



Public – To be published on the Trust external website

Title: Telephone Usage Policy

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1 Introduction

This document explains the Trust's policy in relation to the usage of Telephony within the Trust.

The Trust recognises the importance of efficient, reliable telephone systems in providing patient care and other key business activities.

It also recognises that, as a resource, telephone systems are often open to abuse from both internal and external sources.

1.1 Strategic goal 1: To co-create a great experience for patients, carers and families

By ensuring the Trust has a Telephone usage policy, it provides staff details on how Trust telephony is to be used, including client/patient telephone usage (where devices are provided by the Trust).

1.2 Strategic goal 2: To co-create a great experience for our colleagues

This policy ensures that colleagues understand the type of telephony devices available for their role and are provided with guidance on the management and use of the devices. This will support staff in carrying out their roles effectively.

1.3 Strategic goal 3: To be a great partner

Telephony services are key to how the Trust communicates and the Trust relies on its suppliers to help support and provide these services. This policy provides suppliers with details on how the Trust uses telephony services, enabling them to get a better understanding of the Trust and to help tailor solutions to support requirements.

1.4 Trust Values and behaviours

Ensuring staff understand how to use telephony services and the requirements the Trust expects, helps us to evidence how we live our values of respect, compassion and responsibility in everything we do. An example is the policy clearly states that the Trust does not expect or require staff to use mobiles whilst driving.

2 Why we need this policy

2.1 Purpose

This policy seeks to ensure that appropriate, safe and cost-effective use is made of its telephone systems by:

- Ensuring staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities using Trust telephone systems.
- Ensuring staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities towards clients/patients using Trust telephone systems.
- Ensuring access is available to telephone systems for staff to carry out their duties.
- Ensuring access is available to telephone systems for client/patient use.
- Ensuring staff have clear guidance on personal use and other prohibited uses of Trust telephones, i.e., access to telephone systems.
- Complying with legislation:
 - The Data Protection Act 1998 (Data Protection Act 2018 (GDPR) from 25 May 2018)
 - The Human Rights Act 1998
 - Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000
 - The Telecommunications Regulations 2000
 - Road Traffic Act 1988
 - The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2003

2.2 Objectives

By adhering to this policy, the Trust is trying to ensure:

- Staff understand their corporate and legal responsibility when using Trust telephones.
- The use of Trust Telephones for personal use is minimised.
- The use of Trust telephones for client/patient use is clear.
- Staff are clear on the monitoring that takes place on Trust telephones.
- Efficiency of telephony usage is improved.
- The Trust can meet any legal requirements in terms of monitoring telephony systems.

- Call costs are kept to a minimum.
- Staff comply with legislation relating to driving and the use of mobile phones.

3 Scope

3.1 Who this policy applies to

Trust staff who have access to Trust telephone devices including agency staff and others who are undertaking business for the Trust e.g., Volunteers.

This policy applies to all forms of Trust telephony that includes:

- Fixed line phones.
- Mobile phones.
- Smart phones.
- Client/Patient phones.

This policy does **not** cover:

- The procurement or disposal of telephone handsets and systems: this is covered in a separate policy.
- The use of telephones by its visitors including systems provided by the Trust for this purpose i.e., payphones.
- The use of internet calling such as Teams/Skype

3.2 Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Digital Asset and Configuration Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of mobile and smart phone suppliers, review of available mobile and smart phone handsets.
Network Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and provision of fixed lines and systems
Digital and Data Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis and monitoring of phone usage
Finance Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payment of bills

Line Managers	<p>Ensure appropriate use of telephony by staff and report any abuse.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure staff who leave the Trust’s employment return their Trust telephone in good working order.
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comply with policy
Digital and Data Service Desk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 1st line support for faults
Information Asset Owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep information up to date on assets
External Suppliers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply telephony equipment, provide billing details

4 Policy

4.1 Types of telephony

The Trust recognises that the use of telephony is essential to support day to day business. To meet this need, the Trust provides access to telephones for staff and its clients through a variety of methods including:

- Fixed telephone handsets
- Wireless telephone handsets
- DECT telephone handsets
- Mobile phones
- Smart phones
- Soft phones
- Conference Phones

4.2 Ownership

All telephone equipment provided by the Trust including mobile and smart phones remains the property of the Trust.



An employee who leaves the Trust's employment and fails to return their telephone to the Trust is responsible for the handset, any calls and line rental incurred until the telephone is returned and/or disconnected.

