



# Diocese of Middlesbrough Lourdes Pilgrimage

## Medical Equipment Policy

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## Introduction

This policy is designed to set out the processes to be used to safely store, maintain and use medical equipment for the effective clinical care of pilgrims during their pilgrimage to Lourdes, including during the journey.

## Scope

This policy applies to all medical equipment used primarily or solely for clinical purposes. It includes equipment brought from the UK by pilgrims for use by the pilgrimage clinical volunteers in their care, e.g. hoist slings, but not for equipment brought by the pilgrim for their own purposes, e.g. heat pads, except where this is part of an agreed prior care plan. It also includes other equipment owned, hired or borrowed by the pilgrimage for the purpose of providing clinical care, e.g. beds, wheelchairs.

## Duties and Responsibilities

- **Pilgrimage Director**

The Pilgrimage Director has overall responsibility for ensuring that there are appropriate policies and procedures in place to effectively maintain safe and working medical equipment, and that this is available as needed. This includes ensuring that all equipment owned or used by the pilgrimage is in good working order, with a maintenance schedule as appropriate. It also includes identifying an equipment lead to ensure the suitable maintenance of medical equipment, and taking advice about care and use of medical devices from the clinical team.

- **Clinical Team**

The Clinical Team has a responsibility for ensuring appropriate policies and procedures are in place so that all volunteers are trained in the use and care of any clinical equipment they are expected to use. They also have a responsibility to ensure that there is a clear procedure for any equipment that becomes damaged, or malfunctions, and that a procedure is in place for investigating equipment incidents, that all adverse events and safety incidents are investigated, and that appropriate action is taken to manage any clinical risk that may arise and prevent future occurrences.

- **All Clinical Volunteers**

All clinical volunteers with responsibility for use or handling of medical equipment are responsible for ensuring that they comply with the pilgrimage's policy and procedures. They must also ensure that any equipment incidents are reported to the Pilgrimage Director as appropriate.

- **All Volunteers**

All volunteers have a responsibility to comply with the training they have received in the use and care of medical equipment and report any concerns to the nurse or doctor on duty. They should not use any medical equipment about which they have concerns or are unfamiliar.

## Pilgrims' own Medical Equipment.

Where a pilgrim brings their own medical equipment with them and uses it unassisted, responsibility for the maintenance and suitability of such equipment, as well as the safe use of it, rests with the pilgrim themselves. This would include such items as heat pads for backache, special cushions, etc. Although the pilgrimage will make every effort to ensure that during the journey any such medical

equipment is kept safe, it is the pilgrim's responsibility to ensure it is protected adequately, and kept in a safe place.

## Medical Equipment

Examples of medical equipment would include all items used to provide clinical care to a pilgrim. They range from simple items such as stethoscopes, to more complex ones such as wheelchairs or special beds, and invasive equipment such as blood sugar monitors.

- **Equipment owned by the pilgrimage**

It is the responsibility of the pilgrimage to ensure that any medical equipment that they own is well maintained and safely stored. There must be an appropriate maintenance in line with the manufacturers' recommendations, and a record against this. Any safety alerts must be acted on.

- **Equipment hired for the pilgrimage**

It is the responsibility of the pilgrimage to ensure that equipment that is hired for clinical use during the pilgrimage is of a suitable type to meet the clinical needs of the pilgrim and does not present any risk to the pilgrim. The equipment should be hired from a reputable company with appropriate expertise. There should be a clear understanding of what the pilgrimage should do in the event of malfunction of the equipment, and an escalation plan agreed with the hire company to prevent clinical risk due to its failure. The pilgrimage must ensure that only those suitably trained in its use do so.

- **Equipment borrowed by the pilgrimage**

Where medical equipment is borrowed from other sources, such as other pilgrimages, the responsibility for the adequacy of this equipment falls to the Middlesbrough Pilgrimage, unless there is a formal written agreement to the contrary. Therefore, the pilgrimage must inspect all equipment before use, to ensure that it is in good order, and ensure that all helpers who use it are familiar with it.

## Medical Devices

For the purposes of this document, medical devices are taken to be those specialised items of medical equipment that are normally maintained by a trained professional allied to medicine, such as a hospital Emergency Medical Equipment (EME) technician or the manufacturers support team. It would include syringe drivers, dialysis machines, home nebulisers, etc.

It is the responsibility of the pilgrimage to ensure that all such devices are transported, stored and used in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions, and that no unauthorised repairs or modifications take place.

Any malfunction of such devices must be notified to the appropriate clinical lead as soon as possible. It is then their responsibility to assess what risk to the pilgrim could result, and to ensure that actions are taken to mitigate this through escalation to the MLT.

## Training and Awareness

This policy will be made available for the New Helpers Day, the Briefing Day, the Formation Day and on site in Lourdes. All nurses, doctors and leaders will be given copies of this policy.

It is the responsibility of the nurses, doctors and leaders to ensure that on briefing day, their group is aware of their responsibilities. This is especially important for those volunteering in the Accueil, although medical equipment may also be in use in other places.

## **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years. Earlier review may be required in response to exceptional circumstances, organisational change or relevant changes in legislation or guidance.