

# Protocol for Return of Red Bags to Care Homes

**Deceased patients, patients going to a Residential/Nursing home which is different to the one from which they came, and lost red bags**



This protocol provides an outline of the steps to follow in relation to the return of lost bags to care homes, and bags travelling with the Patient to a new home, which they did not originate from. Also outlined is the steps to be taken for the return of the Red Bag and the contents for a care home resident who s admitted to hospital and subsequently dies in hospital.

The general principles are that the Red Bag remains with and travels with the care home resident throughout their journey. If a resident is discharged to a different home, not the home they arrived from, their Red Bag will need to travel with them and then be returned to the originating care home.

## Deceased Patient:

- **The personal belongings of the deceased should be handed over to their relatives either by the ward or mortuary staff.** If the relatives are willing to take the Red Bag and return it to the care home that is acceptable.
- **Ward staff should remove the documents from the red bag and hand them over to the Continuing Healthcare Team representative.**
- **If the deceased patient does not have relatives or they are unable to return the Red Bag to the care home,** the ward or mortuary staff should contact the Trusted Assessor or the PALS team to facilitate the return of the red bag.
- **If the care home lead is present** the red bag and its contents should be given to them by ward staff.
- **If the care home lead is not present** it is the responsibility of the ward or mortuary to contact the care home within one week of the patient being deceased and make arrangements for the care home lead or Trusted Assessor to collect the red bag from the ward or mortuary.
- **If the care home lead has not collected the red bag within one week of being contacted** the ward should hand over the red bag to the Trusted Assessor or Bereavement/PALS Team and inform the care home of this action.
- **If the care home lead has not collected the red bag within three weeks** The Trusted Assessor or the Bereavement/PALS Team should contact the care home to arrange the collection of the red bag.

## Patient going to a different home:

- When the patient arrives at the different home, unpack belongings, clean bag as per cleaning instructions and liaise with the Trusted Assessor to facilitate the return of the Red Bag to the originating home.

## Lost Red Bags:

- Lost bags should be handed over to the Trusted Assessor or the Bereavement/PALS Team, who will liaise with the respective care home.

# Bedfordshire Red Bag Transfer Pathway

The **Red Bag** is an initiative used by care homes and hospitals which care for residents from Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire and East of England Ambulance Service. If you have not seen or heard of it before, please speak to the senior lead in your care home or organisation.



In bound to hospital →		
<p><b>CARE HOME</b></p> <p><b>Remember to pack:</b></p> <p>Documentation, including the Checklist:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transfer Form,</li> <li>• Care Home Resident Summary Care Plan</li> <li>• Any other appropriate documentation, e.g:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MAR Sheet</li> <li>• DNACPR/ End of Life paperwork</li> <li>• This is Me / All About me.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Medications (see Do's &amp; Don'ts sheet).</p> <p>Personal Belongings, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any personal aids</li> <li>• Clothes for discharge, Toiletries</li> <li>• Glasses, Dentures, Hearing Aids.</li> </ul> <p>Handover packed Red Bag to Ambulance Crew.</p>	<p><b>AMBULANCE</b></p> <p><b>Remember to:</b></p> <p>Receive the Red Bag from the care home and check the paperwork is present.</p> <p>Read the Transfer Form.</p> <p>Take the Red Bag in the ambulance with the care home resident.</p> <p>Handover the Red Bag to the hospital staff receiving the patient and discuss any issues arising.</p> <p>Remind the receiving hospital staff that the Red Bag must stay with the patient throughout their time in hospital.</p>	<p><b>HOSPITAL</b></p> <p><b>Remember to:</b></p> <p>Receive the Red Bag from the ambulance crew</p> <p>Read the information held in the document pouch. It contains baseline information and details on the person's general health, medication, needs and preferences.</p> <p>Store all documents and personal belongings in the Red Bag when they are not being used</p> <p>Place an indicator that the patient is a care home resident, so all staff aware</p> <p>If the patient is transferred to another ward, ensure their Red Bag is handed over.</p>
← Out bound back to care home		
<p>Receive Red Bag from Ambulance/PTS Crew.</p> <p>Unpack Red Bag using the Checklist, follow up on any discrepancies/missing items with the hospital.</p> <p>Clean the Red Bag according to the red bag cleaning instructions.</p>	<p>Receive Red Bag from hospital staff, check paperwork is present.</p> <p>Take the Red Bag in the Ambulance/PTS vehicle with the care home resident.</p> <p>Handover Red Bag to care home staff.</p>	<p>Pack patient's belongs and documentation in the Red Bag using the Checklist, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discharge Letter</li> <li>• Any medication (TTOs)</li> <li>• Personal belongings.</li> </ul> <p>Handover packed Red Bag to Ambulance/PTS Crew.</p>

**This Red Bag is private property. If found in:-**  
**Hospital, without the patient:** Please take it immediately to the senior lead on the ward  
**Care Home:** Please take it to the Registered Manager or Red Bag lead  
**Anywhere else:** Please contact Helen.Jones@bedfordhospital.nhs.uk

**PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE THIS PAGE FROM THE RED BAG**

For more information visit: [www.bedfordshireccg.nhs.uk](http://www.bedfordshireccg.nhs.uk)



Local councils and the NHS - working together for better care locally