

Patient Trust Accounts

Policy Number 2.124

Policy Function Leadership and Management

Issue Date 9 June 2021

Summary This policy outlines the requirements for the operational management of Patient Trust Accounts for Forensic Hospital patients.

Responsible Officer Executive Director, Corporate Services

Applicable Sites

- ☒ Administration Centres
- ☐ Community Sites (e.g. Court Liaison Service, Community Integration Team, etc.)
- ☐ Health Centres (Adult Correctional Centres or Police Cells)
- ☐ Health Centres (Youth Justice Centres)
- ☐ Long Bay Hospital
- ☒ Forensic Hospital

Previous Issue(s) Policy 2.124 (Aug 2017; Dec 2014)

HPRM Reference POLJH/2124

Authorised by Chief Executive, Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network

1. Preface

This policy outlines the requirements for the operational management of patient trust accounts used to manage Forensic Hospital patients' monies held in trust by Justice Health & Forensic Mental Health Network (the Network).

This policy aims to ensure:

- The Network complies with legislative requirements, NSW Ministry of Health (MoH) policy directives and procedure manuals;
- appropriate governance for the management of patient trust funds is in place and adhered to;
- operational efficiencies when facilitating trust account transactions and administration; and
- security of trust funds.

2. Policy Content

2.1 Mandatory Requirements

2.1.1 General

- Patient trust accounts must be operated in accordance with legislation, NSW MoH and the Network policies, procedure manuals and related documents as set out in [Section 5](#) of this policy.
- A trust account must be made available to each patient.
- Patients must not be provided with credit.
- Patients are prohibited from keeping cash in the Forensic Hospital.
- Patient trust funds must not be used to purchase items according to Forensic Hospital Procedure: [Prohibited and controlled items – Forensic Hospital](#).
- In accordance with the Network policy [2.010 Code of Conduct](#), staff, other than authorised staff, must not become involved in a patient's financial affairs, unless authorised in writing by the Service Director, Forensic Hospital and Executive Director, Corporate Services for a specific purpose.
- When authorised staff assist a patient with their financial affairs, they must do so in accordance with legislation, NSW MoH and the Network policies, procedures manuals and related documents as set out in [Section 5](#) of this policy.
- The Network staff and other third parties, excluding merchants, must not benefit or gain from transactions made on behalf of a patient including, but not limited to, seeking and/or accepting points for any banking or merchant loyalty reward scheme in accordance with NSW MoH policy directive (PD) [PD2019_0028 Goods and Services Procurement Policy](#).
- Expenditure, reimbursement and transfer of funds from a patient's trust account must be authorised in accordance with the Network policy [2.022 Delegations Authority](#) and

transaction authorisation procedures specified in the Network patient trust account procedure manuals set out in [Section 5](#) of this policy.

- Monetary transaction limits must not be circumvented by the use of multiple transactions for the same patient or purpose.
- Original hard copies must be provided to delegated officers for approval and signature. Policy breaches and fraud/misappropriation of trust funds, known or suspected, must be immediately reported to the Network Chief Financial Officer or Financial Accountant and line manager.
- Transactions known or suspected to be used for a purpose other than the specified and authorised purpose, or a purpose that is not in the best interest of the patient, must be suspended pending the outcome of any investigation.
- Where a patient does not have a Financial Manager, trust account transactions must be authorised by the patient. In circumstances where the patient is required to authorise a transaction but is unable to do so due to being unwell/in seclusion, the Nursing Unit Manager (NUM) may sign on the patient's behalf on the provision that the goods/services are immediately required and are for the patient's best interest and wellbeing. In accordance with the Network policy [2.022 Delegation Authority](#).
- Documents generated for the purpose of managing patient trust accounts and conducting transactions must be captured, managed, retained and destroyed in accordance with the Network policy [2.014 Corporate Records Management](#).

2.1.2 Financial Manager

- Where a patient's Financial Manager is a General or Enduring Power of Attorney, the original (or original certified copy) legal document evidencing the Power of Attorney must be sighted, recorded and a copy retained before trust account matters (with the exception of deposits to trust accounts) can be conducted with, and authorised by, the Financial Manager.
- Where a patient is subject to a Financial Management Order, Parental Responsibility Order or an order legally appointing an agency or individual to administer the financial affairs of a patient, a copy of the legal document evidencing the authority must be sighted, recorded and a copy retained before trust account transactions (with the exception of deposits to trust accounts) can be conducted with, and authorised by, the Financial Manager.
- Where a patient's Financial Manager is a General or Enduring Power of Attorney and the patient dies in care, the Power of Attorney becomes legally invalid from the point of death and the patient's trust funds must be released in accordance with [Accounting Manual](#).
- Where a patient's Financial Manager is a General Power of Attorney and the patient ceases to have the mental capacity to manage their financial affairs, the Power of Attorney becomes legally invalid from the point the patient lost capacity and trust account matters must not be conducted with the Financial Manager unless they have other legal authority to do so.
- Where a patient has a Financial Manager as defined in [Section 4](#) of this policy, expenditure, reimbursement and transfer of funds (with the exception of in-hospital purchases) from a patient's trust account must be authorised in writing by the Financial Manager.

