



ST. MICHAEL'S HOUSE

**FIRE SAFETY MANAGEMENT
USER MANUAL**

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1. Mission Statement:

It is the aim of all St Michaels House staff to:

1. Prevent a fire from happening in the building and/or
2. Ensure that if a fire occurs (or not) that there are plans in place that will ensure the safe evacuation of all service users from the building is planned for.
3. Ensure learning is gained and shared for all fire drills, near miss and fire events, which is communicated to their colleagues.
4. Ensure service users will be included and engaged in order to achieve the objectives above as much as is reasonably practicable.

Scope:

This document is set up in a number of sections which should not be read in isolation. Once you have read the document you can refer to relevant sections as and when needed.

2. EMERGENCY FILE OVERVIEW:

All units have a local emergency file which contains all fire safety information, templates and emergency plans pertaining to that unit. This folder is your record of compliance with fire safety legislation and so must be kept up to date for inspection as and when needed.

The SMH fire safety policy is included as part of the emergency file, it outlines specific persons and their responsibility for fire safety management in the organisation.

Review

This guidance document and the emergency file will be reviewed annually and changes made as needed, which will be communicated as and when they occur.

If there are any changes you feel are needed please ensure that you email them to the SMH Fire Prevention Officer for consideration.

3. SMH Fire Risk Management

SMH has in place a fire strategy to set out how it will manage the fire risk for the organisation. A key component of this is

- Annual fire performance report using key performance indicators to measure how well the organisation is managing the fire risk
- Annual fire inspections to evaluate the built environment for the individuals using same
- Issues arising from annual fire inspections that require capital managed via an organisational fire risk register system. This register prioritises unit actions based on information streams and key criteria to determine where they are prioritised on the overall list. The fire risk register is managed by the SMH Fire Prevention Officer and Technical Services Manager.

3. FRONTLINE FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE OVERVIEW

A. If you discover a fire:

1. **Sound the alarm immediately** by breaking the glass in the Manual Fire Alarm Break Glass Unit.
2. **Call the fire brigade immediately:**
 - a) Lift the receiver and dial 999/112
 - b) Give the operator your telephone number and ask for the FIRE BRIGADE
 - c) When the fire brigade replies say that there is a fire at (Number of house and remaining address of your Unit). State clearly that it is a St. Michael's House building providing a service to people with intellectual disabilities, and wait for the fire brigade to repeat the address correctly before ringing off.

DO NOT REPLACE RECEIVER UNTIL ADDRESS HAS BEEN REPEATED BY THE FIRE BRIGADE

3. Evacuate persons closest to the fire first, then the remaining service users, closing doors behind you, moving in the direction of an exit and meet at the assigned assembly point.
4. **IF IT IS SMALL AND SAFE TO DO SO** and not at the expense of life safety attack the fire with the correct extinguisher or fire blanket provided.

B. If you hear the Fire Alarm:

1. If possible identify the area/room on fire by going to the fire alarm panel
2. If this is not possible put your hand on the back of the door handle(s) as you are evacuating the house if it is hot than this is the location of the fire. Next check if any smoke is leaking around the periphery of the door – if it is leaking from the top of the door and you must check the room then get down low and open the door slowly. **NEVER** enter a room where there is smoke leaking from the bottom of the door.
3. Call the fire brigade, which should be done as you are evacuating the house
4. Evacuate service users closest to the fire first and then the remaining service users, closing doors behind you and moving in the direction of an exit
5. The Shift leader will take charge of any evacuation and confirm that no one is left in the building.
 - **USE NEAREST AVAILABLE EXIT**
 - **DO NOT STOP TO COLLECT PERSONAL BELONGINGS**
 - **DO NOT RE-ENTER THE BUILDING except in the case of SU evacuation if it is safe to do so**
 - **DO NOT USE LIFTS (if in place)**

You assembly point is: _____

4. FIRE PREVENTION

Good Fire Prevention procedures can greatly reduce the risk of fire.

Located below is guidance on fire prevention in SMH buildings:

- A. **Smoking** in any enclosed workplace is prohibited, in accordance with the amendment to the Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2002 and the Public Health (Tobacco) (amendment) Act 2004. Where smoking is permitted, suitable ashtrays should be provided and they should be emptied regularly. Ensure that all butts are fully extinguished before going to bed and when the ashtray is being emptied into the main refuse.
- B. All units have central heating systems, which is your primary means to heat up the house. As such **portable heaters** should not be needed and should only be used in exceptional circumstances. If additional heating is required you should discuss with Technical Services who can advise on an appropriate course of action and/or can supply portable radiators to the building. However some things to remember:
- Heaters should be used in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.
 - At no time should they be used for drying clothes or other items, even in exceptional circumstances.
 - Additional care should be taken with portable heaters, which have a bad reputation for causing ignition. Portable heaters especially radiant bar type (as below) should be treated as high-risk items and should not be used.



In some buildings technical services have used fan type heaters (see below), which have been erected on walls in bathrooms or some annexes. Ensure that where they are in place that no combustible items are located within 0.5m of the appliance. Ensure they are not used as portable heating appliances to heat up service users bedrooms.



Portable radiators **MUST** always be plugged directly into a wall socket – no use of extension leads/double adaptors is permitted with portable radiators.

- C. All **electrical leads, plugs and connections** should be inspected before use **for damage**, frayed cables or any other damage.



At no time should 'double adapter' units be used. If additional sockets are required for **low** power items, suitable four-way gang sockets (extension leads) should be used. Items requiring high power, such as irons, kettles and heaters should always be powered directly from a wall socket (see point E below for further information).

- D. Care should always be taken with **mobile phone chargers** as they have been the cause of fires in a number of countries. Ensure chargers are not dropped on the ground as this may cause internal damage to the plug and as it is not visible you cannot see what damage may have been caused. If chargers feel very hot on charging it may be a sign that damage has been caused. Either purchase a new charger or get the charger repaired by a qualified electrician. The other issue is sub standard or counterfeit mobile phone chargers. Included below is information provided from Electrical Safety First in the UK on what to look out for:

Plug pins

Check that there is at least 9.5 mm between the edge of the pins and the edge of the charger (9.5 mm is about the width of a ballpoint pen). If the distance between the edge of the pins and the edge of the charger is less than 9.5 mm, there is a risk of electric shock when plugging in and unplugging the charger from a socket.

Plug the charger into a socket but don't switch it on or connect it to your appliance.

Does it plug in easily? If the charger does not easily plug into a socket, the pins may be the wrong size or length, or the distance between the pins may be wrong. If pins do not fit properly into the socket, overheating, arcing and mechanical damage can occur to both the socket and the charger, which can be dangerous.

Markings

- Look for a manufacturer's brand name or logo, model and batch number.
- Check for a CE mark.
- Check that the output voltage and current ratings marked on the charger and your electrical device are the same.
- Do not rely on a CE mark alone as a guarantee of safety – it's simply a declaration by the manufacturer that the product meets all the safety requirements of European law, but they can be easily forged.

Warnings and instructions

Adequate warnings and instructions must be provided. As a minimum, user instructions should provide information on conditions and limitations of use, how to operate the charger safely, basic electrical safety guidance and details of how to safely dispose of the charger when it is no longer required

- E. Care should be taken with the use of **extension leads**. Do not overload the extension lead, generally the maximum ampage of an extension lead is 13amps (this can differ refer to safety information upon purchase) and as such should never be exceeded.

Be aware that with some extension leads it may be less than this – it will say it on the bottom of the extension lead, if not refer to the manufacturers instructions.

Check the ratings for the appliances as it may exceed the ratings of the socket outlet (see picture below).

- Check regularly for the following danger signs
 - A smell of hot plastic or burning near an appliance or socket.
 - Sparks or smoke coming from a plug or appliances
 - Blackness or scorch marks around a socket or plug, or on an appliance
 - Damaged or frayed leads
 - Coloured wire inside leads showing at the plug or anywhere else
 - Melted plastic on appliance casings or leads

- Fuses that blow or circuit-breakers that operate for no obvious



As in the above picture, which is a plug for a kettle, some appliances will indicate on the socket what the ampage is. Always refer to manufacturers instructions or contact technical services if you have any queries. Included below is a table of common domestic appliances and their ampage ratings. This should only be used as a guide as some appliances will differ in their ampage.

Domestic Portable Appliance	Amps Used	Watts Used
Laptop	<0.5	65 - 100
Mobile phone charger	<0.5	<12
Kettle	13	3000
Satellite TV box	<0.5	30
Printer	<0.5	50

