

PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES ON MENTAL HEALTH UNITS

POLICY[®]

DOCUMENT SUMMARY/KEY POINTS

- This procedure provides guidance for Mental Health staff to ensure safe young person access to mobile phone/devices whilst on Acute Adolescent Mental Health Inpatient Units.
- The procedure was developed following consultation with staff and young people. Young person consultation recommended the development of an agreement for young persons to sign that outlines agreed terms of use of mobiles and personal communication devices. This agreement is included in Appendix 3.
- As a result of young person consultation, all young persons admitted to SCHN MHUs will retain possession of their mobile or personal communication device, unless a risk assessment indicates otherwise.

This document reflects what is currently regarded as safe practice. However, as in any clinical situation, there may be factors which cannot be covered by a single set of guidelines. This document does not replace the need for the application of clinical judgement to each individual presentation.

Approved by:	SCHN Policy, Procedure and Guideline Committee	
Date Effective:	1 st November 2020	Review Period: 3 years
Team Leader:	Occupational Therapist	Area/Dept: Mental Health Unit

CHANGE SUMMARY

- Not applicable – new document.
- **21/01/21** – Minor review. Incorrect referencing to Appendix 1, changed to Appendix 3.

READ ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- All clinical staff of the SCHN Mental Health Units should read this document:
 - Nursing Staff
 - Allied Health
 - Medical Staff
- In-services will be provided by the Network Personal Electronic Working Devices Working Party.

This document reflects what is currently regarded as safe practice. However, as in any clinical situation, there may be factors which cannot be covered by a single set of guidelines. This document does not replace the need for the application of clinical judgement to each individual presentation.

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Aim

To provide clear guidelines for use of mobile phones and/or other personal communication devices by people who are admitted to the Sydney Children's Hospital Network (SCHN) Mental Health Units (MHU).

Indications/Criteria

This procedure is applicable to Hall Ward and Saunder's Unit.

Contraindications

Young persons with risk factors preventing access to mobile phones or personal communication devices. This procedure does not cover staff use of work or personal mobile phones.

Scope

This procedure provides guidance for MHU staff to ensure safe young person access to mobile phone/devices.

Alerts/Risks

Mobile phones and other personal communication devices commonly have functions including cameras, video and voice recording capability. Therefore, a potential risk exists for young persons to use such equipment in a way that interferes with the confidentiality, dignity and privacy of other young persons, staff and visitors. Staff should be mindful of enabling young persons to maintain communication and contact with supports, while also protecting others against the misuse of such technology.

Staff are entitled to request patients not to take photographic images or other recordings where this may result in a breach of privacy, or where, in the view of the treating clinician, it interferes with, or compromises, patient care.

SCHN has a responsibility to ensure that all young person's rights to privacy and confidentiality are addressed. As a result, the SCHN does not permit any young persons admitted to MHUs to be photographed or recorded outside clinical care requirements, as per NSW Health Privacy Manual for Health Information.

Additional risks may exist for young persons accessing mobile phones throughout an inpatient admission. These risks are potentially more relevant for young persons admitted within acute units and may include:

- Financial harm – where a young person may use the phone or device to purchase items; use the phone to access high cost phone lines/premium phone services; or for online gambling.
- Harm to the young person's reputation– a young person may make inappropriate calls or posts online e.g. through use of social media.

- Unnecessary calls to emergency or community services
- Potential for distressing calls or communication to be made to family and friends
- Potential to interfere with sleep routines through excessive use of phone or device through the night.

The use of blanket rules across the unit restricting mobile or personal device usage is not acceptable, and each decision must be made based on each individual's circumstances and risk assessment.

Particular consideration should be given to the special communication device needs of people who are hearing impaired.

All devices will be charged on the MHU's docking/charging stations only.

Phone charging will be the responsibility of staff and must occur within the staff station only.

Ear/headphones with cords are not permitted within the MHU. Careful consideration of risk factors is required for young persons within the HDU environment who wish to access their mobile phone/device.

SCHN does not accept liability for damage or loss of mobile phones or other personal communication devices whilst on the unit. The young person remain responsible for data and call costs. Staff are responsible for ensuring young persons are aware of their responsibilities regarding phone or devices through the use of the Young person Mobile Phone/Personal Communication Device agreement (Appendix 3) and regular discussion at allocated phone time.

