

Special observation/care to the patient with suicide/self-harm risk concern at CUH

Information for staff member providing special observation/care

- The staff member allocated to special observation/care will not partake in any activity that will distract his/her ability to supervise and observe the patient effectively.
- The patient must be in full view of the staff member at all times, including when visitors are present, when the patient is using bathroom / toilet facilities and when asleep. Even though the patient is being observed within eyesight, the privacy and dignity of the patient must be maintained.
- The following prevention measures in the immediate environment should happen as a matter of routine:
 - Ensure the person does not have any medications or any potential weapons (ie scissors, knives etc) on their person
 - Ensure plastic rather than metal cutlery is used for meals and plastic rather than glass/metal drinking containers, bottles, cups.
 - Do not allow access to cigarette lighter or matches
 - Remove plastic bags from the immediate environment
 - Remove or be aware of laces on shoes or belts on dressing gowns or pyjama pants.
 - Be aware of potential unavoidable hazards such as IV lines and plugs which could be used as ligatures
 - Be vigilant when patients have visitors and they might need to be checked after every visit in case visitors bring in any of the above items.
- Avoid complacency which can happen if the patient is being specialised longer than 24 hours by the same individuals.
- Give a sufficient handover during changeover with other staff providing special observation/care - particularly in regards to any behavioural disturbance