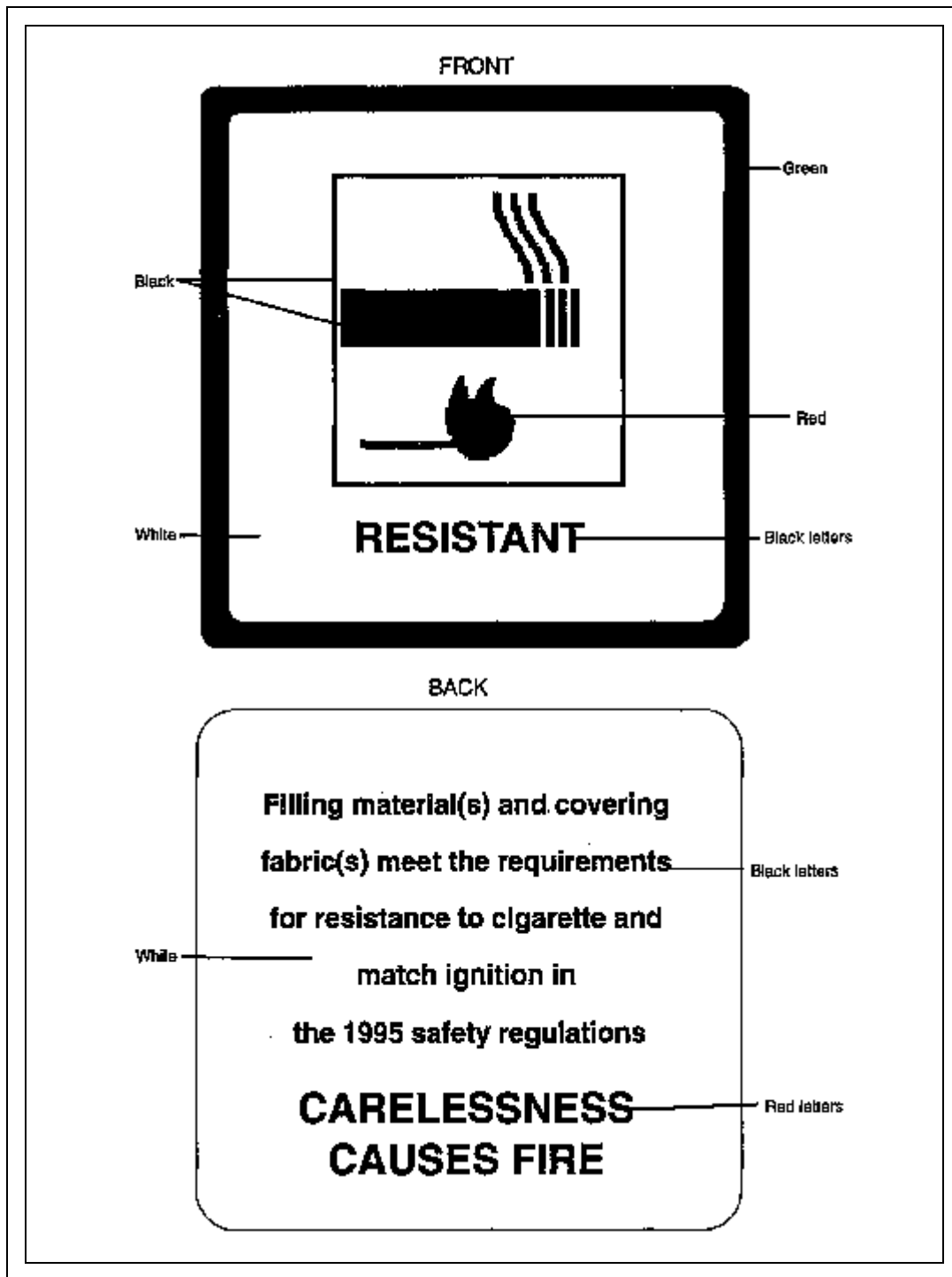
Domestic Portable Appliance	Amps Used	Watts Used
Radio	<0.5	40
Radiator	8.5	2000
DVD player	<0.5	28
Hair dryer	10.0	2200
Landline cordless telephone charger	<0.5	10
Computer monitor	<0.5	100
Desktop computer	3.0	700
Television 42" HD	0.5	120
Games console	0.86	<200
Washing machine	10	2200
Toaster	9.0	2000
Tumble dryer	11.0	2500
Dishwasher	10.0	2200
Iron	12.5	2800
Microwave	4.5w	1000
Vacuum cleaner	9.0	2000
Radiator (oil filled)	13.0	3000

Table taken from electrical safety first – UK

If a fuse 'blows' always report this to Technical Services in order for them to investigate, identify the cause and address the reason for the fuse 'blowing'.

More information can be sourced <http://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/>

- F. **Dishwashers, washing machines and tumble dryers** should never be switched on when the premises are vacant (ideally) or at night time when staff and service users are asleep.
- G. **Tumble dryers** should have sufficient air flow and the filters should be cleaned regularly. In addition the dryer duct should be cleaned on a regular basis as it can result in the build up of lint and cause a fire, as lint is extremely flammable. Contact TSD in order to get the ducting cleaned. In addition once drying cycle has finished clothing should be removed from the dryer and placed in the laundry basket and not left in the dryer drum as this could result in a fire.
- H. All **electrical items** should be switched off/unplugged when they are not in use especially at night time – if accessible and practicable to do so. Certain appliances are designed to be left on for 24hrs i.e. fridge/freezer.
- I. No combustible materials or items of furniture, etc. should be stored in escape routes, these should be kept sterile and clear at all times.
- J. **Furniture** – All furniture is required to meet fire resistant tests – that is a cigarette and match test. This furniture must have the below labels attached to indicate same as per S.I. 316:1995 Domestic Furniture Order (fire safety). The label below is taken from the legislation and all furniture is required to have this visible. Always retain manufacturer's information for any piece of furniture that has been purchased and file it in the emergency file.



- K. **Flammable liquids and aerosols** (which include items such as cleaning liquids, nail polish remover, deodorant and cleaning sprays etc.) should be kept in safe locations away from direct sources of heat and sunlight i.e. in presses and not stored on means of escape corridors. If there is a high level of storage of flammable liquids/aerosols the unit should consider purchasing a fire resistant press for storage of these materials, store these materials in a shed or buy on an as needed basis (the latter is most preferable option).

- L. **Refuse** should be stored outside the building in a designated area each evening. Where possible bins should not be stored beside and to the front of the house especially if the unit has a problem with anti social behaviour, as bins could be ignited and potentially result in fire spread to the house.
- M. There is a no **naked flame** policy in place in SMH. No candles, incense or open fires allowed.
- N. **Bedtime Routine:**
 - I. Switch off/Unplug all electrical appliances not required
 - II. Make sure no cigarettes are still burning in ashtrays provided in designated smoking areas
 - III. Ensure that where portable heaters are in use they are not left on overnight
 - IV. All staff mobile phones/house mobile are fully charged with necessary emergency numbers
 - V. All keys including bus key kept in an accessible location in order for staff to bring with them in the event of an emergency
 - VI. Equipment needed to evacuate service users is left in their bedrooms to ensure a quick evacuation can be executed
 - VII. Close all doors
- O. Keep easily ignited items such as paper, cardboard, clothing etc away from heat sources. An example would be storage in hot presses where towels and clothing are stacked and come in contact with an exposed light bulb which can heat and if left on with clothing adjacent could catch fire.
- P. Building and maintenance contractors should always be carefully supervised. Technical Services should be contacted for advice on the control of contractors.
 - 1. Ensure no contractors are blocking exit routes
 - 2. Ensure contractors are liaising with you re work being conducted on the building and any fire hazards that may affect the house
 - 3. Ensure contractors are aware of the unit evacuation arrangements to ensure any work wont adversely affect plans in place i.e. block exits etc

5. MEANS OF ESCAPE:

- I. All persons who work in a building should be familiar with all means of escape from their normal workplace without having to find a key. In some instances due to security or safety reasons some doors may have to be kept locked. Such doors may be fitted with normal locks or have keypad facilities with a door release mechanism. The keypad facility generally opens the door automatically when the fire alarm is activated and/or if not a green break glass box (see picture below) is available to open the door. **Remember if the door also requires a key to operate it then the door won't open until the key is turned.**



Doors having normal locks will have keys provided which will be kept in special type of Break Glass Box beside the door. In the event of an emergency this "Break Glass" box (see picture below) can be broken quite easily and the key can then be removed to open the door. These keys should only be used in an emergency and are not for normal day to day use.



- II. All staff including relief and agency should familiarise themselves with all escape routes and be satisfied that the route is free from obstructions, all doors can be readily opened and can be relied on in the event of an emergency. If staff are not familiar or do not trust routes they are unlikely to use them in the event of an emergency which will increase evacuation time and may result in persons travelling towards a fire as opposed to away from it.
- III. Ensure that during winter in times of extreme weather that snow doesn't impede egress at final exit doors. As most final exit doors open outwards snow could impede the opening of the door and so these areas must be kept clear at all times.

- IV. During an evacuation, larger buildings should be divided into areas with designated escape routes. This will greatly aid in freeing routes to allow for quicker evacuation of the building and allow occupants who are slower moving or may require assistance sufficient time to escape without holding up faster moving occupants.
- V. All means of escape in the building should be free from obstruction at all times.
- VI. No combustible materials should be stored in escape routes.
- VII. Exit routes around the outside of the building should also be kept clear as you will never know which exit you may have to use i.e. bins kept at the side of the house which blocks the escape route to the front of the house.
- VIII. Special attention should be given to the means of escape being available after normal working hours. Often during these periods, escape routes are locked for security even though persons are still in the building.

All means of escape should be available for use at all periods when the building is occupied. Daily checks must be made to ensure they are kept clear and records kept of same

6. EVACUATION DRILLS

SMH requires each unit to carry out fire drills. The key principles of evacuation drills are foreseeability and planning. Please find outlined below purpose and requirements of the fire drills.

Units are required to complete:

- **Minimum of two alarm activated evacuation drills to be conducted per year** (1 day and 1 night in residential and 2 day in day services) and
- 2 fire walks (these are walks of the evacuation route w/o alarm activation). Again as above one day and night in residential and two day in day services. The night time fire walk can be completed at a time of darkness e.g. 7pm during winter. Units should evaluate their client profile to see what would work best - 1:1 sessions completed by key workers/group sessions/role play etc which could be done during house meetings.

Both the above should be recorded on the fire drill e-form stating whether it was an alarm activated fire drill or fire walk.

There is a requirement that units must meet the 3min time to maintain 2 drills/year. If the unit exceeds this time in a fire drill they are required to:

- Inform the SMH fire prevention officer. This will allow the team and fire officer to review the drill for improvements and evaluate if the environment can facilitate an increased evacuation time or if environmental changes are required.
- Document findings and locate it in the emergency file.

Remember: A night time drill would be defined as a time when all people in the building are in bed asleep.