Procedure

Background

The procedure was developed following consultation with staff and young people. Young person consultation recommended the development of an agreement for young persons to sign that outlines agreed terms of use of mobiles and personal communication devices. This agreement is included in Appendix 3.

As a result of young person consultation, all young persons admitted to SCHN MHUs will retain possession of their mobile or personal communication device, unless a risk assessment indicates otherwise.

Sequence of Actions

Responsibilities of the Medical Officer (MO)

The MO is responsible for performing a comprehensive Mental Health assessment of the young person on arrival to the MHU.

This clinical risk assessment includes consideration of potential harm to self and/or others.

Through the process of assessment, consideration must also be given to the young person's access to their mobile phone or personal communication device. As a standard, all young persons will have their mobile device unless a risk has been identified.

MOs must record the outcome of the risk assessment, and/or plans for review of access to phone or device in each young person's medical record.

Any risk preventing access to a mobile phone or device as identified by the MO will be reviewed every two business days in consultation with the multi-disciplinary team.

Careful consideration of risk factors is required for young persons within the HDU environment who wish to access their mobile phone/device.

Responsibilities of Nurses

Following the MO's assessment of risk regarding the mobile phone/device, the nurse must explain the Mobile Phone/ Personal Communication Device (Appendix 3).

The young person and their parent/guardian must sign this agreement to be able to access their mobile phone/device. If the young person or their parent/guardian does not sign this agreement, they will not be able to access their phone.

The signed agreement must be placed on the young person's paper medical record. A copy is also to be provided to the young person.

Staff will assist each young person to place a name tag on their phone/devices.

Nursing staff to document on each young person's care plan and the Electronic Patient Journey Board (EPJB) the MO's decision regarding the young person's access to mobile phone/device.

The In-Charge of Shift may decide to withdraw a young person's access to their mobile phone/device if an immediate risk is identified or a breach to the signed agreement. This must be documented in the care plan and the young person's medical record. The withdrawal of a young person's phone or device must be discussed with the appropriate medical officer, as soon as possible after the phone /device has been removed. Nursing staff should advise the young person's designated carer when a decision is made that a young person's is not able to access their mobile phone/device.

Any restrictions on a young person's access to their mobile phone/ device should be recorded on the EPJB. The EPJB will provide a guide to staff as to any young person's who has restricted access to their phone/device.

Mobile Phone/Personal Communication Device Young person Agreement

The Mobile Phone/ Personal Communication Device Agreement is available for staff to print or copy in Appendix 3.

This agreement once signed should be placed on the young person's paper medical record. A copy must be provided to the young person.

Failure by the young person to sign the agreement will result in the young person not accessing their phone until next review.

The Mobile Phone/Personal Communication Device Agreement consists of the following points:

- No use of camera or photography functions
- No use of recording function to record conversations this includes never to record medical or staff reviews.
- Not using social media to cause harm to your reputation. This may include discussing your admission to a mental health inpatient unit.

- Not breaching my own or other young persons privacy e.g. through the use of social media.
- No attempts to damage phone or personal communication device
- Not lending my phone/device to other young persons
- SCHN does not accept liability for damage or loss of mobile phones or device.
- Managing telephone data and costs is the responsibility of the young person.
- Not participate in online gambling.
- Agree to minimise the impact of phones/ personal communication devices on their sleep routine and wellbeing.
- Phones or devices are not to be used within the unit's phone free zones. The guidelines for respectful use of mobile phones in the units includes
- Phones must be kept on silent or vibrate.
- People must take responsibility for their own phone/device.
- Headphones may be used for self-soothing activities e.g. sleep disturbance or anxiety.
- People may choose to leave their phone / device in their locker or send home with family.

Mobile Phone Charging

Phone charging will be the responsibility of nursing staff and must occur within the staff station only. Phone charging cords are not permitted within the MHU.

Theft or loss of Mobile Phone or Personal Communication Device

Staff should inform young people of the risk of theft /loss of the phone/device. Young people should inform staff if their phone is lost or stolen during the admission. Staff may be required to assist young people in contacting telecommunication companies or police if required.

