMAILALERT

In the unlikely event that you receive a suspicious letter or package:

- 1 Handle with care. Do not shake or bump.
- 2 Don't touch or open the package or contents.
- 3 Leave the package in the room.
- 4 Leave the room and close the door.
Ensure no-one else enters the room.
- 5 Wash hands with soap and warm water.
- 6 Inform your Line Manager.

FINALLY, YOU MUST CALL.....

Site Facilities Manager

Or

Public Health Protection Unit 0141 201 4917

Out of hours contact the call centre on 0141 211 3600 and ask for on call Public Health or Facilities Manager

SWITCHBOARD OPERATORS INITIAL ACTIONS

Switchboard operators on receiving notification of a threat shall:

- Initiate emergency response team pager alert,
- Dial 999 and inform the Police;
- Contact the Duty Manager

DUTY MANAGER

The Duty Manager shall:

- Establish the location of the threat and delegate staff to cordon off the immediate area as required.
- Notify the Relevant Director
- Ensure that the Police are met at the agreed location;
- Act as the NHS Liaison Officer with the police when they arrive on scene
- Start and maintain a log of actions, messages and decisions.
- Be responsible for making the decision to evacuate in conjunction with the relevant director, ward/ departmental staff and the emergency services.
The purpose of the evacuation is to move people from an area where they might be at risk, to a place of safety. This may be achieved by a partial evacuation (where large premises are involved and only a suspect letter, bomb or small device is found); or full evacuation. Guidance will be provided by the emergency services

Additionally, where appropriate, the Duty Manager shall assess the need to:

- Alert all wards;
- Recall all staff from breaks;
- Alert wards which may be required to horizontally evacuate patients allowing them to plan; and
- Seek advice from nursing or medical staff regarding fitness of patients to be evacuated.

Upon conclusion of the incident the Duty Manager will;

- Ensure any learning points are captured immediately on “stand down” of the incident and ask key participants in the incident to write up notes. and to
- Complete necessary report forms such as Datix
- Liaise with Civil Contingencies Unit regarding the incident debrief.
- Attend the incident debrief