- I. The principle of evacuation drills is to act as a practice run for a real evacuation. The drill may highlight potential difficulties that a person or route may pose. It is this that will allow you to plan for same so that it is not a problem in a real fire event.
- II. It also ensures that staff are aware of what to do and to minimise the risk of panic and things going wrong.
- III. It is critical that all service users comply with an evacuation drill. If a service user will not leave during a drill **DO NOT** physically lift them. Account for the non-compliance in your fire drill e-form and follow step VII. below.
- IV. Before any drill ensure you contact the monitoring company to inform them you are conducting a drill, this is best practice. **Also note – some units who have their heating turned on will find that upon activation of the fire alarm panel it will result in the heating switching off which is a safety mechanism. To ensure there are no difficulties switch heating systems off prior to activating your fire alarm panel. This can be switched on again when the drill is completed. Any queries contact TSD.**
- V. Following a fire drill, a fire drill e-form should be completed in which the results of the drill can be recorded and any issues that were identified can be highlighted. This is to ensure that the issues identified are addressed for the following drill. If deemed necessary the SMH Fire prevention officer can provide advice on how to address any issues identified during the drill. See below procedure.
- VI. Houses that have their means of escape corridor subcompartmented by a fire door should time their evacuation drills differently. In these situations time how long it takes to evacuate occupants from each compartment - you should be aiming for 2:30-3mins from each subcompartment. Total house evacuation time is all subcompartment times added together.

VII. Any issues noted in the fire drill should be addressed in the following manner whether the fire drill exceeds 3 minutes or not:

1. Report the difficulty in the fire drill e-form.
2. Raise the issue with the staff team at the earliest possible opportunity
3. Try and address the issue locally – if a suitable plan can be formulated then test this in another fire drill and see if it addresses the problem. If not
4. Raise the issue with the SMH Fire prevention officer in order to provide advice on an appropriate course of action.
5. Recommendations provided – test for adequacy and feedback to SMH fire prevention officer

VIII. All staff as part of fire training will be refreshed in the house evacuation plan annually. This includes day and night time fire evacuation procedures. Simulations will be included where necessary and common difficulties that have been experienced in previous drills are included as part of the process in order to get an accurate portrayal of the scenario. Some things that are covered (this is a non exhaustive list):

- Who rings the fire brigade (shift leader if more than 1 staff is on duty)
- Who do I go to first
- Walk through of the evacuation plan
- Who could pose difficulties and what do I do - Identify any service users that pose potential problems and the strategies that should be adopted in order to support their evacuation from the building. This is based on previous fire drills for difficulties which arose.
- What exit points you could use to re-enter the house if needed
- How do you support service users outside the building i.e. use of unit bus as part of evac plan etc
- Alternative accommodation if needed and relevant details of same

IX. The emphasis of your drills should be to ensure that **all** persons can be evacuated. **As a rule of thumb** the following times should indicate how effective your drills are:

- o Evacuations completed within 3 minutes are satisfactory. Unit can maintain 2 fire drills/year.
- o Evacuations completed between 3-6 minutes should be examined to see if there are ways to

improve the evacuation time. SMH Fire prevention officer must be notified.

- o Evacuations taking 6 minutes or more require reporting to the SMH Fire Prevention Officer for further action.

The above times are not set in stone and are very much dependent on the building you are in. It applies to both day and night time drills and is used as a guide and a monitoring mechanism to ensure that once times are exceeded they are reviewed, improved where possible and any issues addressed.

How to access my fire drill reports:

Currently only the HOU has access to same

1. Go to the intranet homepage
2. Choose reports on left hand side of screen
3. Enter your username and password
4. Click into organisational reports
5. Then fire drill report
6. Screen should populate all your fire drills to date
7. The year, night/day time drills etc are at the top of the page which will allow you to look at previous years information.

7. FIRE EVACUATION STRATEGIES

Your evacuation plan for the unit should take account of the following:

- Type of premises –
 - Is compartmentation/subcompartmentation in place?
 - Do you have fire doors?
 - Do you have escape windows on the ground/first floor bedrooms? Are windows large enough to escape through?
 - How big is your premises? The larger a premises the longer it will take for fire and smoke to spread as long as doors are kept closed.
- Profile of Service Users
 - How many non-ambulant service users do you have?
 - Are my non-ambulant service users located in bedrooms that are closest to an exit? This would facilitate a shorter travel distance to exit the building and/or for staff to re-enter the unit and support the non ambulant person to safety
- Previous drill records
 - What difficulties have been highlighted in previous drills? Have these issues been addressed?
 - If issues are identified during a drill first see if the issue can be addressed locally. If not what discipline(clinical/non clinical) do you need in order to support the team to ensure all persons can be evacuated safely
- Staff training
 - Have all staff completed fire safety training? Refresher?
 - Have all staff gone through the day and night time drill within a calendar year? This could be a simulated day/night time drill done during refresher fire training to ensure all staff get the opportunity to go through the procedure and discuss approaches collectively as a team
- Any reports completed on fire safety in the unit
 - Has a third party/internal auditor completed an audit or other report for the unit? If so have recommendations been put in place?

Simultaneous Evacuation

In most premises a simultaneous evacuation strategy will be in place. This means that upon activation of the fire alarm all staff and service users leave the building together to a place of safety away from the building.

This evacuation strategy is more or less the one that applies to most of our premises. I say this as most of our premises have one or more non-ambulant service user(s) and as such we don't all collectively leave the building together however everyone is evacuated from the building **as a phased horizontal or delayed evacuation is not possible in most of our units due to the building layout and size.**

As most of our premises are small residential houses they are generally not suitable for anyone to be left behind for Fire Service Rescue. It is also not a suitable approach to take to rely on third party intervention i.e. fire brigade to rescue occupants. It is only in exceptional and unforeseeable circumstances that the latter approach should be adopted – see section on managing non-compliances below.

Phased Horizontal Evacuation.

In some buildings the unit may be divided into a number of fire resisting compartments and the occupants are moved from the compartment involved in the fire to the adjacent compartment and if necessary moved again. Depending on the fire situation it may eventually be necessary to consider full evacuation. Because of the extra time this type of evacuation takes the building needs to allow for this strategy to be adopted. There would only be a very small number of units that could adopt such a strategy. **Advice should always be sought from the SMH fire prevention officer if you are changing your evacuation strategy due to changing needs of service users in your house.**

8. Evacuation plans & Evacuation management

Evacuation Plans

Some things to remember:

There is a generic evacuation procedure included at the beginning of this user manual however this information is not specific to the needs of the individuals in the house and how you get them out. Personal evacuation plans allow you to evaluate and explain the support needs of individuals and how you get them out in the event of a fire. This should be complemented by an overall evacuation plan which outlines how to implement the personal evacuation plans with the overall arrangements for fire evacuation. There are templates for day and residential services evacuation plans available on the fire safety downloads on the intranet. An example personal evacuation plan is included

in the appendix which can be referred to when completing your own plan if needed.

Remember: always know who can get out of the house quickest and who takes the longest to evacuate. This should be identified locally by the team.

As we will not know when or where a fire will occur we can only look to areas of high risk which in residential houses is generally the kitchen, sitting room, utility/boiler room and hot press. You will always go to the person who is at greatest risk first and then radiate outwards (like a ripple effect) towards an exit. Hence you can appreciate why you would have those with the greatest need beside an exit!

As most houses generally have a two stage evacuation – evacuating those quickest from the house first and then the remaining slower moving or non ambulant persons. You also need to consider the safety of those persons outside of the house. Some suggestions include:

- Use of the unit bus to put the ambulant persons in a safe area
- Closing of the front gate to create a secure area until you can collectively move to a safer place as a group
- Support from staff in another local residential unit if it is close enough
- Others in the group – is there one or two service users that are of a higher level of ability in the group who can keep everyone together?

Remember: *Always explain to the service users what will happen in a real fire event. You as a staff may have to re-enter in order to support those with greater needs out of the building. Explaining what is happening may reduce the likelihood that service users will follow you back into the building.*

Personal Evacuation Plans

There is a specific organisational document for units to use on the fire safety downloads on the intranet. Please complete these on soft copy. The PEP allows you to evaluate service user need for evacuation and document what that person requires in order to evacuate or be evacuated safely. It should be detailed and completed in such a way that you don't assume a staff reading same knows the person. If there is an issue of non compliance with a service user ensure that when you are accounting for the issue you also include a procedure that staff need to follow if this arises. PEPS should be located in the emergency file and not in the service users personal file.

There is also a service user accessible form available on the fire safety downloads on the intranet.

Contacting the fire brigade

When you call 999/112, the operator will ask you which service you require e.g. Fire Ambulance Gardai. In Leinster, all requests for the fire service are directed to the East Region Communications Centre. This is located in Dublin Fire Brigade Headquarters at Townsend Street, Dublin 2. The fire service then use a predetermined response system in order to mobilise the nearest fire brigade to the address of the emergency as soon as possible. A Fire Service controller will proceed to ask you a number of questions, for example:

1. What is the address of the emergency? (GIVE NUMBER OF THE HOUSE and then remaining address)
2. What is the telephone number that you are calling from?
3. What is the reason for calling the emergency services/what exactly has happened?
4. Is everybody safe and out of danger? You will probably be initiating the evacuation as you are making the call so tell them that.

You may be asked to stay on the line so that the Fire Service can get more information which will be of assistance to the Fire Personnel who will be responding to your emergency. Please do not hang up the telephone until told to do so by the fire service controller.

Remember - If as part of your evacuation you realise there is no fire then you can contact the fire service again to let them know. They may still send out an engine to check on things.

Receipt of the Fire Service:

The shift leader should meet the Fire Brigade upon arrival.

The following should be communicated to the senior officer of the fire brigade (this will be the person wearing a white hat):

1. If anyone is left in the building and their last known location
2. Location of the fire.
3. Any specific Fire hazards in the unit i.e. oxygen or other bottled gases
4. Any other queries should be answered.

Fire report form

If a fire occurs in the unit or there is a near miss fire event, a fire report form must be completed (available in the fire safety downloads section on intranet) with all relevant details. The HOU, Service Manager and SMH Fire Prevention officer must be notified of any near miss and/or fire event.

Evacuation and smoke spread

In the unlikely event that staff/service users are evacuating and have no choice but to pass through smoke it should be remembered that you keep as low to the ground as possible. Smoke will rise to ceiling level and will start to layer, as smoke being lighter than air it will always rise upwards. Therefore the air nearer the ground will have less smoke, will be cooler and a person's ability to see will be at their best.

Always remember never open a door where you see smoke leaking from the bottom of the door as this room is more than likely filled with smoke.