SCHN does not accept liability for damage or loss of mobile phones or other personal communication devices whilst on the unit.

Storage of Mobile Phone or Personal Communication Device

If a risk is identified that prevents a young person from accessing their mobile phone/device, staff must secure the phone/device in the young person's locker or with a parent/guardian.

Equipment & materials

The following equipment is required

- Charging stations available within sight of the nurses station
- Young person's mobile phone or other device
- Charging cables for the HDU nurses station.

Patient education

This procedure including the mobile phone/personal device agreement is to be discussed with the young person at the time of admission, following the young person's review with MO and/or Multi-Disciplinary team or during allocated phone time.

Documentation

The following documentation is relevant to this procedure:

- Mobile Phone/ Personal Communication Device Agreement.
- Care Plan: Young person's access to their mobile phone or other device should be documented and regularly updated within the young person's care plan.
- Young person's Medical Record.
- EJPB: To record any restrictions on access to phones or device for young persons.

Safety Considerations

- Standard Precautions
- Electrical Safety

Responsibilities

Managers – Nurse Unit Manager to ensure all MHU staff are aware of and comply with this procedure.

Staff – All MHIU staff are to be aware of and comply with this procedure.

Outcome Measures

Increased access by admitted young persons to social supports, families and other networks. This information will be captured by the following:

- Results from young person satisfaction surveys (Mental Health your Experiences of Services – YES) are reported quarterly to the Nurse Unit Managers.
- Feedback at the young person regular reviews, which is recorded in the young person electronic medical record.

Definitions

- Young person - A child or adolescent under the care of a SCHN MHU.
- Medical Officer – A doctor of medicine who is responsible for the medical care of a particular group of people, such as young people within the MHU.

- Mobile Phone – A mobile phone is a wireless handheld device that allows users to make calls and send text messages, among other features.
- Personal Communication Device – Any device which is portable and used for communications such voice calls, email, texts or faxes. Devices include laptops, tablets, and mobile phones.

Created by

SCHN Personal Electronic Devices Working Group, supported by the Clinical Governance Unit.

Bibliography

1. Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust. Use of Mobile Phones and Tablets (by service users & visitors in clinical areas) Policy. Version 4. May 2016
2. Victorian Chief Psychiatrist Guidelines Electronic Communication and Privacy in Designated Mental Health Services 2018
3. NSW Department of Family and Community Services Restrictive Practices Guidance; Environmental Restraint, September 2019

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APPENDIX 1 - Staff Guidelines For Phone Use – The Saunders

Unit

STAFF GUIDELINES FOR PHONE USE

This policy has been developed as part of the Network's commitment to embracing least restrictive care practices. These guidelines are intended to guide staff as they support young people in the appropriate use of personal electronic devices. There are both benefits and challenges in allowing young people to use their devices while on the unit. Staff should strive to enable young people to stay connected with their community while also protecting them from the misuse of technology. Personal electronic devices are a tool for communication and connection, as such they should not be used as either reward or punishment.

Time allocation

Monday to Friday: 6.30pm-7.30pm

Saturday, Sunday and Public Holidays: 11.00am-12.00pm & 6.30pm-7.30pm

School Holidays: 10:45am – 11:45am

Note: Visits with family take priority

Location

Phones can only be used in the Sensory Area or Dining area (dependent on how big the group is). Only one space at any time, and patients are to use their phones in the same area. All bedrooms, bathrooms, outdoor area (unless in use) must be locked.

Storage

Phones are to be kept in a locked box with a charging station. Laptops and other devices to be kept in the patient lockers.

Contract

If parents do not sign the contract and disagree with technology use, then no use is to occur. Inclusive if the patient is over 16.

Supervision

Physical presence of at least 2 staff members required. Nurses to check in verbally with patients if needed. Use clinical judgment to decide whether harmful use is occurring. Supervision levels to be determined based on the needs of the group e.g.) *if a patient is on a special*

Note: Staff aren't expected to run groups if risk of escalation on the unit is too high before/during the allocated group time.

The T/L will flag this with staff at huddle.

