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1. INTRODUCTION

This policy outlines the Trusts policy in relation to the risks presented by snow and ice. The Occupiers Liability Act 1957 (amended 1984) places an obligation on the owner/occupier of land or building to ensure safe access and egress from that premise, which includes an obligation to minimise the adverse effects caused by snow and ice. Snow and ice may present risks to the continuation of the provision of services which are provided by the Trust and may present risks to service users, visitors, staff and others who access the grounds and buildings that are utilised by the Trust. It is therefore important to plan ahead for potential problems that may be caused by snow and ice. The Trust is required to demonstrate that that it is acting reasonably in the event of snow and ice conditions and that it has plans to reduce the risks.

As a general rule it is the main occupier of a building who is responsible for the gritting and snow clearing operations, unless otherwise specified within a lease or other agreement.

In situations of multiple occupancy, where the owner of a building has some level of occupancy the responsibility for gritting will generally fall to the owner. If the building owner does not have occupancy in the building then the responsibility will be with the main occupier as above.

Individuals should also be aware that even if the Trust is not responsible for the gritting of a property, the landlord’s compliance with the legislation should still be monitored. If an accident were to happen, it would be helpful for the Trust to have evidence in place to show that pressure had been exerted on the landlord to comply, so assisting in protecting the Trusts position in the event of any investigation or claim.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that the Trust has considered the risks from snow and ice and has plans in place to reduce the risks.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all buildings and grounds where the Trust provides services from, or are utilised by the Trust. The Trust provides its services from many buildings and has in place varying arrangements in relation to these. The information in this policy offers Trust staff guidance in relation to measures that should be taken to fulfil the Trusts duty of care.

The Trust does not have central resource capacity to apply snow clearance and/or gritting to all buildings and grounds where the Trust has control of the building or from buildings where the Trust provides
services. An operational risk assessment has established that the sequence of providing ice and snow clearance should be prioritised at inpatient sites which include:

- The Tickhill Road Site,
- Great Oaks,
- Swallownest Court,
- The Woodlands,
- The Bentley Site

All outpatient sites and sites that are used as staff bases may have a lower risk and it is not practicable to provide an ice and snow clearance service from central resources to these sites. The arrangements at these sites will vary and typically range from locally based staff taking appropriate measures, to host organisations or external contractors providing safe access and egress from buildings.

This policy does not address issues in relation to attendance for duty during periods of inclement weather or disruption to the public transport system for which there is a separate Trust policy (See section 9).

4. RESPONSIBILITIES, ACCOUNTABILITIES AND DUTIES

4.1 Chief Executive

The Chief Executive has overall accountability for ensuring that safe access and egress is provided for buildings that are utilised by Trust staff and visitors and is responsible for ensuring that a policy is in place to mitigate against these risks. The accountability for implementation of these risks is devolved to Directors, Assistant Directors and Heads of Service.

4.2 Directors, Assistant Directors and Heads of Service.

Directors, Assistant Directors and Heads of Service are responsible for ensuring the buildings under their control have appropriate arrangements in place to minimise the risks associated with access and egress to buildings during periods of ice and snow, and are responsible for nominating a senior person at each site/building during periods of inclement weather to ensure that the effects of snow and ice are effectively managed. This may be the designated/identified health and safety representative on duty that day.

It is the service/building managers or nominated senior person’s responsibility to ensure a procedure is developed and implemented as described in section 5 of this policy, if necessary this can be done with assistance from the Trust estates department. This procedure shall be reviewed at least annually with a thorough and appropriate site specific risk assessment.
The procedure shall include a process to monitor the effectiveness of previous ice/snow clearing operations and to check the access and egress to the site/building on a frequent basis.

4.3 **Staff carrying out ice/snow clearance.**

Where staff carry out ice/snow clearance and/or gritting operations, appropriate equipment, personal protective equipment (PPE) and training will be provided by the Trust. All persons carrying out Gritting operations should be provided with a site specific risk assessment and procedure to follow.

Any equipment provided for use should be returned to an appropriate store and cleaned to ensure that equipment is always readily available for use and in a serviceable condition.

Staff carrying out ice/snow clearance may be responsible for completing a log which will assist with monitoring and assisting in protecting the Trust’s position in the event of any investigation or claim. Staff must also report back to their manager when grit is running low or if there are any problems with equipment.