- Transactions declined by a patient's Financial Manager must not be processed.

2.1.3 Trust Account Transactions

- Cash transactions are restricted to approved cash transactions as specified in the Network [Patient Trust Accounts - Cash Transactions Procedures Manual](#) and [Patient Trust Accounts - Admissions & Discharge Procedures Manual](#), set out in [Section 5](#) of this policy.
- The Network staff are prohibited from accepting cash deposits on behalf of patients and for trust account matters, with the exception of approved cash transactions as specified in the Network [Patient Trust Accounts - Cash Transactions Procedures Manual](#) and [Patient Trust Accounts - Admissions & Discharge Procedures Manual](#), set out in [Section 5](#) of this policy.
- The authorised staff member who signs out cash for an approved transaction must, where applicable and possible, sign in any unused cash and receipts associated with the same transaction.
- Patient Purchasing Card transactions as specified in the Network policy [2.126 Patient Purchasing Cards](#) and non-cash transactions as specified in the Network [Patient Trust Accounts - Non-Cash Transaction Procedures Manual](#) as set out in [Section 5](#) of this policy, are permitted.
- Supporting documentation for transactions must be provided as specified in the Network patient trust accounts procedure manuals as set out in [Section 5](#) of this policy.
- Where deposits cannot be reconciled to a patient or the depositor, a minimum of three (3) attempts to reconcile the deposit must be made. Where the funds cannot be reconciled or remain unclaimed by the patient or other person lawfully entitled to them within a period of twelve (12) months from the deposit date, the funds must be transferred to the designated the Network Samaritan Fund.

2.1.4 Kiosk Accounts & Transactions

- Cash transactions must be restricted to staff and visitor purchases.
- Kiosk accounts must be restricted to patients and operated on a pre-paid non-cash basis.
- Kiosk accounts must not be topped-up above the designated top-up cap.
- Kiosk account transactions must be authorised biometrically or through the use of an account authorisation card.
- Incorrect funds deposited into a kiosk account must be recouped from the kiosk account or the respective patient's trust account where the funds were spent by the patient.
- Staffs are prohibited from using their own money to purchase items for and on behalf of patients.
- Patients are prohibited from using their kiosk accounts to purchase items for and on behalf of staff, or other patients except Christmas and New Year Holiday Period.
- Visitors using their own money are permitted to purchase items, within reason, for patients.
- Patients are permitted to use their kiosk accounts to purchase items, within reason, for their visitors.

- Funds deposited to a kiosk account must be transferred from the respective patient's trust account.
- Where a kiosk account is no longer required, any remaining balance must be transferred back to the respective patient's trust account.

2.2 Implementation - Roles & Responsibilities

2.2.1 Executive Director, Corporate Services and Service Director, Forensic Hospital

- Providing written authorisation to Finance-Patient Accounts for non-Finance/Allied Health employees to handle financial affairs on behalf of a patient for a specific purpose.

2.2.2 Service Director, Forensic Hospital and Chief Financial Officer are responsible for:

- Ensuring staff are aware of this policy, legislation, NSW MoH and the Network policies, procedures manual and related documents as set out in [Section 5](#) of this policy;
- Ensuring adequate resources are in place and training is provided to support the implementation of this policy;
- Ensuring a communications strategy outlining policy and procedural requirements is prepared and distributed to external stakeholders; and
- Addressing, and where necessary, escalating risks and issues that arise from the implementation of this policy.

2.2.3 Financial Accountant, Line Manager (of Authorised staff), Authorised Staff and the Patient Fees & Trust Accounting Officer: are responsible for:

- Ensuring they are aware of their operational roles and responsibilities relating to this policy, procedure manuals and related documents as set out in [Section 5](#) of this policy;
- Ensuring they receive the necessary resources and training to effectively undertake their roles and responsibilities; and
- Addressing, and where necessary, escalating to their line manager risks and issues that arise from the implementation of this policy.

3. Procedure Content

Procedure context is provided in the Network patient trust account procedure manuals as set out in [Section 5](#) of this policy. Flow chart overviews of key procedures are provided at appendices A and B.

4. Definitions

Authorised Staff

Is the Patient Fees & Trust Accounting Officer, Finance staff, Allied Health staff and staff authorised in writing by the Service Director, Forensic Hospital and Executive Director, Corporate Services for a specific purpose.