4.3 Business usage

This is classified as any call made or received that relates to Trust business.

4.4 Health and safety

Current evidence suggests mobile phones are safe to use, but devices should be used in accordance to the manufacturer's guidelines, especially their safety information.

4.5 Private usage

A mobile phone or smart phone that has been provided for dedicated use by an individual can be used for private usage **if the use of a personal phone is not possible**. The cost of calls will be recovered – see Telephone Private Usage and Payment Procedure.

For non-mobile telephone systems, staff should follow the guidance in the following section 4.6.

4.6 Making private calls



Staff will sometimes need to make a personal telephone call at work. They must use their own mobile telephone whenever possible. On rare occasions, this might not be possible, and the use of the Trust telephone is unavoidable. This use **is the exception** rather than the norm.



If using a Trust telephone to make a personal call while at work, staff **must not**:

- Make repeated personal calls
- Make calls to premium rate telephone lines
- Make international personal calls

4.7 Misuse/fraud



Any fraudulent application, abuse, misuse or excessive use of Trust Telephony could result in disciplinary action. This is without prejudice to any criminal action that the organisation may deem necessary. It is the responsibility of individuals to ensure they comply with this policy and report and misuse.

Any misuse should be reported to the Digital and Data service desk, and this may be further reported to the NHS Counter Fraud service.

4.8 Safeguarding equipment

All staff are responsible for safeguarding Trust telephone equipment and should take care over the storage and handling of telephone handsets especially mobile devices.

4.9 Telephone use and driving



Staff must **at all times** comply with the law when using a mobile phone while driving.

The Trust does not expect or require that staff use their Trust phone while driving, with or without hands free equipment. The Trust will not reimburse fines or other penalties which staff incur as a result of being prosecuted under the relevant legislation.

Staff should also not use a Trust phone whilst in control of other vehicles such as cycles, motorcycles and mopeds.

4.10 Personal Identification numbers (PIN)

All mobile and smart phones must be configured with a personal identification number (PIN) to protect from un-authorized access.

4.11 Call restrictions

The Trust as standard blocks certain numbers, if you have a business requirement to dial a blocked number please see the removing call restriction procedure.

4.12 Making reverse-charge calls

Staff should not accept reverse-charge calls, unless they have prior agreement from their line manager.

4.13 Making international calls

International dialling must be for business use only and calls kept to a minimum. Before making an international call, staff are advised to check that international dialling is available on the telephone before making the call, and if necessary, follow the removing call restrictions procedure.

4.14 Premium rate numbers

Avoid dialling premium rate numbers. If it is necessary, use a fixed line telephone and not a mobile/smartphone.

4.15 Directory services

Use web-based services where possible to avoid costs of directory services/enquires, if you must use direct enquiry never asked to be put through to the number.

4.16 Data Usage

To make best use of smartphones, data must be enabled. This allows connection to information such as email, and also for management of the device. Where possible connect to local Wi-Fi, rather than use 3G/4G/5G, all Trust Smartphones are configured so they will automatically connect to TEWVNET, but some manual configuration will be required to connect to other Wi-Fi networks, such as your home Wi-Fi.

4.17 Communicating with Service Users

The document 'Communicating with Service Users Best Practice Guidance' advises on different media for communicating with service users depending on their preferences and accessibility needs, this includes advice on the use of text messages and also updating their communication preferences with their PARIS record.

This procedure covers, phone calls, voice mail and text messages.

4.18 Voicemail and answer phones

Where voice mail services exist, staff may apply for an account to be activated for their extension.

On sites where this is not possible, answer phones may be purchased locally by the department. In both instances, please follow the IT and Telephony Equipment Procurement Procedure.

4.19 Emergency calls i.e. 999 and 112

All Trust phones have the ability to contact the emergency services; even mobiles if they are locked with a pin code will allow emergency calls to be made. This covers calls to both 999 and 112.

4.20 Working from home

You must use your Trust provided telephone i.e. mobile phone or smart phone when working from home.

4.21 Working Abroad

If you have a requirement to work abroad, then you will need to log a call with the Digital and Data service desk, to request your mobile phone number is configured to allow data roaming.

Please note that where possible use wi-fi calling as data roaming charges are expensive and vary from country to country.

Please where possible use the local wi-fi for accessing any data services from your smartphone or your laptop. If this is not possible then you can tether your laptop to your smartphone, and utilise the data provided by the Trust, please note this is classed as data roaming and will incur high charges.