If as part of your evacuation of occupants you need to open a door where there is no vision panel to see into the room:

1. Put the back of your hand against the door handle – if it's hot there is a fire on the other side of the door.
2. If you must enter the room (and no smoke is leaking from the bottom of the door), open the door slowly while crouching close to the ground.
3. If there is smoke leaking from the bottom threshold of the door - DO NOT OPEN THE DOOR AND MOVE ON.

Remember: If ceilings are very high it will take longer for the room/corridor to fill with smoke, hence if ceiling levels are low the room will fill with smoke quicker. If your corridor have velux windows/skylights smoke will pool in this locations first and act as a default smoke reservoir.

Assembly points

When the evacuation has been completed all the occupants report to the designated assembly point/area and a roll call should take place to ensure everybody has been accounted for. A list of staff and service users should be available for this purpose (where applicable).

An assembly point should always be a safe place and be located away from the building, which has been evacuated. For community based residential houses it may not be appropriate for assembly point signs to be erected so make sure all staff and service users know where the meeting point is in the

event of an evacuation i.e. take a picture of a point at which you are to meet and include it in information for staff and service users.

Re-entering a building

Generally as a rule of thumb once you are out of the building you should not re-enter it. However as most of our houses are set up to have one or more non ambulant person you may have to re-enter in order to support this person from the building. Upon re-entry the building should not be re-entered unless it is safe to do so. This means if there is fire or smoke blocking your path to the person left in the building it is unsafe and await fire brigade support. Hence it is so important that doors are always kept closed.

Remember if there is more than one entry point into the house always choose the quickest and most direct route to the person needing support in evacuation. Where possible it's useful that all doors have one master key however this is not the case in many houses. Ensure you have the keys to all the exterior doors in the house on your person.

Remember: *When deciding on changes to service users bedrooms or if a new service user is to move in - it is extremely important to locate service users with the lowest level of need upstairs or furthest from an exit. The more dependent service users should be closest to an exit. Any internal move should take time to consider this as part of the process; advice may also be sought if required.*

Service user involvement in fire safety

If appropriate get the service users involved in fire safety in the house. Ultimately fire safety affects everyone and it is easier to engage with service users rather than impose fire safety upon them. Some ideas include:

Service User develop their own personal evacuation plan – There is an accessible personal evacuation plan template on the fire safety downloads on the intranet.

Service users explain evacuation procedure to new, relief or agency staff

Service users choosing when drills are to be held (choosing the day as opposed to time)

Service users in rotation taking charge of a drill with staff support and feeding back to their peers

Service users testing the alarm system weekly with the support of staff

Service users completing daily fire checks with support of staff

Service users given a role in the fire drills – taking the role call, ensuring everyone is accounted for etc

Reward system for involvement in the drills

The above are some good ideas being done by staff in units.

There is a resource section on the downloads on the intranet that contains videos, photo symbols and other information that may be useful to staff in order to increase fire safety awareness for service user(s) in the house. There is a section at the end of the emergency file where you can store this information.

Remember: Means of communication is extremely important – if a service user will not leave – is it because they do not understand what is being asked of them? What communication system do you have in place for the individual when it comes to fire evacuation – it may be as simple as a picture of a fire, person evacuating and an assembly point outside. Sometimes we need to put ourselves in their shoes in order to try and understand the reason as to why they do not want to leave. If this doesn't work then follow the procedure in fire drill section above for action to take on issues highlighted as part of your drill.

Non-compliance in the event of a fire

If we ensure that issues noted in our drills are addressed with the input of relevant stakeholders it reduces the likelihood that in a real fire a person will not leave the building, as there are plans in place to account for same. However it can happen that for whatever reason a person who has never caused us difficulty may decide not to leave in the event of a fire. Try and encourage the person to leave, if they still will not explain that you are going to get everyone else out and will come to them last. Ensure they keep their door closed and open the window (team will have to discuss risk of doing this if room is on the first floor) (newer built houses have escape windows¹). This person now becomes the person who takes the longest and will be the last person you support.

They are not left behind and follow the section on re-entering premises. If the fire brigade arrive on site in the intervening time you can explain that there is one remaining person that needs to be supported to leave and they will assist you in the process.

Evacuation options

Please see appendix for a list of possible evacuation options, not all these options may be suitable and you should always seek advice of the SMH fire prevention officer before implementing any of the evacuation options

¹ This is a window that opens 90° and allows the person to escape/be rescued from same

Psychologist Support around behavioural issues

On discussion with the psychology department, if you need advice or support on non-compliance issues with a service user during a fire drill consult with your assigned psychologist who knows the person best. If you do not have a psychologist assigned link in with someone who has previously provided support to you and would have some knowledge around the service user and their difficulties. If this is not possible you and the team will have to provide the working knowledge on the service user and the difficulties presented to try and develop a strategy to address same with the psychologist assigned. If you are having difficulties contact the SMH fire prevention officer for support.

Evacuation Aids

The company that you use to purchase evacuation aids from is called Phoenix Safety – www.phoenixsts.ie 043 3349611 and use the following reference ST MI00001 in order to avail of discounts.

There is an account set up with this company so you can receive discounts available. Prices vary from 65 - 600 euro.

There are 4 types of evacuation aids that are applicable in our premises:

1. **Ski sheets** – these are devices that sit under your mattress and result in the evacuation of the person and their mattress. For this reason the doorway widths need to be wider than the size of the mattress. You would also want some leeway in the space available as the straps can result in the mattress bulging in places, which could pose a difficulty on evacuation if the space is too confined. They are generally specific to the person as they are on their bed and need to be washed down if you intend to change it to another person's bed. They generally have to be replaced regularly and in many situations are not suitable in domestic applications or with someone who only has an air mattress. Safe Working load 120kgs.
2. **Albac mats** – these are like sleeping bags with a polypropylene board. They are suitable for use with narrow and normal doorway widths however they are not suitable for persons with medical conditions such as osteoporosis or other degenerative bone conditions. They are also not suitable for a person who may become non-complaint and may try to grab hold of the doorway or other items on egress. Bed linen does provide some degree of securing the person in place however it does not enclose them sufficiently to prevent arms being used to prevent egress. These devices are more versatile and are not person specific and last longer than the ski sheet. Safe Working load 120kgs (260.85e price with discount).
3. **Res-q-mat** – this device is most suitable for persons with challenging behaviour as the device is nearly fully enclosed and offers the person little opportunity for grabbing onto things during evacuation. This device is not suitable for those with medical conditions as described above.

The mat can be adjusted in size and so offers flexibility in that it caters for both adults and children. Safe Working load 120kgs.

4. **Ski Pad** – this device is suitable for persons with medical conditions described above. This device provides very little vibration and as such would be suitable to protect the person who is being evacuated. It can take a working load of 160kgs. It can also accommodate persons who are in a foetal position and doesn't require you to have bedding in order to evacuate the person.
5. **Ski Slide Pad** – this device is the same as the ski pad but it has slide sheets attached either side which can help in both transferring the person and for securing the person in position. This device is suitable for persons with medical conditions described above. This device provides very little vibration and as such would be suitable to protect the person who is being evacuated. It can also accommodate persons who are in a foetal position and doesn't require you to have bedding in order to evacuate the person. It can take a working load of 120kgs and would be the one device that offers the widest range of flexibility.

All the devices above can be used for horizontal and vertical evacuation and are recommended to have 2 people for use; this is mainly around the transfer of the person into the equipment. In limited circumstances depending on the service users ability to assist with the transfer and the operator's size, one person can use the albac mat however this is on a case by case basis. All devices have a safe working load of 120kgs unless otherwise stated, there are also bariatric aids available if needed. Generally for our settings devices number 4&5 would be most suitable.

To see ski sheets and albac mats in action use the following links:

<http://www.phoenixsts.ie/evacuation-aids/albac-mat.html>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kch1CAszAVk>

Training

The above company provide the training in the use of the evacuation aids and annual refreshers. Ensure that you notify the SMH Fire Prevention officer of any evac aid that has been purchased. This is for training purposes, so the Training Dept can be notified and unit added to the training list. The use of these pieces of equipment should be discussed with the SMH fire prevention officer and/or company prior to purchase if there are any queries as to suitability.

These aids are only for use in a real emergency and not to be used as part of your fire drills.

Using non SMH premises

If service users are accessing public buildings for classes it is very important that you can ensure the safe evacuation of all persons from the premises. This proves more difficult if you are accessing the upper stories of a building with non-ambulant service users.

If you are intending or currently using the upper storey of a premise then contact the manager of the building and ask what arrangements they have in place for evacuation of non-ambulant persons from the building. They should have appropriate arrangements in place especially if they are a publicly accessed building. **You should never be happy with being told that they get non-ambulant persons to a refuge area and await the fire service to rescue the person.** This is discrimination and all persons should be able to leave the building in the event of a fire. The building management should ensure these arrangements are in place, have suitably trained staff and plans that can be implemented at all times. Ultimately they need to work with you and the person with the disability to create a personal evacuation plan that they can support you with in order to leave the building safely.

If you have any concerns or require support in meetings with building management then please contact the SMH fire prevention officer.

Evacuation lifts

Generally as a rule of thumb you do not use a lift in the event of an emergency however there are some occasions where they can be used. This is applicable in a limited number of situations, which should be confirmed by building management of a non SMH building or TSD if it is a SMH building. If you have any queries or concerns please contact the SMH fire prevention officer.

9. FIRE SAFETY LEGISLATION:

The Fire Services Act 1981 & 2003 section 18 (2) & (3) places obligations on fire safety to the following:

- To take all reasonable measures to guard against the outbreak of fire on our premises
- To ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of persons on the premises in the event of an outbreak of fire or not.
- To ensure the safety of persons on the premises by providing appropriate fire safety measures and fire safety procedures, which are applied at all times

Section 19:

The Fire Authority under the Fire Services Act 1981 & 2003 can deem a place of work as a potentially dangerous building if it doesn't meet the stipulations set under section 19 of the Act. The Fire Authority having deemed a building potentially dangerous will serve a Fire Safety Notice under section 20 of the act. The Fire Authority will require upgrading of fire safety measures within the building in order to remove the fire safety notice.