Buy-Up Scheme

Is a service where a patient can purchase non-food items unavailable for purchase at the Forensic Hospital kiosk via an order and delivery service provided by Corrective Services NSW and coordinated by designated the Network staff.

Comfort Allowance

Is a payment deposited into a trust account for the specific purpose of purchasing comfort items.

Comfort Item

Is a relatively inexpensive item of necessity that provides comfort to a patient, such as, but not limited to, clothing, shoes and toiletries.

Finance-Patient Accounts

Is a division of the Network Finance responsible for the administration of hospital fee and trust accounts.

Financial Manager is:

- A trustee organisation or a private individual under the direction and authority of a trustee organisation appointed to manage the financial affairs of an adult patient; or
- An adult patient's Enduring Power of Attorney where the adult patient is no longer mentally capable of managing their financial affairs; or
- An adult patient's General Power of Attorney or Enduring Power of Attorney where the adult patient is mentally capable of managing their financial affairs and provides written consent for their Power of Attorney to authorise hospital fee and trust account transactions on their behalf; or
- NSW Community Services or a private person appointed under a Parental Responsibility Order to manage the financial affairs of an adolescent patient; or
- A Primary Carer or Guardian with the legal authority to manage the financial affairs of an adolescent patient.

In-hospital Purchases

Are purchases made through the Forensic Hospital kiosk, buy-up scheme, mobile hairdressing service, takeaway food scheme (*see Patient Trust Accounts Cash Transactions Procedures Manual for maximum limit amount per patient*), comfort items purchased through Patient Purchasing Cards, purchases for Open Training and Education Network/education course providers, purchases by a patient whilst on leave from the Forensic Hospital.

Must

Indicates a mandatory action required that must be complied with.

Patient

Is a Forensic Hospital inpatient.

Patient Purchasing Cards

Are prepaid debit cards bearing the Visa logo and used by authorised staff in accordance with the Network policy [2.126 Patient Purchasing Cards](#), to purchase certain essential goods and services on behalf of patients.

Trustee Organisation

Is an organisation or statutory Government agency responsible for providing a range of legal, financial and asset management trustee services to clients.

Seclusion

Is where a patient is removed from the patient population and held in a secluded room under the supervision of hospital staff.

Should

Indicates a recommended action that should be followed unless there are sound reasons for taking a different course of action.

Staff

Is a Network staff member, agency staff, contractor or other third party undertaking the work of the Network.

Trust Account

Is, unless otherwise stated, an account managed and operated by the Network Finance-Patient Accounts and made available to individual patients admitted to the Forensic Hospital to hold their funds in trust.

5. Legislation and Related Documents

Legislations	<i>Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998</i> <i>Guardianship Act 1987</i> <i>Health Services Act 1997</i> <i>Mental Health (Forensic Provisions) Act 1990</i> <i>Mental Health Act 2007</i> <i>NSW Trustee and Guardian Act 2009</i> <i>Oaths Act 1900</i> <i>Powers of Attorney Act 2003</i> <i>Public Authorities (Financial Arrangements) Act 1987 (PAFA)</i>
The Network Policies, Procedures and Forms	<i>2.010 Code of Conduct</i> <i>2.014 Corporate Records Management</i> <i>2.020 Corruption Prevention and Fraud Control</i> <i>2.022 Delegations Authority</i> <i>2.123 Patient Fees – The Forensic Hospital</i> <i>2.126 Patient Purchasing Cards</i> <i>Prohibited and Controlled Items – Forensic Hospital</i> <i>Patient Fees Procedures Manual - the Forensic Hospital</i>

[Patient Trust Accounts - Admission & Discharge Procedures Manual](#)

[Patient Trust Accounts - Cash Transactions Procedures Manual](#)

[Patient Trust Accounts - Financial Manager Procedures Manual](#)

[Patient Trust Accounts - Kiosk Procedures Manual](#)

[Patient Trust Accounts - Non-cash Transaction Procedures Manual](#)

