



Department of Health

10998 NHS Management Executive
St. Andrew's House
Edinburgh EH1 3DG
5 December 1995

Dear Colleague

**PATIENT SMOKING ARRANGEMENTS
MANAGEMENT POLICY AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Summary

1. This letter draws your attention to the recent death of a patient following a serious fire incident in order that appropriate action is taken.
2. The patient had been smoking in an informally designated "safe area". It appears the paper gown he was wearing caught fire, probably igniting on contact with the lit cigarette. Staff were aware this patient was a persistent smoker.

Action

3. Health service bodies should urgently consider their policy in relation to patients who wish to smoke and ensure the operational arrangements in place offer adequate safeguards.
4. It is critical that those with a management role in the care and safety of patients who insist on smoking make all staff involved aware of their individual responsibilities. Approval for any such arrangements must be sought at the appropriate level.
5. I would ask you to bring this matter to the immediate attention of all staff.

Yours sincerely

M R SIBBALD

M R SIBBALD
Director of Human Resources

COMMON SERVICES AGENCY	
RECEIVED	
- 6 DEC 1995	
FILE No	
REFERRED TO	ACTION TAKEN

Addressees

For action:

General Managers, Health Boards

Chief Executives, NHS Trusts

General Manager, Common Services Agency

General Manager, State Hospitals Board for Scotland

For information:

General Manager, Health Education Board for Scotland

Executive Director, SCPMDE

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