This fire safety notice may prohibit the use of the building until specific actions are taken depending on the deficiencies noted.

Section 22:

A member of the Fire Authority noted in the Act as an "authorised person" has the power to inspect any premises to which the Act applies. Records of items relating to fire safety should also be available for inspection by a member of the Fire Authorities.

Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and Safety Health and Welfare at Work (General Application Regulations) 2007

These documents are designed to improve all aspects of safety for people at work, including fire safety. The Safety health & Welfare at Work Act 2005 & General Application regulations 2007 have designated requirements for Fire safety in workplaces. The sections that apply are as follows:

The Safety health & Welfare at Work Act 2005 Chapter 1 section 11 apply to Emergencies and serious and imminent danger.

Section 11 provides for the measures to be taken in emergencies, and in the case of serious and imminent danger. In support of the general duties on employers in Section 8 Employers must have plans and procedures in place for emergencies and serious or imminent danger.

In the General Application regulations 2007 Chapter 1 section 12 Emergency routes and exits & 13 fire detection and fire fighting.

It requires employers to make provisions for emergency exits, fire detection and fire fighting equipment. It also includes the provision of information, instruction, training and supervision as appropriate (section 8), the provision and maintenance of safe means of access and egress and the preparation and revision of adequate plans to be followed in emergencies.

Section 12 Emergency routes and exits states that:

1. Emergency routes to emergency exits and the exits themselves are kept clear at all times and lead as directly as possible to the open air or to a safe area
2. In the event of danger, it is possible for employees to evacuate all workstations quickly and as safely as possible,
3. The number, distribution and dimensions of the emergency routes and exits are adequate for the use, equipment and dimensions of the place of work and the maximum number of persons that may be present,
4. Emergency exit doors open outwards
5. Any sliding or revolving doors that are fitted are not used, or intended to be used, as emergency exits,
6. Emergency doors and gates are not so locked or fastened that they cannot be easily and immediately opened by any person who may need to use them in an emergency
7. Specific emergency routes and exits are indicated by signs in accordance with Part 7, Chapter 1 and such signs are placed at appropriate points and are adequately durable
8. Emergency routes and exits, and the traffic routes and doors giving access to them, are free from obstruction so that they can be used at any time without hindrance, and
9. Emergency routes and exits requiring illumination are provided with emergency lighting of adequate intensity in case the lighting fails.

Section 13 requires employers to ensure that:

1. A place of work is equipped with appropriate fire-fighting equipment and, as necessary, fire detectors and an alarm system, taking account of
 - o The dimensions and use of the buildings
 - o The equipment they contain,
 - o The physical and chemical characteristics of the substances present and

- o The maximum potential number of people present
2. Non-automatic fire-fighting equipment is:
- o Easily accessible and simple to use, and
 - o Indicated by signs in accordance with Part 7, Chapter 1 and the signs are placed at appropriate points and are adequately durable, and
3. Fire detection equipment and fire-fighting equipment is:
- o Inspected and maintained as frequently as necessary to ensure that it is in good working order, and
 - o Serviced by a competent person as frequently as necessary.

10. RECORDING PROCEDURES/GENERAL INSPECTION PROCEDURES

The following standards are in place for active fire safety measures:

- I.S. 291 Fire fighting equipment,
- I.S. 3217: Emergency Lighting,
- I.S. 3218: Fire alarm and detection systems

Fire safety equipment is subject to regular periodic inspection by a competent person as per the applicable standards (above) to ensure it is fit for purpose and in proper working order. In addition there are local checks that must be carried out by staff at regular intervals as is recommended in these standards to ensure equipment is in proper working order between competent servicing intervals.

Fire Safety Checklist

A fire safety checklist is provided to all units, which includes all the daily, monthly and quarterly checks that need to be completed.

- Daily checklist is completed by staff on duty
- Monthly checklist completed by Local unit fire officer/Deputy
- Quarterly checklist completed by PIC/PPIM

These checklists contain all the fire safety checks that need to be completed in a year. Initial the checklist and use the comments section attached to each sheet to account for any issues/non conformances. The comments section has a date, action required, person contacted in order to address and a completion date. Once any issues have been completed the records should be updated to indicate same.

	Emergency Lighting	Fire alarm system	Fire extinguishers	Fire exit routes and doors
Daily	*	*	*	*
Weekly	*	*		
Monthly	*		*	*
Quarterly	*	*		*
6 monthly				*
Annually	*	*	*	*

* To be inspected by staff

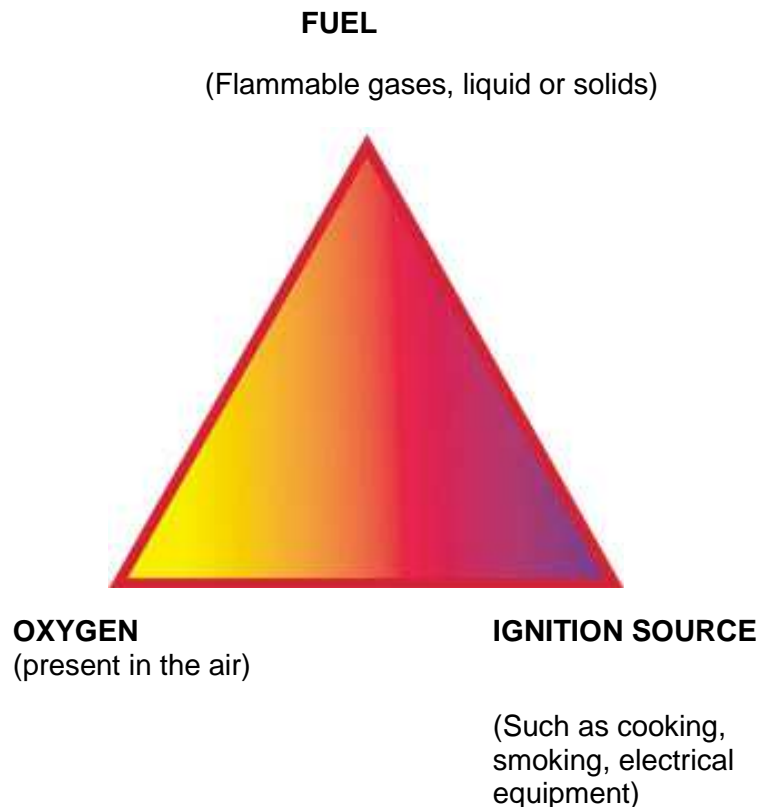
• To be inspected by competent contractor

11. CLASSIFICATION OF FIRE AND EXTINGUISHING EQUIPMENT

A small fire tackled with fire-fighting equipment in the early stages may be prevented from developing into a fire of life-threatening proportions. Fire-fighting equipment can fall into one of two categories; either

- (a) It is designed for use by persons, such as portable fire extinguishers or
- (b) It is a fixed installation, such as a sprinkler system, which comes into operation automatically in the event of fire.

The triangle of fire:



For a fire to start, three components are needed: a source of ignition, fuel and oxygen. These components can be represented in the form of a triangle of fire as shown in the above diagram. This reaction generates its own heat and as long as there is sufficient fuel and oxygen present it becomes self-sustaining. If any one of these components is missing, a fire cannot start. Taking steps to avoid the three coming together will therefore reduce the chances of a fire occurring. This is the basis upon which fire extinguishers work depending on the one used it will eliminate one of the 3 components needed for a fire to continue burning.

- Cooling the fire – removing the heating element – foam extinguisher
- Smothering the fire – removing the oxygen supply – carbon dioxide extinguisher/foam extinguisher

Classes of Fire description:

<u>Class of fire</u>	<u>Description</u>
<u>Class A</u>	Fires involving solid materials such as wood, paper or textiles
<u>Type of fire</u>	<u>Description</u>
<u>Electrical</u>	Use Carbon Dioxide (CO2) for fire(s) involving electrical appliances

Suitability for the Class of Fire:

Specific fire extinguishers are provided in our premises to deal with the specific fire hazards that are present in the units.

In SMH the following two types of extinguishers are provided as there is an expectation that as our staff are trained in same they can intervene in a fire. You will only intervene in a fire that is a **SINGLE BURNING ITEM** - one item on fire that has not spread to anything else.

Foam Extinguisher

A **Foam Extinguisher (red body with cream label/band)** can be used on Class A or B fires. It can be used on most fires that may occur in our centres i.e. wood, paper, fabric – curtains etc.

It is not suitable for electrical fires.



Use:

Aim the hose (by holding it towards the end of the hose) at the base of the fire and discharge the entire contents of the extinguisher on the fire. If it has not extinguished after all the contents have been discharged then close the door and leave

Carbon Dioxide Extinguisher

A **Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) Extinguisher (red body with black label/band)** can be used on Class B fires and is particularly suitable for fires involving electrical equipment as it is filled with carbon dioxide - a non-flammable gas. As with all fires involving electrical equipment, the power should be disconnected if possible. The use of this extinguisher discharges a loud noise accompanying the discharge. **Do not** hold the discharge horn due to the freezing effect.



Use:

Move the horn in an outward and downwards direction (45°), remove the tamper proof seal, pull the pin and squeeze the handle to discharge the contents. The discharge horn should be directed at the base of the flames and the jet kept moving across the area of the fire. Hold the base of the extinguisher if you need support holding it while discharging.

Warning: Carbon Dioxide has a limited cooling effect and care should be taken to ensure that the fire does not re-ignite so ensure all contents of the extinguisher are discharged. As the carbon dioxide extinguisher is limiting the oxygen available to the fire it is also limiting oxygen availability to those in close vicinity especially if it is a small unventilated area. The person should vacate the area as soon as the fire has been extinguished. Ventilate the room once the fire has been extinguished, if there is any uncertainty contact the fire brigade.

Fire Blankets

The use of a Fire Blanket has a smothering action and thus cuts off the oxygen supply.

