Fire Policy Practice Guidance Note **Active Fire Precautions within Trust Premises V04**		
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1   Introduction

1.1   The fire protection measures in a building are vitally important in the continuing pursuit of safety from fire within Cumbria Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust Group (CNTW Group) premises.

1.2   The purpose of this Practice Guidance Note (PGN) is to set out specific guidelines to enable the CNTW Group to be assured that the fire prevention measures in buildings is clearly understood by CNTW Group employees.

2   Scope

2.1   This PGN together with any associated procedures and guidance notes, shall be observed by all employees of the CNTW Group and is applicable to responsible persons and their nominated deputies

3   Statement

3.1   The CNTW Group are committed to effective management and control of fire safety in order to reduce the risks to patients, staff, visitors and members of the public.

3.2 The Fire Safety Advisors will actively assist all responsible persons in ensuring the fire risk assessment is carried out satisfactory manner.

4 Types of Active Fire Protection

4.1 Active or Passive

4.1.1 Passive fire protection is built into the fabric of the building and helps to make up the framework of the building (further details are in FP-PGN-07). Active fire measures can include fire extinguishers and fire alarm systems. They are additions to a building to add extra protection and to help prevent a small fire escalating into a larger uncontrollable fire.

4.2 Active fire precautions:

4.2.1 Active fire precautions are the supply and provision of appropriate and cost-effective equipment installed either permanently or in a portable capacity to provide a measure of protection in the event of fire. Active fire precautions are designed to detect fires and to counteract them. They include:

- Fire alarm systems
- Emergency lighting
- Fire fighting equipment
- Water delivery systems
- Suppression systems
- Fire dampers
- Smoke containment and dispersal systems

4.2.2 The overall aim of active fire precautions is to:

- Detect the fire at an early stage
- Assist in implementing evacuation
- Alert the emergency services
- Control the movement of smoke and fire
- Suppress or starve the fire of oxygen and fuel

4.2.3 There are many active fire measures available but the measures likely to be found in CNTW Group premises are fire alarm systems, emergency lighting, firefighting equipment and suppression systems in more modern buildings.

4.2.4 Good fire safety management procedures should allow for the required reaction from staff if alerted by the fire alarm system. All staff should familiarise themselves with the various types of active fire precautions in their workplace and know what to do if such fire precautions are activated.

4.3 Fire alarm systems

4.3.1 There are many types of fire alarm system in use today, but all have the same purpose – to alert people to the possibility of fire.

4.3.2 In CNTW Group premises the fire alarm system will normally consist of a continuous alarm sound (either siren or bell) in the area affected or where the alarm has been actuated and an intermittent alarm sound in other areas to warn staff that an incident is occurring elsewhere. The location of the activated alarm can be found by looking at the fire alarm panel.

4.3.3 In some areas of CNTW Group, a flashing amber beacon will also denote that the fire alarm is actuating in another area of the site or hospital and that any available staff should locate the incident and assemble at that area in case assistance is required.

4.4 Emergency and escape lighting

4.4.1 Again there are many different types of escape and emergency lighting systems, but all have the same purpose – to assist in reaching a place of safety.

4.5 Emergency lighting

4.5.1 Situated in areas of a building to provide adequate lighting, should the normal power supply fail.

4.6 Escape lighting

4.6.1 Situated in areas of a building to provide adequate lighting on escape routes and final exits to lead from the building to a place of ultimate safety.

4.6.2 Emergency lighting is either maintained – illuminated at all times, or non-maintained and will not be illuminated until a power failure is detected.

4.6.3 These lights can be decorative to blend in with the ambience of the area or a standard design. They are subject to testing on a regular basis to ensure their operative status.

4.6.4 Escape lighting will normally be maintained on escape routes and final exits to provide constant lighting cover and may incorporate fire signage as part of the light or have directional signage nearby. They are also situated externally outside final exits.

4.7   Firefighting equipment

4.7.1   Fire fighting equipment is covered in a separate guidance note and also in the Fire Safety Guidance document. Practical use of fire extinguishers and fire blankets is covered in mandatory training sessions and on induction.

4.8   Suppression systems

4.8.1   These systems can be found in kitchens giving fire protection to cooking areas or in fuel storage areas or in IT server rooms. They are designed to operate either manually or automatically when excessive heat or fire is detected.

4.10   Smoke containment and dispersal systems

4.10.1   Smoke is responsible for almost 99% of deaths in fire situations and the management and movement of smoke is essential in fire safety, examples of these systems include:

- Fire dampers
- Smoke curtains
- Smoke ventilation
- Smoke shutters

4.10.2   Where appropriate the CNTW Group will incorporate the above systems into buildings as part of an overall fire precaution strategy.

4.11   Cigarette smoking detection

4.11.1   Cigarette smoking detection is becoming increasingly used in all areas to alert staff when a person is smoking in a particular area. The alarm senses the smoke from a cigarette, cigar etc. and transmits a remote signal to an alerter normally located in a staff area. These detectors are not connected to the main fire alarm system and therefore do not alert the switchboard or fire service but they alert staff to the fact smoking is taking place and allows the situation to be quickly dealt with.

5   Summary

5.1   All active fire precautions measures are provided to enhance personal safety. Contact the Fire Safety Advisor for any further information.