

Estates and Facilities Alert

Ref: EFA/2015/006

Issued: 3rd December 2015

Fire door self-closing devices

Summary

A recent incident occurred where, during an electrical storm, the hospital power supply was momentarily interrupted causing fire doors held open on magnetic detents to be released. The closing doors struck an elderly patient as they passed through the doors, causing them to fall, and sustain a serious head injury, which ultimately contributed to their death two weeks later.

The fire doors were a set of double swing cross-corridor doors with floor mounted closing devices. The door self-closing device was compliant with the relevant British Standard, BS EN 1154, and the doors functioned as intended, albeit at the faster end of the standard, with the resultant consequence.

Action

A risk assessment should be undertaken to assess the appropriate closing time for **all** self-closing fire doors, taking account of the occupancy of the building.

Adjustment should be made, where appropriate, to lengthen the closing time to the higher end of the tolerance in patient access areas.

Action by

- Estates Managers

Deadlines for action

Actions underway: 31st December 2015

Actions complete: 31st March 2016

Device details

Self-closing devices fitted to fire doors in hospitals

Problem

Fire doors provided with self-closing mechanisms may close without warning in the event of a fire alarm activation or power interruption, and their closing speed may present a risk to occupants passing through such doors at the time. Whilst the fire doors in question were a set of double swing cross-corridor doors with floor mounted closing devices, the same risk could result from any type of door closing device. The door closing mechanism in question was compliant with the British Standard BS EN 1154 with the doors being subjected to regular pre-planned maintenance checks, and functioning as specified with a closing time of approximately 3 seconds.

The BS EN allows for a degree of flexibility in the closing time of fire doors. Whilst the closing time of the doors was within the tolerances of the BS EN, the fact that this type of incident can occur and has been documented means that it is now a foreseeable incident, and steps should be taken to reduce the likelihood of a similar incident.

Manufacturer contacts

Refer to relevant installation product manufacturer

Distribution

- Directors of Estates
- Estates Managers
- Fire Safety Managers/Advisers
- Governance and Risk Lead

Enquires

England

Enquires should quote reference number EFA/201X/XXX and be addressed to:

Mb-defects&failures@dh.gsi.gov.uk

The web-based D&F reporting system is managed by the NHS and Social Care Information Centre on behalf of the Department of Health. For further information on this system, including obtaining login details, please contact the **efm**-information Helpdesk. Tel: 0300 303 5678.

Reporting adverse incidents in England

Defects or failures should be reported on this system: <http://efm.hscic.gov.uk/>

Northern Ireland

Enquiries and adverse incident reports in Northern Ireland should be addressed to:

Northern Ireland Adverse Incident Centre, CMO Group,

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Tel: 028 9052 3868 Fax: 028 9052 3900 Email: NIAIC@dhsspsni.gov.uk

Web: <http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/hea/niaic.htm>

Reporting adverse incidents in Northern Ireland

Please report directly to NIAIC using the [forms on our website](#).

Scotland

Enquiries and adverse incident reports in Scotland should be addressed to:

Incident Reporting and Investigation Centre, Health Facilities Scotland, NHS National Services Scotland

Tel: 0131 275 7575 Fax: 0131 314 0722 Email: nss.irc@nhs.net

Reporting adverse incidents in Scotland

NHS Boards and Local Authorities in Scotland – [report to Health Facilities Scotland](#).

Contractors such as private hospitals carrying out NHS work and private care homes that accept social work funded clients – [report to Health Facilities Scotland](#).

Private facilities providing care to private clients report to the [Care Inspectorate](#) and [MHRA](#).

Wales

Enquiries and adverse incident reports in Wales should be addressed to:

Anthony Pitcher, Senior Fire Safety Advisor, NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership – Specialist Estates Services, 4th Floor, Companies House, Crown Way, Cardiff CF14 3UB

Tel: 029 2090 4120 E-mail: anthony.pitcher@Wales.nhs.uk