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Festive Season: IPC & Fire Safety Guidance 2026

At MFT, Christmas decorations and celebrations are a tradition in our hospitals and workplaces. However, it is important to maintain infection prevention and control (IPC) and fire safety standards during the festive season, especially with increased winter infections. Please see guidance below to ensure a safe and happy Christmas for all.

Christmas Trees

- Please use artificial flame-retardant trees or displays within healthcare premises. Written proof of fire resistance can be obtained from the suppliers.
- Please ensure clear demarcation on the ground below them so that they cannot easily be accessed and handled.
- Christmas trees can be placed in the clinical environment in offices, corridors, foyers, or reception areas (please avoid placing them in patient bays)
- Please ensure these are regularly inspected by the ward/departmental manager to ensure that they are clean and intact. Facilities teams will inspect displays in public areas.
- Please limit trees and display in very high-risk areas such as Intensive / Critical Care Units due to patients being immuno- compromised.
- If any outbreaks/periods of increased incidence of infection occur the Christmas trees will need to be removed from the area to support environmental decontamination.
- 'Real' Christmas trees can be used only in areas outside Trust buildings. Please consult with the Fire Safety Team who will be happy to help with placement guidance prior to installation.
- Please be mindful not to obstruct fire escape routes of firefighting equipment/signage when placing displays.

Nativity Displays

Nativity scenes can be displayed in atriums with clear demarcation to improve safety and prevent access to the public and patients.

Christmas Lights

- LED lighting is recommended, as these are safer, and must have a CE/UKCA mark.
- Please do not use rope/strings of bulbs for internal displays.
- All sets of Christmas tree / display lights must comply with the `Electrical Equipment Safety Regulations 1994` and BSEN 60598/2/20.
- Laser lights can be used in clinical areas; please ensure they are wiped down frequently and are included in regular cleaning activity. In the case of an outbreak, then these must be cleaned and removed from the area.
- Light sets must be tested by a competent electrician annually and be connected to the electrical supply through an RCD (Residual Current Device) to reduce the risk of fire.

Christmas Attire

Please remember, 'Bare Below the Elbows' and reflect a professional image to promote confidence in patients and visitors, taking into consideration the patient population and circumstances.



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Ceiling / Wall Decorations

- Please use flame retardant decorations e.g., foil type decorations.
- Paper, cotton wool, plastic, and other combustible materials are not flame retardant.
- Please do not decorate fire doors with displays as this affects their fire rating.
- Please do not impinge any fire door operation with displays.
- If there is any infection outbreak, then decorations will need to be discarded, please do not use ceiling decorations which cannot be cleaned.

Raffles

The charity team is here to help you raise funds for your hospital with your raffle or receipt of any gifts from external organizations please contact charity.office@mft.nhs.uk or call 0161 276 4522

Visitors (VIPs, Bands, Displays)

Musicians and band displays are welcome on site.

Buffets and Christmas gatherings

Please hold these in non-patient areas only and avoid during any infection outbreaks to prevent any cross transmission.

Please see the link below for all MFT fire safety protocols

https://intranet.mft.nhs.uk/content/corporate-services/estates-and-facilities/Fire/Fire-Safety-Protocols