

Destruction of confidential waste procedure

The purpose of this procedure is to document the procedure for disposal of confidential waste in an effective and secure manner

Key information

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1. Introduction

NHS Bradford Districts & Craven Clinical Commissioning Group is legally obliged to comply with the provisions of the data protection legislation to protect all personally-identifiable information by ensuring that it is 'processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the personal data, including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage, using appropriate technical or organisational measures'.

The CCG has a duty of care to ensure all personally identifiable and confidential information relating to the CCGs' business activity is protected from the public domain and has an obligation to dispose of all clinical and non-clinical personal confidential data under secure and confidential conditions.

Regular audits are carried out by the IG team to gain assurance that the handling and disposal of confidential waste is compliant with current regulations (BS15713) British security industry association code for the secure destruction of confidential waste best practice guidelines.

This procedure relates not only to the CCGs' headquarters at Millennium Business Park, Steeton and Scorex House, Bradford but also to staff attending meetings off site, hot desking at other locations and working from home. Particular care should be taken to ensure that all papers are disposed of correctly after meetings have ended.

2. Objective

All staff have a common law duty of confidentiality to safeguard personal and confidential information during the course of their work. This is a contractual obligation and a legal requirement of the data protection act 2018.

The purpose of this procedure is to document for all staff the procedure for disposal of confidential waste in an effective and secure manner.

3. Definition of confidential information

Confidential waste is defined as 'waste containing personally-identifiable information' or 'waste which is business sensitive'. When determining if information is confidential, consider whether the information could be disclosed under the freedom of information Act (FOI); if the information is permissible to release under FOI then it should not be considered confidential.

Below is a specific list of material classes as 'confidential' that would require secure disposal:-

- name (of patients, staff, members of the public etc.)
- identification number (such as NHS number)
- online identifier
- payroll and pension data
- phone numbers and email addresses
- location data (i.e. address)
- sensitive personal data, as defined by the data protection act 2018 covers racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious beliefs, trade union activities, physical or mental health, sexual life or details of criminal offences;

- higher level personal data such as information relating to staff disciplinary proceedings or harassment
- clinical records
- records of a commercially sensitive nature, such as contracts, tenders, purchasing and maintenance records, or legal documents
- records containing sensitive information such as video, DVD, photographs and other multi-media formats.
- data relating to future activities of the CCG

Any breach of confidentiality should be classed as an information governance incident and reported to the corporate governance team in accordance with the CCGs' incident reporting procedure.

4. Destruction of confidential records

It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure information they are handling is stored and destroyed effectively and securely. Information on the correct disposal of confidential waste is included within the IG user handbook (provided upon induction) and regular reminders will be provided via staff communications.

Any material which is not confidential in nature should be disposed of in desk-side recycling bins.

All paper records that have reached the end of their life cycle (see records management and information lifecycle policy and the records management code of practice for health and social care 2016) should be destroyed using one of the following methods:-

4.1 Internal shredding: cross cut shredder (Millennium Business Park, Steeton)

Paper records should be destroyed using a shredding device designed to cross cut material to ensure shredding cannot be reconstructed. Staff shredding their own records are responsible for ensuring records are kept secure in a locked cupboard or drawer until such time they can be shredded.

4.2 External confidential waste disposal company (Scorex House, Bradford)

The CCG has a contract in place with Russell Richardson & Sons Limited for the collection, destruction and disposal of confidential paper waste from CCG premises at Scorex House. Locked confidential waste bins are located throughout CCG premises and it is the responsibility of every member of staff to ensure that confidential waste is disposed of in the correct receptacles.

Russell Richardson & Sons Limited are responsible for ensuring:-

- a log is maintained of every collection of confidential waste by 'Russell Richardson'
- provision of a destruction certificate for every consignment
- that the confidential waste container is locked at all times
- the safe custody of the key to the confidential waste bin

Requests to retrieve items from on-site confidential waste bins will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. If approval is given to retrieve confidential waste, this will be carried out in a controlled manner by the corporate governance team.

Once confidential waste has been collected, it becomes the property of Russell Richardson & Sons Limited and is immediately destroyed.

4.3 Home working

Any documentation used during the course of homeworking, which may hold identifiable data or information sensitive to the CCG, should be stored and treated as if they were confidential.

If a staff member has access to a cross-shredder at home, this would be an acceptable means of disposing of confidential waste.

If no cross-shredder is available confidential waste should be stored securely within the home and disposed of when next on CCG premises.

4.4 IT equipment and electronic media

Advice should be sought from the CCGs' IT service provider regarding the destruction of IT equipment and electronic media.