Oxleas House

Avery Ward

2016 Ligature Audit

Action Plan and Picture Library

Oxleas
NHS Foundation Trust
Ligature Risk Overview

It is your responsibility to know the ligature risks in your working environment (ward, communal areas, day services) – this knowledge reduces the risk of the unthinkable happening to a patient in our care.

Two things are required for strangulation (non-exhaustive list of examples below)

**Ligature**

- Curtains
- Sheets/pillow cases
- Clothing
- Shoe laces
- Window seals
- Electrical cables
- Blind cords
- Bin liners

**Something to anchor the ligature to (Ligature Point)**

- Doors and handles, closers, hinges, frames
- Window, window handle, window vents, window restrictors
- Furniture – wardrobe doors, chairs, knobs and handles
- Electrical outlets not flush to the wall
- Light fittings
- Radiators, water pipes and other plumbing

Suicides are generally attempted is when the patient is alone. Be aware of patients in bedrooms, bathrooms/WC’s, TV Lounges, blind spots on the ward etc.

Oxleas have an annual ligature assessment to identify and deal with risks and is led by the Modern Matron. Estates & Facilities support the Modern Matron during and after assessments.

As of late 2016 Oxleas adopted a new ligature audit tool. All risks are rated and a course of action is decide ranging from removing the offending item, replacing it with something safer or perhaps supervising patient access to a particular area to ensure they aren’t alone.

Between annual assessments, a room or its contents may change so another assessment should be undertaken to record and apply a risk rating to the changes (think furniture, structural changes, sinks, shelving, hooks, fixings etc.).

**Your role?**

Ward staff are the eyes and ears of the organisation - you will generally be the first to spot a risk between annual assessments. If you see something that concerns you, bring it to the attention of the ward manager via email who will communicate it to the Modern Matron (out of hours, email it to the shift co-ordinator and DSN, cc’ing the modern matron and ward manager).

**Ligature Policy**

The policy is on the intranet. Type ‘Ligature’ in the search bar to see the policy and audit tools (policy under review as at October 2016).