Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust

Standard Operating Procedures

Managing Email Inbox: Chest Pain Review Clinic (CPRC)

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Approved by:	Cardiology Directorate Meeting
Approved by Medicines Safety Committee: *Where medicines included in guideline*	N/A
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Date of Review: This is the most current document and is to be used until a revised version is available	28th May 2029 Annually or upon changes in NHS policies, data protection regulations or departmental needs.

Aim and Scope of Standard Operating Procedure:

To outline the standard operating procedure for managing a generic email inbox within an NHS hospital setting to ensure timely, accurate and professional responses to all incoming emails. This SOP ensures that all emails are handled consistently and in line with NHS data protection and patient confidentiality standards.

To outline the standard operating procedure for managing the generic email boxes wah-tr.cprcreferral@nhs.net It will include procedures for checking, categorizing, prioritising, responding to and filing emails, as well as guidelines for ensuring compliance with NHS information governance and data protection regulations.

Responsibilities:

- **Email Manager(s**): Designated staff responsible for overseeing the management of the inbox, including checking, assigning, and responding to emails, as well as training new staff on this SOP.

- **Department Staff**: All staff with access to the inbox are responsible for following this SOP and maintaining confidentiality and professionalism in all communications.

Target Staff Categories:

- Cardiology assessment CNS's.
- Cardiology Admin
- Worcestershire Heart centre staff.

Key amendments to this Standard Operating Procedure:

Date	Amendment	Approved by:
May 2026	New document	CDM

1. Introduction:

The Chest Pain Review Clinic (CPRC) reviews patients who present with low-risk chest pain that may be cardiac in origin. Before discharge, these patients will have been assessed by the Emergency Department or Medical SDEC and will have had a negative troponin result and ECG review. Referrals are made through this email inbox by the assessing clinician or by administrative staff on the clinician's behalf.

A telephone consultation is arranged by the cardiology specialist nurses. On some occasions, a face-to-face appointment may also be required and will be organised by the Cardiology Administrator.

2. Access and security:

- **Access control**: Access to the generic inbox must be limited to authorised staff only. Each user must use their own NHS network login credentials and complete mandatory data protection and confidentiality training.
- **Data protection**: All emails must be handled in accordance with GDPR, NHS data protection policies, and any other relevant information governance requirements.
- **Confidentiality**: Do not share sensitive patient information inappropriately. Always check the recipient's email address carefully before sending a response.

3. Checking the inbox:

- **Frequency**: Check the inbox once daily on anormal working day.

- **Log entries**: Record all actions taken in the inbox using the appropriate category dropdown to support continuity and accountability.

4. Categorising and prioritising emails:

- **Triage:** Categorise each email as soon as it is opened.
- **Urgent/immediate action:** Prioritise emails that require an immediate response, such as urgent clinical assessments or escalation requests.
- **Non-applicable/spam:** Delete irrelevant emails or mark them as spam, as appropriate.

5. Responding to emails:

- **Response time:** Review emails within 24 hours to assess urgency and contact patients within one week of receipt depending on urgency. If more time is needed, send an acknowledgement with an estimated response timeframe.
- **Escalation:** Escalate any email requiring senior input or action to the Band 7 nurse in charge for that shift or, where appropriate, the Cardiology CNS lead.

6. Filing and archiving emails:

Folder organisation: Maintain a structured folder system within the inbox.

Folders include:

- Appointment to be made
- Awaiting consultant response
- Dealt with (initials of CNS included)
- Awaiting consultant/colleague response
- To be declined
- Letter complete
- 1st attempt made
- Saved.

7. Forwarding emails:

- **Internal communication**: This inbox is for internal use only. Forward information only to staff or departments who need it, in order to act or respond and clearly state why the email is being forwarded.
- **External communication**: Do not forward emails outside the NHS network without management approval. If this is necessary, the email must be encrypted.

8. Handling confidential information:

- **Encryption:** Encrypt emails containing confidential information before sending, especially if the recipient is outside the NHS network.
- **Redaction:** Redact or anonymise patient information wherever possible. Include only the information needed to address the query or issue.
- **Attachment management:** Minimise the sharing of attachments containing personal or medical information. Check all attachments before sending to ensure they do not include unnecessary confidential information.

9. Monitoring and audit:

- **Email monitoring:** The cardiology advanced practitioners /or the Cardiology CNS Lead will carry out periodic reviews of the inbox to ensure compliance with this SOP.
- **Auditing:** The generic inbox is subject to audit in line with NHS data protection policies. All staff must be prepared to support any data security or operational audit related to email management.

10. Training:

All new staff with access to this inbox must receive a copy of this SOP during induction.

All staff must complete regular training on data security, confidentiality, and related policies and procedures.

11. Compliance

All staff are expected to understand and follow this SOP to protect patient information and maintain effective communication. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action in line with NHS and Trust policies.