

## FOI\_0834\_2022-23 – FOI Request Concerning – Ligature Cutters

---

*Additional Information:*

*We are paramedics by background and now work as the resuscitation officers within Tees Esk and Wear valleys NHS foundation trust. Historically the trust let wards order ligature cutters from the central system and there has been no control over how many are ordered, who is responsible for them, how we can be assured they are sharp enough for purpose etc. So, we were tasked with beginning this project of which I can honestly say we had very little knowledge except from an emergency response perspective. We completed an online ligature removal course with a subject matter expert and went on to buy the LC1 from Barrington's international. However, we are hitting a few questions now which we don't know the answers to. I know your environment maybe a little different from the majority of our services, but we do have a forensics SIS at Roseberry Park hospital in Middlesbrough. We are hoping to replicate best practice from places like yourselves in order to get it right from the outset. When we sat down to discuss the logistics around this some questions came up based on Barrington's suggesting that each time the LC1 is used it should be sharpened. Some of our wards will at times use the LC1 seven or eight times a shift. For these wards, taking into consideration a 48-hr turnaround by Barrington's to sharpen and sterilise them, this would mean that a high-risk ward would need more than 20 sets.*

**1. How many sets of cutters do you supply to each ward/area?**

We have a single set of ligature cutters which contain three different types of cutters (Pelican Ligature Knife, Ligature Cutting Hook, Ligature Scissors) for our AMH and OPMH wards and within the resuscitation crash bag

**2. Who is responsible for the blades at ward and trust level?**

These are checked at ward level by the clinical team and the resuscitation Bags items inclusive of ligature cutters are checked via our weekly MyCheck equipment check list

**3. Do you register each individual blade to each ward via the serial number? Or are they individually issued to staff?**

As above comment

**4. Do you have a central store where staff can exchange blades for sharp ones?**

The sharpness of the ligature cutter is so crucial that they are considered to be single-use items within the Trust and in the event of use the ligature cutter/ s and the ligature itself are kept for investigation purposes

**5. If so, which department is responsible for it?**

Health and Safety department and Meds management have spare stocks