4.4 **All Trust Staff**

All staff are responsible for reporting areas of ice or snow that may present a hazard to others, for example a blocked fire exit and to ensure that, where necessary, appropriate and practicable measures are taken to assist with gritting and snow clearing operations.

Staff should always be aware of their own health and safety and when inclement weather is forecast should wear appropriate clothing and suitable footwear to help reduce the risk of slipping. In severe conditions when snow makes vehicular access difficult staff should not park in such a way as to cause further disruption to services or other site users.

Staff not directly employed in patient care may be called upon in severe conditions to assist with site clearance to help maintain essential services.

Appendix 1 provides further practical advice on gritting and snow clearing.

5. **PROCEDURE/IMPLEMENTATION**

A site specific risk assessment is required to establish what action may need to be taken in the event of snow and ice conditions. The risk assessment should be done in conjunction with staff that may be required to carry out ice/snow clearance at the site and should include:
• The sequence in which any areas affected by ice/snow will be attended to.
• When ice/snow clearance will be implemented –for example, will it be preventative or reactive?
• How ice/snow clearance work will be carried out, who will do it and what equipment will be used, this should also include a manual handling risk assessment.
• Any Health and Safety or lone working considerations of staff carrying out the ice/snow clearance.
• Any PPE Requirements.
• A system for monitoring the weather to ensure preventative gritting is carried out at the right time.
• A system for monitoring the effectiveness of operations.

The risk assessment will determine and aid the development of procedures for ice/snow conditions and identify the equipment required to safely carry out any clearance operations. Local procedures should specify the conditions under which ice/snow clearance will be undertaken and the extent to which these procedures will cover. Where footpaths and car parks are accessible to visitors all areas should be incorporated into the clearance procedure where practicable.

Ice/snow conditions can often be widespread, but very often can also be localised. It is therefore imperative that conditions at each site are checked thoroughly when ice/snow conditions are forecast. The local Met Office or the BBC Local weather reports online may be used for forecasting ice and snow. If the forecast predicts snow or the temperature to fall to +2 degrees Celsius or below, pro-active operations to reduce the effects of ice/snow may be implemented.

Inpatient units will need to ensure a procedure is in place to ensure that an amended fire evacuation plan is in place should some fire exits become blocked due to snow.

In severe conditions such as heavy snow it may not be possible to clear the snow and managers may have to consider closing non-essential buildings for safety reasons.

6. TRAINING IMPLICATIONS

All Trust staff should be made aware of the key points within this policy, and any local procedures that may accompany this policy. Awareness campaigns will be communicated through the Trust intranet, Trust publications, departmental team brief, organised training days (including manual handling) and strategically placed posters and information leaflets.

The Trust will publish advice and guidance documents annually to coincide with the onset of winter, and to remind people of their
responsibilities during periods of inclement weather.

Where appropriate, either by legislative requirement or as identified in a risk assessment, information training and any associated equipment will be provided by the Trust. This should take place at local induction to a service.

7. **MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS**

This policy and any associated procedures will be reviewed for effectiveness and amended to reflect practices and procedures as set out in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area for Monitoring</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Who by</th>
<th>Reported to</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legislation</td>
<td>Review of guidance provided by government websites</td>
<td>Environmental and Waste Manager</td>
<td>Health Safety and Security Forum</td>
<td>Annually ahead of gritting period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance</td>
<td>Diary entries Log books Correspondence</td>
<td>Managers/ Heads of Service</td>
<td>Health Safety and Security Forum</td>
<td>Frequently during periods of inclement weather. Reviewed annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adverse Incidents</td>
<td>IR1 reports</td>
<td>H&amp;S Lead</td>
<td>Health Safety and Security Forum</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is the intention of the Trust to ensure effective implementation and regular review of this policy in all aspects of resource management and decision-making.

8. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING**

The completed Equality Impact Assessment has been published on this policies webpage of the Trust’s Policy website.

8.1 **Privacy, Dignity and Respect**

The NHS Constitution states that all patients should feel that their privacy and dignity are respected while they are in hospital.
High Quality Care for All (2008), Lord Darzi’s review of the NHS, identifies the need to organise care around the individual, ‘not just clinically but in terms of dignity and respect’.