Other devices

Laptops can be used (for education related topics) during school hours in the classroom, if approved by treating team and Hall Ward/Saunders School.

Unfortunately, we do not have the capacity to allow all patients to use their phone as a de-escalation/coping strategy, outside of the allotted times/day. Patients can use the ward iPads during these times.

Inappropriate Use

- Explicit content (*pornography, violent games, D&A content, gambling, no buying/selling anything*)
- Video calls (*facetime*)
- If uber eats ordered, will not be given to patients

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying will NOT be tolerated and will result in no further access

Confidentiality Breaches (*photos/videos/audio recording of anyone*)

Staff and patient confidentiality MUST be maintained at all times. If you believe a photo/video/audio recording has been taken of you, you can request the young person to delete it, and they can show you they have done this.

Proposed Consequences – to be discussed with team (NS, AH, Medical) when possible

- Refusing to return phone in the short term = **1 day penalty**
- Refusing to return phone overnight = **2 day penalty**
- Inappropriate use = **3 day penalty**
- Confidentiality breach = **7 day penalty**
- Cyberbullying = **no further access to the use of personal electronic devices**

APPENDIX 2 – Staff Guidelines For Phone Use – Hallward

This policy has been developed as part of the Network's commitment to embracing least restrictive care practices. These guidelines are intended to guide staff as they support young people in the appropriate use of personal electronic devices. There are both benefits and challenges in allowing young people to use their devices while on the unit. Staff should strive to enable young people to stay connected with their community whilst also protecting them from the misuse of technology. Personal electronic devices are a tool for communication and connection, as such they should not be used as either reward or punishment.

Time allocation

Note: See current Ward Timetable for up to date times.

Monday to Friday: 6.30pm-7.30pm
Saturday, Sunday and Public Holidays: 4:00-5:00, & 6.30pm-7.30pm
School Holidays: 6:30pm-7:30pm

Note: Dedicated Study Time on Laptops may occur in school holidays subject to treating team approval and T/L's decision about safety and staff capacity. Treating team to discuss with T/L in Morning Team Talk or Huddle as to length of time, if any.

Location

Personal Devices: Games Room
(Courtyard or Common Room if social distancing restrictions are in place)
Dedicated Study Time on Laptop: Common Room
(Dedicated Study Time on Laptop subject to treating team approval)

Contract

- Member of treating team must sign the contract after initial review (unless they are aware of circumstances making phone use unsafe). Young person cannot use their device until this is done (unless under parental supervision).
- Any changes to approval must be written on the contract by treating team
- If parents do not sign the contract and disagree with the use, then no use is to occur (Inclusive if the patient is over 16).
- If parent/guardian cannot visit the ward, a contract can be emailed to the carer, in order to obtain a scanned signature. Alternatively, email confirmation stating that they "agree to these terms" will suffice (staff must then note on hard copy that parent/guardian have "agreed to terms via email confirmation").

Supervision

- Physical presence of at least 2 staff members required (2 in each room if across two rooms). T/L to decide whether more staff are required if multiple specials are needed.
- Nurses may check in verbally with patients throughout. Nursing staff urged to use clinical judgment to decide whether harmful use is occurring support young people accordingly.

- If young people are pulled out of phone time by treating team then the T/L can decide whether a make-up phone session is feasible
- If young people choose to leave phone time early or are on leave during phone time then they are not allowed a make-up session later
- For a standard session of personal phone time, staff are NOT to monitor screens (but can demand to see phone if misuse is strongly suspected)
- For any dedicated study time on a laptop, staff may monitor screens
- If parents wish to bring a phone and allow the young person to use it outside or inside of allotted phone time they can, provided it is within an interview room or games room and with T/L permission (even if contract is unsigned by parents)
- Young people should always stay with the group, however if someone is becoming distressed on a voice call, an extra nursing staff can take them away from the group to continue their conversation, if staff feasibility permits it.

Note: Staff aren't expected to run groups if risk of escalation on the unit is too high before/during the allocated group time. The T/L will also flag any concerns at huddle.

Storage

Phones are to be kept in a locked box with a charging station. Laptops and other devices to be kept in the patient lockers. Night staff are to ensure phones are plugged into charging station at the start of their shift to charge overnight.