Finance-Patient Accounts Work Instructions

Memorandum of Understanding between the Network and NSW Trustee & Guardian

[FIN418](#) *Patient Trust Accounts Cash Request*

[FIN420](#) *Patient Trust Accounts Deposit*

[FIN421](#) *Patient Trust Accounts Cheque Request/EFT Request*

FIN431 Patient Trust Accounts Hospital Fees Direct Debit

FIN432 Private Bank Accounts Withdrawal Form

FIN442 Patient Trust Accounts Kiosk Account

FIN450 Patient Trust Accounts Buy-Up Order

[FIN451](#) *Hairdressing Request Form Patient Trust Account*

FIN453 Patient Trust Accounts Essential Property Items

FIN454 Patient Trust Accounts Buy-Up Orders Delegated Authorisation

NSW Health Policy
Directives, and
Guidelines

[PD2005_054](#) *ICAC Report: Cash Handling in Public Hospitals*

[PD2005_484](#) *Trust Fund Procedures - Mental Health Hospitals*

[PD2019_028](#) *Goods and Services Procurement Policy*

[PD2015_049](#) *NSW Health Code of Conduct*

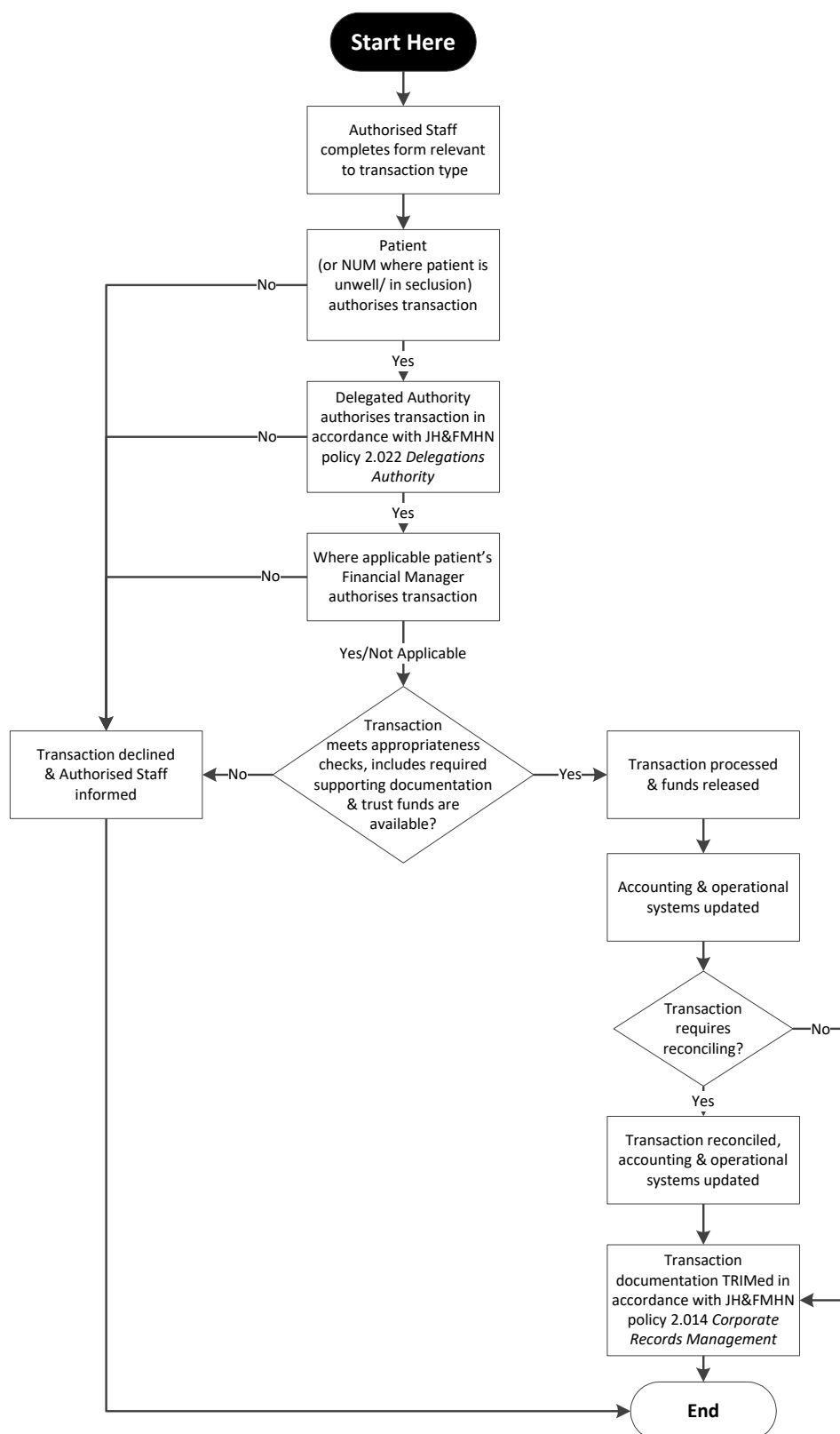
[Accounting Manual](#)

[Accounts & Audit Determination for public health entities in NSW](#)

[Goods and Services Procurement Policy Manual](#)

[Privacy Manual for Health Information \(March 2015\)](#)

Appendix A – Trust Account Transaction Procedure Flow Chart



Appendix B – Kiosk Account Transaction Procedure Flow Chart