Suitable for use on:

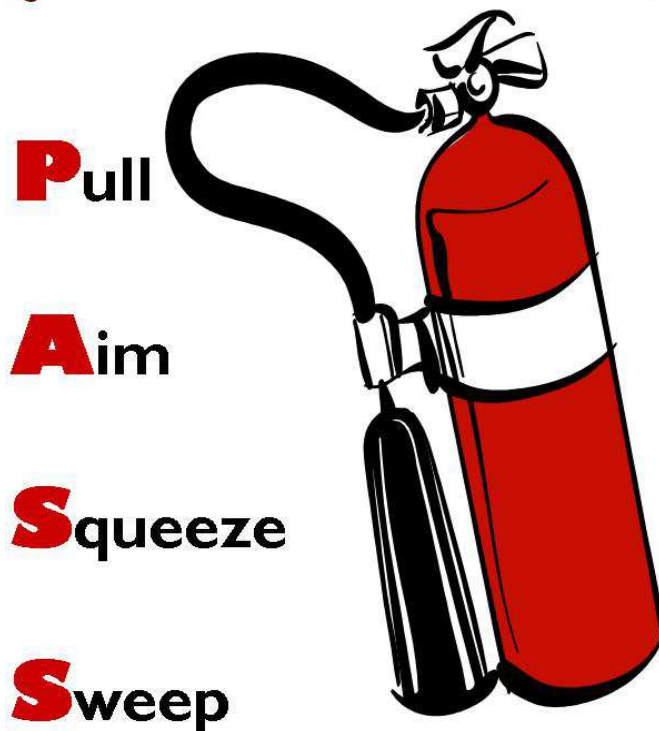
- Small fires that occur on pots and saucepans on cookers and
- Toaster fires.

Use:

Pull the black tabs and fire blanket will come out of packaging. The tabs are sewn into the side you are to hold - these should be facing you. Hold the tabs and ensure hands, arm and body are behind the blanket and you have a tight grip. The blanket is coated in a fire retardant material and as long as your body is behind the blanket you are protected. Holding the blanket at arms length move towards the item on fire – put the blanket over the burning item **and turn off the cooker**. The fire blanket smothers the fire and removes the oxygen by turning off the cooker it also removes the heat source. This means when taking off the blanket all that is left is the fuel and even when oxygen is reintroduced the fire will not restart.

Method for Using Fire Extinguisher:

Remember!



The following points should be considered before commencing to extinguish a fire however small:

1. The alarm and the fire procedures should have been activated
2. Only fight a fire where there is only one item on fire and so hasn't spread to anything else. Fire extinguishers are provided for first aid fire fighting.
3. Take up a position where access to the fire is unrestricted but where a quick and safe retreat is possible – back to your exit
4. Crouching will help the operator to keep clear of smoke, avoid heat and allow a closer approach to the fire
5. Discharge the entire contents of the extinguisher regardless of how small the fire is. If the fire doesn't extinguish then close the door and leave
6. Always ensure that a fire is completely extinguished and not liable to re-ignite or continue smouldering.
7. Before using an extinguisher always make sure it is the correct type for the class of fire.
8. Never use an extinguisher at the expense of life safety – the latter is always the priority
9. If there is any uncertainty that the fire may not be extinguished properly contact the fire brigade and vacate the house until they arrive.

When the fire has been extinguished leave the area immediately and go to fresh air. Contact the fire brigade if you are unsure if the fire is fully extinguished.

Do not continue to fight a fire if:

1. It is dangerous to do so
2. There is foam or plastic materials involved which give off toxic fumes
3. There is a possibility that your escape route may be cut off by the fire or smoke
4. The fire continues to grow in spite of your efforts
5. There are gas cylinders threatened by a fire
6. There is a fire involving a burning gas do not extinguish it, as there will be a danger of an explosion. Turn off the gas supply if safe to do so, evacuate the area and call the Fire Brigade.

Remember:

**IF IN DOUBT, GET OUT
CLOSE THE DOOR BEHIND YOU
STAY OUT**

Inspection of Portable Extinguishers

Full maintenance inspection in accordance with I.S. 291. Fire extinguishers are serviced every year through the technical services preventative maintenance program by an external third party.

Daily/Monthly Inspection Procedure

The inspection shall determine that:

- (a) The extinguisher is in its designated place;
- (b) Access or visibility of the extinguisher is not obstructed and easily accessible
- (c) Any seals or indicator tabs are not broken;
- (d) Pressure indicators, where fitted, show the correct pressure – arrow pointing in the green; If the pin is pointing into the left hand side of the green it relates to a pressure issue in the cylinder and needs to be checked by service engineer.
- (e) The extinguisher has not been damaged in any way;
- (f) The extinguisher does not have obvious defects such as a clogged nozzle, corrosion, leakage or a damaged hose.
- (g) The maintenance record is properly attached to the extinguisher and is up to date and the maintenance register is up to date.

Discovery of Defective Equipment

If any extinguisher is found to be damaged, corroded or otherwise defective in the course of an inspection, it should be reported to the Technical Services Department **ASAP** for it to be replaced. In addition this should be noted in the fire safety checklist.

12. Inspection of Fire Alarm and Detection Systems

The provision of a fire alarm and detection system in a building is an important fire safety measure taken in SMH. In all our residential units and regional offices there is an L1 detection system in place, which offers a high degree of life protection and means there is a detector head located in each room of the house/building. In remaining services there is an L2/L3 system in place, which means there is detection of the means of escape and adjoining areas opening onto the means of escape and covers any other high risk areas.

Alarm systems provide an early warning of a fire event and facilitate the appropriate procedures to commence:

- Evacuating persons most in danger first
- Restricting the growth and spread of fire by closing of doors
- Early call-out of the Fire Service and
- If possible and safe to do so intervention in the fire by the use of fire extinguishing equipment

All fire alarm systems in SMH are connected to a central monitoring company G4S – 01-8058358. The only two exceptions are Goatstown and Ballymun regional offices. The monitoring company should be contacted before testing the system and carrying out fire drills.

Daily:

- o All panels indicate 'normal' operation (see normal operation section below) and that any faults indicated are recorded in the fire safety checklist
- o Any faults reported have received attention

Weekly:

- o Once a week the fire alarm panel should be operated to test the alarm panel and the sound levels of the noise making devices. Activate the fire alarm by using the fire alarm panel to operate the system - press evacuate. To ensure noise making devices can be heard, chose the furthest location from a bell/klaxon (noise making device) and close the door – can it still be heard/has the noise level decreased significantly that someone may find it difficult to hear especially if they were asleep?
- o Internal and external doors that are connected to the fire alarm system will not activate in the event of a test of the system using the fire alarm panel directly. They will only activate if a detector head/break glass unit is activated which sets off the fire alarm system. Any defect found should be noted in the Fire Safety checklist and action initiated to correct it.

Quarterly:

Fire alarm system is inspected by a competent contractor quarterly. Local records should be maintained on the servicing sheet located in the emergency file. In addition service engineer reports following the service will be sent to units by technical services, these records must be filed in the emergency file.

General Operating Procedures for Fire Alarms

Adjacent the fire alarm there should be:

- Operating instructions that staff can follow in order to operate the fire alarm system.
- a zone chart – this chart can be referred to by staff in the event of a fire so they know what area of the house has activated the alarm and can take the appropriate emergency response to support those closest to the fire first.
- For those with an addressable system this will be a list of detector head numbers which correspond with a room in the house.

Always keep the instruction manual for the fire alarm system in case you need to reference anything in future.

There are many different variations of panels in St. Michael's House so it would be impossible to outline the use of each individually. Outlined below is very general guidance on the basic function and some commonalities among system types.

Panel operation

Panels with key switches will require the key to activate the controls. This key (see photo 2 below) should be readily available at all times to persons in the premises when the building is occupied.

Some newer panels require a code to be inputted in order to make the panel operational. Once the code has been entered the buttons on the panel become functional.

Normal Operation

Under normal conditions in newer systems text on the panel will indicate '**mains healthy**' and/ or '**normal panel operation**' and green indicator light should be lighting see photo 1. In older systems that do not have a text display it would be indicated by a green light above 'mains on' text see photo 2.



Photo 1



Photo 2

Fire

If an automatic detector or manual call point is operated anywhere in the building, a 'FIRE' light will illuminate. For zoned systems, a light should illuminate to indicate the zone on fire.

Some units may have an addressable system where the control panel will indicate which smoke/heat detector activated, generally indicated by the number of the detector showing up in the text area of the screen with corresponding location. Hence it is important that there is a corresponding chart that indicates the number of the detector heads and room it corresponds with.

NOTE: ZONES – A zoned system is a loop on which a number of detector heads and manual call points are located. The house is subdivided into a number of zones, which generally is downstairs, upstairs and attic, dependent on the size of the building.

Addressable system – a system where each detector head is given a unique number. This number is addressed into the fire alarm panel so if it activates the panel can tell you which detector head has activated and so which room is on fire.

Fault

In the event of a fault an audible and /or visual warning will be given. The operation of the 'MUTE'/'FAULT MUTE'/'SILENCE INTERNAL SOUNDERS switch will silence the audible warning, (refer to fire alarm panel instructions as this will be dependant on the panel). A fault condition will reset itself when the cause is removed (see false alarms below). Contact technical services if there are any concerns or the cause cannot be identified.

To Reset

To reset the panel following a fire (or any other reason for activation) and the building being given the all clear refer to fire alarm panel instructions that should be in place adjacent the panel. It is generally a button indicating reset.

Evacuate

Operation of this button will cause all sounders to operate.

Internal and external doors will only operate upon activation of a detector head/break glass unit and not by operation at the fire alarm panel.

Power Failure

In the event of a power failure, the fire alarm will remain active for a period of time on reserve batteries and the fault mode will activate. Normal operation will resume following return of power.

For specific details on the operation of a fire alarm panel reference should be made to the alarm manual. Refresher briefings can be given by the alarm company upon request, contact technical services if you wish to organise same.

False Fire Alarms

Action by the user after any false alarm:

False alarms can be a major hazard to any fire alarm system since they lead to a loss of confidence in the system. It is important that any alarm from the system is treated as an alarm of fire until it can be proved to be false rather than being treated as false until proven to be a fire. This means that an evacuation should take place to reinforce with service users that if the alarm goes then evacuate.