Other devices

- Laptops can be used (for education related topics only) during school hours in the classroom, if approved by treating team AND Hall Ward School
- Laptops may also be used on the ward during school holidays if advised by treating team and if the personal device contract is signed by all parties
- For young people without their own device, but who have written parent / carer permission, nursing staff can lift "Safari Web Browser" restrictions only, on their allocated i-pad for the duration of the session. Instructions can be found in P.E.D. folder

Inappropriate Use

- Explicit content (*pornography, inappropriate content/interactions for young person's age, illicit D&A content, gambling, discussion of bed availability*)
- Video calls (*facetime*)
- the purchasing or selling of anything (*food deliveries will not be delivered*)

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying will NOT be tolerated and will result in no further access.

Confidentiality Breaches (*photos/videos/audio recording of anyone*)

Staff and patient confidentiality must be maintained at all times. If you believe a photo/video/audio recording has been taken of you or someone else, you can request the young person to delete it, and you can request for them to show you they

have done this by handing over their phone and / or showing staff as they do it. Staff may wish to also check their “recently deleted folder” together with the young person.

Consequences

Please Note:

- A warning carries over for the entirety of the admission and does not reset after the penalty.
 - Bans and warnings are to be discussed in huddle or morning meeting
 - Up to 8 laminated mutual agreement reminders must be laid out by nursing staff at the start of each session and discussed as a group
-
- Refusing to return phone in the short term = **1 day penalty (1 warning)**
 - Refusing to return phone overnight = **2 day penalty (1 warning)**
 - Inappropriate use = **3 day penalty (1 warning)**
 - Confidentiality breach = **4 day penalty (no warning & staff must see evidence of media created)**
 - Cyberbullying = **No further access to the use of personal electronic devices (no warnings)**

APPENDIX 3 – SCHN Personal Electronic Device Contract

Personal Electronic Device Contract

We at the Sydney Children's Hospital Network believe you have the right to use your mobile technology. You also have the right to decline personal electronic device use as you may want a detox from social media. The decision to have these on the unit will be made in conjunction with your parents or carers.

However, there are important factors to keep in mind. Please read below regarding guidelines for accessing personal electronic devices on both the Saunders Unit and Hall Ward.

1. Personal electronic device use will be part of the structured timetable
 - a. You will be allowed your phone daily during allocated hours.
2. Patient and staff confidentiality
 - a. Having your personal electronic devices on the ward is a privilege. Patient and staff confidentiality is very important and we ask that everyone respects this. If you are found to be taking photos, video or audio recording anyone, you will be asked to delete this and your phone privilege will be removed until a later date.
3. Patient Privacy
 - a. Staff members will be supervising phones, but to protect your privacy we will not be monitoring your screens throughout the allocated time period. However you must show the content of your current activity to a staff member if asked.
4. Inappropriate phone use
 - a. Any inappropriate use will result in your personal electronic device use being discussed with the treating team as soon as possible.
 - i. Inappropriate website searching - pornography, violent games, drug and alcohol content, gambling, the buying/selling of anything
 - ii. Confidentiality breaches (ie. taking photos, videos or audio recordings of anyone)
 - iii. Facetime
5. Cyber Bullying
 - a. Cyber Bullying of any kind will not be tolerated on the unit. Any instances of this occurring will be discussed with the Multidisciplinary team (Nursing, Medical, Allied Health) as soon as possible, and a consequence will be decided.
6. Damage To Your Device

- a. Staff will not be held responsible for any damages to your personal devices whilst on the ward.
7. If not signed by Parent or Carer
- a. If a parent or carer does not sign this contract then no phone or personal technology use is to occur whilst on the ward. This includes patients over the age of 16.
8. This Contract references other documents within the SCHN Personal Electronic Device Use Policy
- a. By signing this contract you are agreeing to the site relevant terms set in the wider SCHN Personal Electronic Device Use Policy.

(Patient – Name and Signature)

(Parent / Carer – Name and Signature)

(Staff Witness – Name and Signature)

Date Signed: _____

Office Use Only:

Approval by Treating Team _____
(Name and Signature)

Changes to Treating Team's approval outlined below:

