

 <b>Halton Healthcare</b> <small>GEORGETOWN • MILTON • OAKVILLE</small>	<b>Patient Belongings, Valuables and Essential Assistive Devices Management Policy and Procedure</b>		
	Program/Dept.:	Quality and Patient Relations	Document Category: Clinical
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## 1.0 Purpose

To outline the process and guidelines for the management of patient belongings, valuables and essential assistive devices.

## 2.0 Scope

All staff, credentialed staff and volunteers.

## 3.0 Policy

- 3.1 Whenever possible, all patient belongings and valuables, should be sent home and not kept at the hospital.
- 3.2 Patients will be informed to leave valuables at home prior to their hospital procedure/admission whenever possible e.g. during appointment phone calls, pre-procedural appointments and/or through patient education information.
- 3.3 Halton Healthcare is not responsible for the loss or damage of belongings or valuables that a patient chooses to keep with them during their hospital procedure/admission.
- 3.4 Admitted patients will sign the “Inpatient Responsibility for Payment” form that informs the patient the hospital is not responsible for belongings or valuables if a patient chooses to keep items with them during their admission. In signing this form the patient acknowledges that they are responsible for the safekeeping of their personal belongings and valuables during their stay.
- 3.5 Halton Healthcare will offer temporary safekeeping of inpatient belongings in the following special circumstances:
  - a. The patient is incapacitated or has involuntary status (as defined by the Mental Health Act).
  - b. The patient is undergoing emergency procedures and is unable to manage personal belongings.
- 3.6 The belongings and valuables of a deceased patient will be handled as per the [Death: After Death Care Policy and Procedure](#).
- 3.7 Whenever possible, medications that are brought into the hospital should be sent home with family or designate as soon as possible after a best possible medication history (BPMH) has been collected. Refer to the [Patient's Own Medication Policy and Procedure](#).
- 3.8 If any patient belongings or valuables are left behind by the patient following a hospital appointment or discharge from hospital, they become “lost” and will be turned over to Security for storage for 30 days. Refer to the [Lost and Found Policy and Procedure](#)

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- 3.9 Any patient belongings or valuables that are left at one of Halton Healthcare's off-site locations will be held for 7 days at which time they become "lost" and are sent by courier to one of the Security offices at either Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital, Milton District Hospital, or Georgetown Hospital for storage for 30 days.
- 3.10 A patient's belongings may be searched if there are reasonable grounds to believe that the patient's belongings may contain an item that poses a risk of harm to self or others. For further details refer to the [Patient Person and Belongings Search Policy and Procedure](#).
- 3.11 Any essential assistive devices (and their components) that accompany patients to the hospital will be appropriately stored (e.g. in a denture cup, if possible), appropriately labelled with a patient sticker, and kept at the patient's bedside, with documentation completed in the patient's health record.
- 3.12 If an essential assistive device is damaged, requires new battery, etc. while patient is admitted in the hospital, repair and/or maintenance is the responsibility of the patient and/or family.

## 4.0 Procedure

- 4.1 If a patient is unable to make arrangements to have belongings and/or valuables sent home, the following procedure is required:

### 4.1.1 Patient's Own Medication

Refer to the [Patient's Own Medication Policy and Procedure](#) for further details.

### 4.1.2 Special Circumstances

In the special circumstance identified in policy statement 3.5, staff will manage the patient belongings and/or valuables as follows:

- a. Don gloves
- b. Use caution when handling patient belongings, avoiding placing hands in areas where the contents are unknown.
- c. Once items are identified, the primary care nurse ensures completion of an inventory of the belongings on the **Patient Belongings & Valuables Record** (found on FormFast),
  - i. If unidentified, illegal substances, weapons and/or contraband found, refer to the [Patient Person and Belongings Search Policy and Procedure](#)
  - ii. If sharps found, safely dispose of them in the nearest sharps container as soon as possible and document disposal on Patient Belongings & Valuables Record.
- d. The patient reviews and signs the Patient Belongings & Valuables Record as soon as possible.
- e. In the event the patient is unable to sign the form, two staff members will sign off on the Patient Belongings & Valuables Record and seal the belongings and valuables in a patient belonging bag with patient label affixed.
- f. The unit staff stores the patient's belongings in a secure location with patient label and completed Patient Belongings & Valuables Record (one copy in patient chart and one kept with the belongings).

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- g. In the event the patient's belongings are not stored within the patient room, documentation in the patient's health record is required to note the storage location.
- h. Belongings of significant value (as defined by the patient or family) requiring safekeeping will be placed in an appropriately sized Patient Belongings Bag or Envelope by the department. Security will place belongings/valuables in the designated locked safekeeping area within the Security office. A copy of the Patient Belongings & Valuables Record/Envelope will accompany the belongings/valuables.
- i. The patient's belongings and valuables stored by the department will be returned to the patient and/or family/designate as soon as possible.
- j. In circumstances where the patient and/or family member/designate presents to Security to reclaim belongings of significant value, government-issued identification will be requested. If there are any discrepancies when reclaimed, Security will communicate with unit/program Patient Care Manager and/or Patient Relations.
- k. When patient's belongings and valuables stored under locked safekeeping in the Security office are returned to the patient and/or family/designate, the Security Officer returning the items will record the details in Security's internal recording system and have the patient/designate sign the Patient Belongings & Valuables Record as appropriate.
- l. The signed Patient Belongings & Valuables Record will then be sent to Clinical Information Services for filing.

## 5.0 Supplies

- a. Gloves
- b. Patient Belongings Bag
- c. Patient Belongings & Valuables Record (Form # H4145)
- d. Patient Belongings & Valuables Record (Envelope Version) (Form # H4449)
- e. Patient labels/stickers

## 6.0 Definitions

**Patient Belongings:** includes, but is not limited to clothing, toiletries, pillows, blankets, and home medications.

**Patient Valuables:** includes, but is not limited to money, jewelry and electronics devices (cell phones, personal digital accessories).

**Essential Assistive Devices:** includes, but not limited to, dentures, hearing aids, glasses, prosthetics and personal c-pap machines.

## 7.0 Related Documents

Patient's Own Medication Policy and Procedure  
Death: After Death Care Policy and Procedure  
Lost & Found Policy and Procedure  
Patient, Person and Belongings Search Policy and Procedure

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## **8.0 Key Words**

Belongings, Patient Belongings, Valuables, Patient's Own Medication, Essential Assistive Devices

## **9.0 Reviewed by/Consultation with**

Refer to Engagement/Stakeholders/Approvals table

## **10.0 References**

Mental Health Act. (1990). Retrieved, <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90m07>

Personal Health Information Protection Act [PIHIPA]. (2004).

Retrieved, <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/04p03>