



Title	Ward Refrigerators Protocol
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Equality & Diversity Impact Assessed	

WARD REFRIGERATORS PROTOCOL

Aim: Ensure that refrigerated food for patients [and staff if facility is shared] is managed in a safe manner, to prevent food related illnesses

Standards

1. The ward food refrigerator will be maintained by the Estates staff and cleaned and defrosted by the General Services staff or as per local policy
2. It is important that all faults are reported immediately to the Estates Department by the Nurse in Charge
3. All reported faults must have an agreed deadline for rectification and progress monitored
4. Refrigerators have a limited lifespan after which they are no longer effective. A replacement date should be identified for all fridges and replaced according to a programme.
5. The food refrigerator should operate between 1-4°C. The temperature must be recorded minimum twice daily and a record kept. Inform Estates department if the refrigerator temperature is operating out with 1-4°C [note: fridge temperature recordings should be made during periods of minimal activity when the fridge door has been closed for at least 2 hours; usually early morning and mid evening.
6. Freezer temperatures should operate between -12 and -18°C. The temperature should be recorded minimum once per day following the same principles as for refrigerators, and a record kept.
7. Recording sheets need to be returned to the catering department at the end of each month

["Click here for the recording sheet and flow chart"](#)

8. All food and drink must be covered labelled and dated while in storage
9. All items must be used in rotation. Food or drink must never be consumed after 'use-by' or 'best before' date

10. Large quantities of food must not be allowed to accumulate. Orders must only be placed for actual requirements. All surplus food must be disposed of
11. Pre-packaged food or drink purchased by staff or patients must be labelled with the date and name of the owner and sealed until use. Sufficient food for that day's use only should be brought in and stored
12. Prepared food brought in by staff for personal use must be clearly labelled with date and name
13. Relatives should be discouraged from bringing in foods and are restricted to providing commercially available products, which are date stamped and labelled with the patient's name. The rationale for any exception from this must be documented in the patient's notes. A record should be made of the food eaten, the date and time of consumption, and where it was purchased or made
14. The Nurse in Charge has the responsibility of ensuring that the refrigerator is checked at the end of evening shift and that items incorrectly labelled, stored or out of date are disposed of
15. Drugs or specimens must not be placed in the food refrigerator
16. Raw poultry, meat and shell eggs must not be stored in the refrigerator. Shell eggs may be stored in training kitchen refrigerators only, for the purpose of teaching patients how to hard boil eggs for example.