When an alarm has been found to be false the following immediate action should be taken by the staff member.

1. Procedure for identifying device that caused the false fire alarm activation

- A. Silence the fire alarm at the panel (button that says silence/silence sounders)
- B. Contact the fire alarm monitoring company to ensure the fire brigade will not be called out
- C. Identify what zone has activated - check all devices in that zone using the device list adjacent the fire alarm panel. If the unit has an addressable fire alarm system go to room location to ensure this is the device that has activated.
- D. Next walk around the building to identify which detector head or break glass unit activated. You will be able to tell this by a red light lighting on a smoke or heat detector or in the case of a break glass unit the glass being broken or a red light lighting (this can differ from device to device – some will have a light others wont).



- E. Once you have identified which device is the cause of the activation, try to establish what was being done in that area at the time i.e. someone drying their hair, using deodorant or a leak in the vicinity of the detector head.
- F. Once you have completed the above go back to the fire alarm panel (which will be buzzing as you haven't reset it) and press the reset button.
- G. Next email TSD & SMH Fire Prevention Officer ASAP re the false alarm activation giving them information relating to point B-D above.
- H. They will provide this information to the fire alarm company to investigate and rectify the cause and prevent any further recurrence.

Remember even if the above wasn't followed every false alarm must be reported by email to TSD & SMH Fire Prevention officer ASAP.

Remember: Even if it is a false alarm service users should be evacuated as they will not be able to tell the difference between a false alarm and a real fire.

In Attic spaces look at the indicator plate located adjacent or close to an attic hatch - they light will light if it is the head in this location that has activated.



The reason why it is important to record any false alarms with the system is because the organisation under I.S. 3218 has an obligation that if any one device or group of devices gives repeated false alarms then the company responsible for servicing shall be informed and required to investigate and take appropriate action. The average rate of false alarms from an installation should not exceed one false alarm per year for each 20 detectors connected to the system. The number of false alarms from an individual detector or detector location should not exceed one false alarm per 2 years. Installations, detectors or detector locations having higher false alarm rates should be subject to special investigation.

All units should try to apply a:

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY TO FALSE ALARMS and IF THE ALARM ACTICATES EVACUATE REGARDLESS OF WHETHER YOU KNOW IT TO BE A FALSE ALARM OR NOT

13. Emergency Lighting

Emergency lighting is designed to do two things

- Highlight the exits routes to take in a fire via the green running man signs and
- Light the route to the final exit so occupants can safely make their way out of the building in an emergency where power has failed.

The failure of electricity and consequently lighting is a relatively common occurrence during a fire. The emergency lighting should provide enough illumination to provide for a safe evacuation.

Emergency luminaries are normally a self-contained unit, which following power failure will provide approximately three hours backup lighting. There are three basic modes of operation:

1. Lights normally on, a power failure switches to battery backup.
2. Lights are normally off, power failure automatically activates them. Following resumption of power or if the battery becomes fully drained they will switch off – hence tested for 3 hrs to ensure a set period of supply.
3. Emergency lights may be combined with normal lighting and may be switch controlled. In the event of a power failure, regardless of whether the lights are on or off, some light will be maintained in operation. This typically consists of a single bulb on reduced power.

Emergency lights may be separate units or combined into normal lighting. They are distinguishable by a small red/green light on the unit. This light indicates the charging circuit is operational and should normally be illuminated (see photo below).



As with all lighting they are subject to normal wear and tear. The fluorescent bulbs however tend to have a long life span. A visual weekly inspection is recommended to ensure correct operation and lights are formally tested by technical services quarterly-annually.

Inspection of Emergency Lighting

To ensure the integrity of emergency lighting supplied within the building a routine inspection is outlined in Irish Standard 3217: Code of Practice for Emergency Lighting:

A daily/weekly inspection shall determine that:

- a) All LED's in luminaries are illuminated (i.e. the small red/green light on the luminaire is on, indicating that the batteries are charging).
- b) All luminaries, which are designed to be constantly on, are functioning correctly.
- c) Any fault recorded in the fire safety checklist is given appropriate attention. In the event of any faults or failure of emergency lighting it should be reported to the Technical Services Department (St. Michael's House)

A routine scheduled inspection is completed by a competent person at regular intervals and records are kept of same.

14. Fire Doors:

Fire doors are an important passive fire safety measure that can impede the spread of smoke and fire for a designated period of time. Generally fire doors come in 30, 60, 90 and 120-minutes. In SMH they are generally 30 or 60-minute doors. The latter are found in a minority of locations and would generally be located to kitchen environments or other high fire risk areas.

Fire doors will only work if they are kept closed.

Mandatory signs to BS 5499:5: 2002 are required on all doors, which are designated as fire resisting. These signs are circular in shape, have a blue background with white lettering (see below).



These signs will tell the occupier whether the door is to be:

- o Kept closed, when not in use
- o Kept locked shut when not in use
- o Held open by an automatic release mechanism and so say “automatic fire door keep clear”

How to identify a fire door if there is no signage:

Below are some checks to make in order to identify if you have a fire door in place. Remember any door is an impediment to fire and smoke when it's closed however a door with the following features should offer up to 30/60 minutes if specified, installed and maintained properly:

- Three hinges at a minimum
- Generally thickness 44mm for FD30 and 54mm for FD60, (there can be variations to this)
- Intumescent strip and there should be cold smoke seals on all doors in our units
- Vision panel with intumescent material/sealing system in the surround. Glass is either Georgian wire or stamped to indicate it is fire resisting glass

If you are unsure as to whether you have fire doors in your unit then contact the SMH fire prevention officer.

Remember: *What type of doors are in situ in the unit? The more doors you can close between yourself and the fire then its more time you have to evacuate - 2 doors at 10/15 minutes (approx) each = could give 20/30 minutes and two doors at 30 mins each = could give 1 hour. Relate this time to how long your evacuation drill takes you and it should provide you with sufficient time in order to execute your evacuation – but only if the door is closed!*

A fire door will only work when closed

Fire doors will also have intumescent strips built into the doorframe/door the purpose of this is to impede the spread of hot smoke and gases within the building and work by expanding on exposure to heat (see photo 1). This seals the gap around the periphery of the door and frame. There may also be a cold smoke seal present (is it included as an action in your fire feedback report), this is the furry/rubber strip (see photo 2) that generally sits on top of the intumescent strip. It reduces the size of the gap between frame and door to make it more difficult for smoke to escape especially in the early stages of a fire when it's cold. These should be in place on all doors in residential houses as it is smoke spread that is of greatest danger.

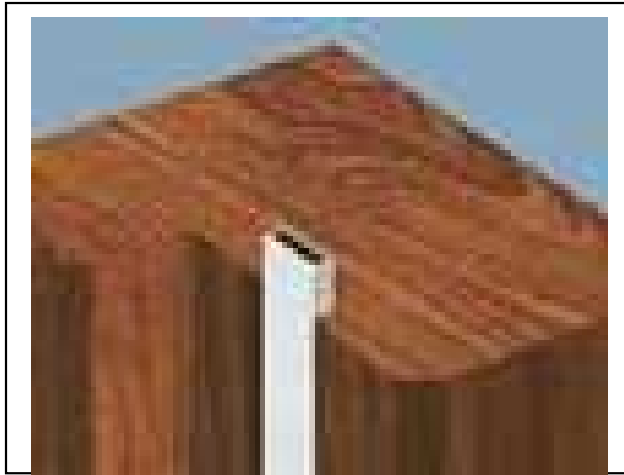


Photo 1

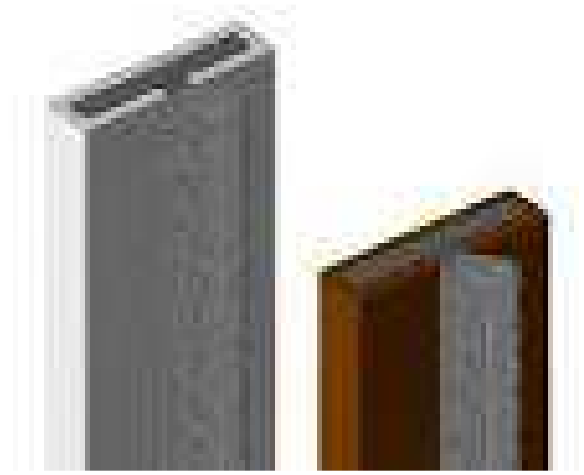


Photo 2

Fire doors should be checked on a regular basis to ensure that it is in proper working order; the intumescent strips are in place and not loose and there is no damage to the door. Any defects should be reported to the Technical Services department ASAP and logged in the fire safety checklist.

Reference document located in appendix no. 3 is a guide on inspecting fire doors and any associated problems that may occur and corrective action required. If problems are noted you need to contact the SMH fire prevention officer and Technical Services ASAP.

15. Control of contractors:

The presence of contractors can introduce additional levels of fire hazards and risk because of the work that they do or because they are not managed properly while in or on a premises. Therefore it is very important that their actions are adequately managed and monitored.

Contractors must ensure that they are aware of the emergency evacuation procedure and assembly points for the unit. Staff can easily do this by meeting the contractor and explaining it to them before work starts. Ensure that you know and are introduced to the person(s) that are due to complete any work. Open communication between contractor and staff in the unit is very important.

The contractor shall provide a method statement to the Technical Services department prior to work being carried out. This will highlight how they intend to carry out the work that needs to be done, the hazards involved in same and how the hazards will be controlled and minimised. The greatest danger that increases the likelihood of fire is hot work such as welding or any work that involves the use of a naked flame. When possible this work should take place when no one is in the unit. The Authorized Person before using any equipment, materials or substances that may be likely to cause fire will be issued a hot work permit for all such work in order to manage the hazard and

reduce the likelihood of a fire occurring. This will be something that will be managed in conjunction with the TSD dept.

Ensure that contractors do not block fire escape routes for any period of time unless it has been discussed with staff on site and planned for. Any difficulties must be reported to Technical Service ASAP.

