

Pest Control Policy

Document History	1 March 2009
Version 1	
Version 2	
Review date	1 March 2010

Location of Policy

All wards and departments (for information purposes)

Introduction

Like all public buildings, hospitals are a magnet for pests. Pests that have the potential to cause problems in hospitals include:

Rats
Mice
Pigeons
Squirrels
Cockroaches
Pharaoh's ants
Flies
Carpet beetles
Bed bugs
Fleas

Pests can be more than a nuisance. They can be destructive e.g. gnawing through packaging, furniture, electric cables etc. They can access and contaminate sterile supplies e.g. Pharaoh's ants in giving sets. They can also transmit disease e.g. salmonellosis, dysentery, leptospirosis, cryptococcosis etc. Cockroaches carry up to 14 million bacteria on their bodies and 7 million bacteria (including *Escherichia coli*, *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, *Serratia marcescens*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* and *Salmonella spp.*) in each of their droppings. In a hospital environment, with sterile supplies, operating theatres and immuno-compromised patients, pest control is extremely important.

Aim

The Trust aims to keep all areas as free as is reasonably practical from pests of public health significance in order to minimise the potential spread of disease and to satisfy its statutory duties.

Signs of infestation

Staff should be alert to the possibility of infestation on discovery of any of the following:

Direct sightings of vermin/pests
Droppings near food source or along vermin "runways"
Evidence of nesting
Gnawing (mice do this not just to access food but to keep their teeth short)
The maintenance department also do night-time inspections of the grounds and gardens to look for signs of vermin.

In the event of a pest problem

1. Staff must immediately notify the Housekeeping and Portering Manager on extension 4195. Out of normal working hours, in an emergency where a response cannot wait until the next working day, contact the Site Manager via Hospital Switchboard.

Give your name, ward/department and telephone extension, and details of the pest problem. Mention where in your area you saw the pest or signs of pest activity.

2. The Housekeeping and Portering Manager will then contact their contracted pest control company who will respond.

Prevention of infestation

It is much easier to prevent a pest problem in the first place, rather than to eradicate established pests. Pest control is primarily based on good sanitation and maintenance. Pests can grow to a huge population on what may seem like very little food & water. **To prevent pest infestation you need to deprive them of food, water and shelter.**

1. Deprive pests of food

1.1. Do not feed birds or animals

Apart from attracting pigeons, the residual food will attract vermin and insect pests.

1.2. Food storage

Food must be kept in pest-proof, airtight containers.

1.3. Cleanliness

All food debris must be cleaned up immediately. Wipe off kitchen counters. Pay particular attention to areas where food debris accumulates e.g. under the microwave. Don't leave dirty pots out overnight.

1.4. Waste disposal

Make sure that waste bags are removed promptly. Clean bins if they become contaminated with food residues. Make sure that sanitary bins are emptied regularly.

2. Deprive pests of water

Pests need a water supply as well as food. Report any water leaks (e.g. the plumbing under the kitchen sink). Make sure leaking taps and toilets are reported to (TWFM) Maintenance Department on extension 1188.

3. Deprive pests of shelter

3.1. Clear away clutter.

Pests like to have lots of clutter so that they have plenty of places to hide.

3.2. General maintenance

Pests need cracks and crevices (harbourages) for resting and hiding. Ensure that the environment is well-maintained and that all cracks and crevices are sealed. Block any entry points from outside (e.g. around pipe work). Gardens must be well maintained and rubbish must not be allowed to accumulate. Pigeon nesting places in buildings must be sealed to prevent future access. Requests for maintenance or remedial works should be directed to Estates Department on extension 4172.

4. Pets

Pets can harbour fleas and must not be kept on the ward or be allowed to visit. The exception to this is guide pets (if needed), when the Infection Control Team must give approval in advance and will advise on the conditions required i.e.

Provision of a single room for patient and pet

Staff are not allowed to touch the animal

All responsibility for feeding, walking and caring to toilet needs is the responsibility of the patient's family/friends/support group.

Documentation

An ongoing record of all pest control problems, location, date and action taken will be kept in the Housekeeping and Portering Department.

Contracting

The contract drawn up between the contractor and the Trust will comply with all the requirements in the document "NHS conditions of contract for pest control" (March 2007).¹

Useful Contact numbers

To report a pest problem:

Staff must immediately notify the Housekeeping and Portering Manager on extension 4195 or bleep 539. Out of normal working hours, in an emergency where a response cannot wait until the next working day, contact the Site Manager via Hospital Switchboard.

For Advice on Pest Control:

Contact the Housekeeping and Portering Manager on extension 4195 or bleep 539

Infection Control Team:

Mrs Ann Smith

Nurse Consultant for Infection, Prevention and Control

Ext. 3118

References

1. NHS conditions of contract for pest control (March 2007)

[http://www.pasa.nhs.uk/pasa/Doc.aspx?Path=\[MN\]\[SP\]/Guidance%20Documents/terms%20and%20conditions/pestcontrol0307withoutguidance.doc](http://www.pasa.nhs.uk/pasa/Doc.aspx?Path=[MN][SP]/Guidance%20Documents/terms%20and%20conditions/pestcontrol0307withoutguidance.doc)