As a consequence the Trust is required to articulate its intent to deliver care with privacy and dignity that treats all service users with respect. Therefore, all procedural documents will be considered, if relevant, to reflect the requirement to treat everyone with privacy, dignity and respect, (when appropriate this should also include how same sex accommodation is provided).

| will be met | There are no additional requirements in relation to privacy, dignity and respect |

8.2 Mental Capacity Act

Central to any aspect of care delivered to adults and young people aged 16 years or over will be the consideration of the individuals capacity to participate in the decision making process. Consequently, no intervention should be carried out without either the individuals informed consent, or the powers included in a legal framework, or by order of the Court

Therefore, the Trust is required to make sure that all staff working with individuals who use our service are familiar with the provisions within the Mental Capacity Act. For this reason all procedural documents will be considered, if relevant to reflect the provisions of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 to ensure that the interests of an individual whose capacity is in question can continue to make as many decisions for themselves as possible.

| Indicate How This Will Be Achieved. | Not applicable |

9. LINKS TO OTHER TRUST PROCEDURAL DOCUMENTS

Attendance-for-Duty-Policy

10. REFERENCES

The Occupiers Liability Act 1957 (amended 1984).

11. APPENDICES
Appendix 1

Guidance for staff involved in Gritting and Snow Clearing Operations

Clearing ice/snow and grit spreading in winter can be hazardous and care should be taken to ensure your own safety. No gritting should take place without first completing a site specific risk assessment.

Always:

- Ensure you are up to date with Statutory Manual Handling Training
- Dress appropriately for the conditions.
- Wear good sturdy footwear.
- Be aware of your own capabilities.
- Wear Hi Visibility clothing when gritting car parks and access roads.
- Let other staff know you are outside gritting/snow clearing.
- Complete a log of gritting operations including any problems you encountered.
- Clean and return to storage all equipment used.

Wherever possible 2 people should be involved in the gritting operation as the inherent risk of injury from slipping is high and with sub-zero temperatures this poses a high risk assessment rating.

Snow Clearing

Take care when shovelling snow. Cold air makes it harder to work and breathe, which adds extra strain on the body. Take your time, rest when you need to, make sure you have plenty to drink and be safe.

Fresh snow is relatively easy to clear. As traffic starts to compact it then it becomes harder. It is therefore better to clear snow as soon as it has settled. Dry powdery snow is best cleared simply by use of a sweeping brush. Wet snow will require more effort using a snow shovel or ordinary shovel.

When clearing snow it is important to think about where to put it, wherever possible move it to the bottom of a slope rather than the top. This prevents the ensuing melt water re-freezing across the path/road. Paths should be gritted as soon as possible after clearing snow.

For light snow (less than 2 inches) it is not always necessary to remove the snow as grit salt will be effective, especially if applied before the snowfall.

NB. It is an offence to move snow onto a public highway or public footpath.
Gritting

Gritting paths and roads on private land that is open to the public is necessary to fulfil our duty of care under the terms of the Occupiers Liability Act 1984. The Trust is liable to prosecution if it does nothing to reduce the risk of slipping on ice and snow. By gritting our sites we are reducing the risk of people slipping and therefore reducing the risk of a claim being sought against the Trust.

Grit salt is most effective in temperatures down to -10 degrees Celsius. In temperatures below this road salt becomes less effective although it can still melt ice down to -21 degrees, however the effect is much less and grit sand or ash is advised to be added for extra grip.

Grit salt is also effective under snow as the salt will form a barrier between the pavement and the snow so reducing the chance of slipping, however when snow is deeper than 2 inches salt becomes ineffective and manual snow clearance is recommended before gritting.

Do Not use too much grit salt, a light coverage is all that is necessary to achieve a safe environment, using too much grit is wasteful, can cause pollution of ground waters and can actually create a slip hazard especially for cars.

Salt is corrosive so all equipment used should be washed immediately after use and left serviceable for the next person.

Take care when handling bags of salt, bags are heavy and the cold conditions make handling more hazardous. Follow advice as given during manual handling training, and if necessary complete a manual handling risk assessment.

Personal Protective Clothing (PPE) will be provided by the Trust for any staff member required to apply grit or clear snow. As a minimum requirement PPE should include:

- Gloves
- Hi Vis Jacket

Any other PPE deemed necessary should be considered by managers according to the individuals need such as wellington boots, hats and coveralls.

For advice on clearing snow and ice at home visit the Meteorological Office advice pages online: The Snow Code