16. Appendix 1:

Evacuation Options

- Option 1. Use of a lift - which has been tested for use in a fire emergency
- Option 2. Meet assistance at temporary waiting space
- Option 3. Meet assistance at work location
- Option 4. Make own way down stairs slowly
- Option 5. Shuffle or slide down stairs after main flow of people
- Option 6. Use an evacuation chair or similar - Use of ski sheet or 'albac' mat
- Option 7. Carry down – 2 persons
- Option 8. Carry down – 3 persons
- Option 9. Carry down – 4 persons
- Option 10. Travel down in own chair with support
- Option 11. Cannot transfer readily from wheelchair
- Option 12. Travel down stairs using handrails
- Option 13. Assistance from 1 person
- Option 14. Assistance from 2 people
- Option 15. Orientation information
- Option 16. Tactile map of the building
- Option 17. Colour coding or contrasting on escape routes
- Option 18. Step edge markings
- Option 19. Needs to be shown the escape routes
- Option 20. Needs assistance for the person and their dog
- Option 21. Needs doors to be opened
- Option 22. Large print information
- Option 23. Identification of escape routes by reception or security staff
- Option 24. Flashing beacons
- Option 25. Buddy system
- Option 26. Vibrating pagers
- Option 27. Alternative communication system

Option 28. Additional checks by fire wardens

Option 29. Horizontal evacuation into another fire compartment

Option 30. Phased evacuation

Option 31. Taped information

Any of the above options should be discussed with the SMH fire prevention officer and/or clinical discipline/manual handling trainer before being adopted.

http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0040/00402451.pdf - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by St Michaels House

http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0040/00402451.pdf

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	Electric Wheelchair user	Wheelchair user	Other Mobility impaired person	Breathing/ other health issues	Visually impaired person	Hearing impaired person	Dyslexic/ Orientation disorders	Learning difficulty /Autism	Mental health problems	Dexterity problems
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19					<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
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30	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>						<input type="radio"/>		
31					<input type="radio"/>		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

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Photo

Appendix 2:

Example of a completed Personal Evacuation Plan

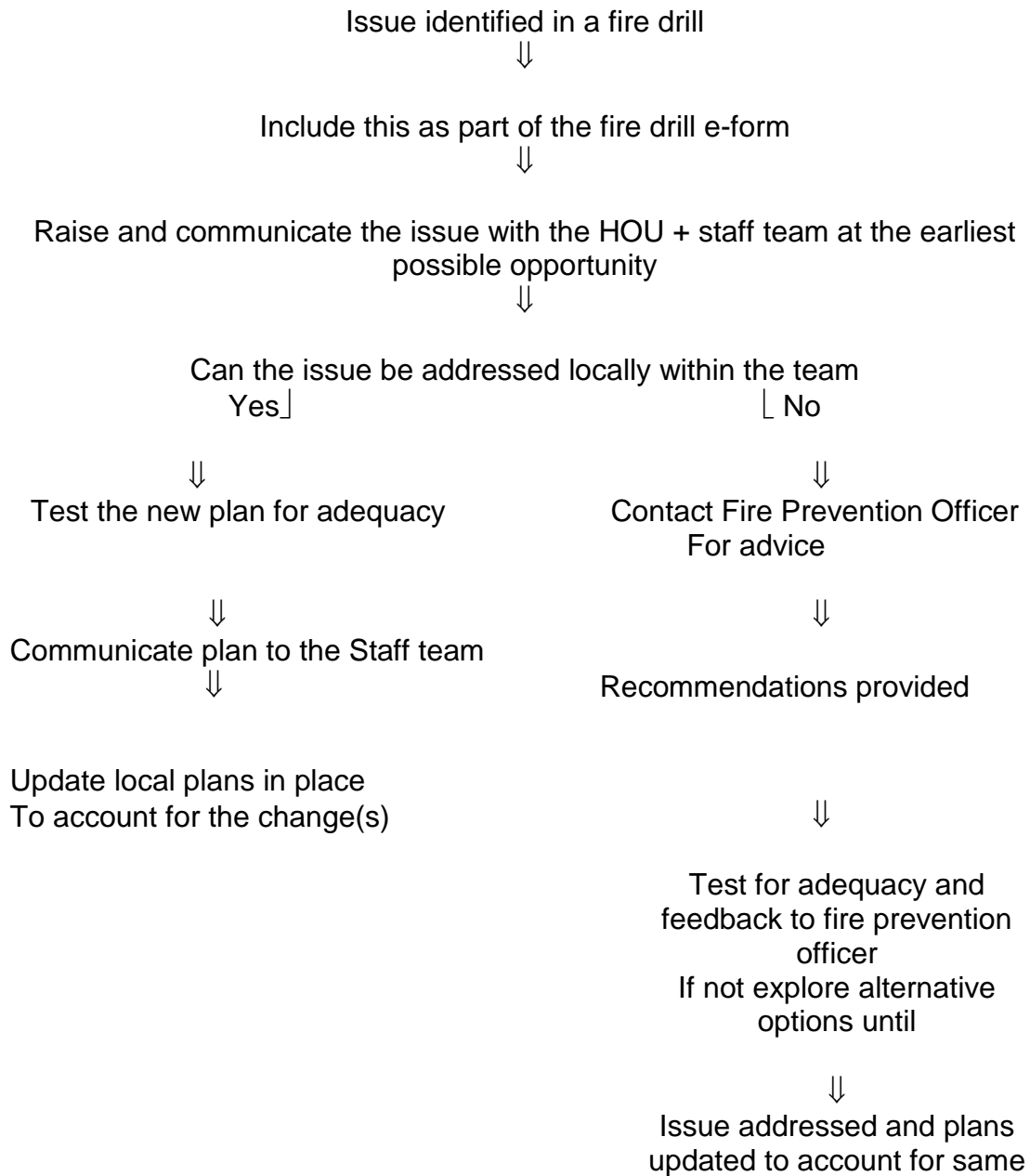
Personal Evacuation Plan

Name of Service User: MARY BLOGGS	Su Mobility: NON AMBULANT - WHEELCHAIR USER
Date: 28/07/17	Review Date: 28/07/18 OR AS CHANGES ARISE
Plan Carried out by: JOE BLOGGS	

Designated Assistance: (how many staff required to aide SU in evacuation)	2 STAFF ARE GENERALLY REQUIRED AS PER BEST PRACTICE HOWEVER IT CAN BE COMPLETED WITH ONE STAFF IN AN EMERGENCY AS MARY CAN ASSIST IN SAME
Method of communication and understanding: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PECS• Lamh• Pictures	PECS IS MY COMMUNICATION SYSTEM. THERE IS A SPECIFIC SYSTEM PUT TOETHER FOR FIRE EVACAUTION WHICH IS KEPT IN MARYS ROOM FOR USE BY STAFF IN A FIRE.
Assistance Methods/Techniques: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ How is the SU evacuated➤ Any specific handling procedures/guidelines?	THERE ARE SPECIFIC GUIDELINES IN PLACE FOR ONE PERSON TRANSFER IN AN EMERGENCY. STAFF ARE AWARE OF SAME AND THEY HAVE BEEN ATTACHED TO THIS PEP.
Equipment Provided: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Hoist➤ Walker etc	HOIST, SLING - TO BE LEFT IN HER ROOM AT NIGHT TIME
Designated Evacuation Routes in the house:	FRONT DOOR AND SITTING ROOM DOOR AS CLOSEST TO MARYS BEDROOM
SU evacuation issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Any problems on previous evacuations?	MARY CAN BE NON COMPLIANT IF HER COMMUNICATION SYSTEM IS NOT USED. SHE CAN GET ANXIOUS AND LIKES TO KNOW WHAT IS GOING ON. ONCE THIS IS USED WITH HER SHE WILL ASSIST IN THE TRANSFER

Appendix 3:

Any issues noted in the fire drill should be addressed in the following manner



NO ISSUE THAT ARISES IN A FIRE DRILL SHOULD BE IGNORED

Appendix 4:

Item:	Observations:		Actions:
Door fully closing	1. Does the fire door fully close & shut tight by use of its own self-closing device?		1. Yes – the fire door is working & effective
	2. Does the fire door slam shut with force?		2. Self closing device requires adjusting to dampen closing action#
	3. Fire door does not close fully?	Is it slow to close or restricted?	3a. The self closing device requires adjusting#
		Has the door dropped on its hinges?	3b. Yes requires adjusting#
Door closer operation	Is the self closer fixed to the door & frame securely?	1. Has the door-closing arm been separated from the frame?	1. Reaffix#
		2. Is there any oil leaking from the door SC device?	2. New closing device required?
Door Handles	1. Are the door handles functioning correctly? 2. Are they loose or missing 3. Can the door be opened without the use of a key, if on an escape route in direction of travel to the fire exit?		Take appropriate action as necessary, including reporting to maintenance as a priority repair#
Door Seals	1. Does the door have intumescent seals around the top and 3 edges (not the bottom of the door) or in the doorframe?		1.
	2. Are the fire seals in good condition, not missing or damaged?		2. If damaged or missing must be repaired#

Item:	Observations:	Actions:
	3. Does the door (or frame) have cold smoke seals in the form of brushes or a rubber strip? Are they in good condition, missing or damaged?	3. If damaged or missing then must be repaired as a priority#
Glazing in the door	1. Is the glazing in the fire door loose, does it rattle or is it broken?	1. Yes – requires repairing#
	2. Are the vision panels in the door clear and unobstructed to provide safety to door users on both sides of the leaf?	2. Vision panels are provided for safety on circulation routes and remain clear and unobstructed
Door Hinges	1. Does the door leaf have 3 or more hinges?	1. A requirement for a fire door is that it must have a minimum of 3 steel hinges
	2. Are they loose or screws missing?	2. Hinges need to be repaired to make the door close fully shut and insure door integrity#
Door hold open devices	1. Electromagnetic hold open not working; units hanging off door or walls etc	1. Yes requires repairing#
	2. Other device holding door open	2. Must be a device that closes the door upon activation of the fire alarm
Doors wedged open	It is an offence to interfere with safety equipment including fire doors	Remove obstruction and report persons to Manager. Only approved device complying with BS 5839 may hold open fire door