Please note accessing voicemail, using text messages and phone calls will incur a charge.

The form: **Undertaking for Staff Overseas using Trust equipment** found in Appendix 3 must be completed by all staff who are required to work abroad.

4.22 Text messages

Text messages are permitted for business use and must not include Patient Identifiable Information.

Text Messages should not be used to pass information that is required immediately as there can be delays in delivery. The Trust's mobile tariff includes text messages, however sending some text messages may incur a cost

For communicating with service users please refer to section 4.16

4.22 Reporting a fault

If you have an issue with your telephone, contact the Digital and Data Service desk, if the issue requires a replacement device then the service may need to pay for the replacement handset.

4.23 Lost or stolen telephones



Contact the digital and data service desk and raise an incident on the Trust's incident reporting system if you lose your Trust mobile, smart phone or any other Trust telephone handset.

The telephone provider will be contacted to block the telephone and prevent future and unauthorised use.

Failure to report a lost telephone may result in any incurred costs being passed to the user.

It is the responsibility of the user's department to pay for the cost of a replacement handset, if lost or stolen.

4.24 Telephone directory

The Trust does not have a single telephone directory; directory information can be found on the Trust's Intranet or within NHS mail. It is responsibility of individuals to ensure their contact details are kept up to date.

4.25 Monitoring

The monitoring of telecommunications is regulated by the Telecommunications (Lawful business practice) (Interception of Communications) Regulations 2000. Trust staff must therefore be mindful of the fact that Telephone calls may be monitored and/or audited from time to time.

Staff must be aware that the Trust receives detailed information from its telephone providers, and it is possible to analyse this information to show all calls made from a particular extension.

4.26 Audits

Regular audits of the use of telephony will be undertaken and exceptional usage investigated. The devices are the property of the Trust, and the Trust has the right to interactively or remotely audit any device. This may also include forensic analysis.

4.27 Client/ patient telephony usage

- Clients/patients must pay for their own phone calls. Payment will be made via pre-paid cards which are available for purchase:
 - via Cardea
 - from a Post Office
 - from a patient card vending machine where installed (larger hospitals)
 - from some cashiers where based within a Trust hospital site

- Staff must **NOT** allow clients/patients to use Trust corporate handsets

- It is the responsibility of managers to choose the appropriate client/ patient handset for their environment, from the range of Trust standardised phone types available

- Details of the current range of Trust approved client/patient and corporate handsets is available on the intranet.

4.28 Call Forwarding

Mobiles/Smartphones – Call forwarding should only be used as a temporary measure when circumstances require it i.e., poor mobile signal and re-directed to land line. Permanent call forwarding should not be used. Where this is found to be the case the mobile/smartphone will be suspended.

Land Lines – In normal circumstances this should also be a temporary measure, however there may be cases such as a change in service number, where longer forwarding is required and in these cases the Digital and Data Department should be contacted.

Any call forwarding if not monitored, or changed, has a risk that messages from patients may not be picked up by staff in a timely manner.

5 Definitions

Term	Definition
Fixed Telephone	A telephone handset that has a wired connection, limiting where it can be used.

Wireless Telephone	A cordless phone that can connect to the Trust's Flexi Net wireless network, they only work where Flexinet is present.
DECT Telephone	Digital Enhanced Cordless Telecommunications (DECT) is used for cordless phones; these telephones will have a docking station that is used to charge the phone when not in use. The phones have limited range depending on the location of the base stations they are associated with.
Mobile Phone	A device that can make and receive telephone calls over a radio link whilst moving around a wide geographic area. In this case it is telephone calls and text messages only.
Smart Phone	Similar to a mobile phone, but it has added functionality including the ability to connect to the internet.
Soft Phone	This is software program for making telephone calls over the internet or Trust data network using a computer.
PIN Number	Personal Identification Number (PIN) is a secret numeric password that is used to authenticate to a telephone handset.
Voice Mail	A computer based system that is linked to a telephone system, that allows people to exchange personal voice messages.
Text Messages	Is the ability to send and receive electronic messages between two or more mobile or smart phones.
Flexi Net	The Trust's wireless network system, only available in some Trust properties.
TEWV Net	The Trust's wireless network system, used by Trust Smartphones.
Wi-Fi	A facility allowing computers, smartphones and other devices to connect to the internet or communicate with one another wirelessly, within a particular area.
3G/4G/5G	Mobile communications standards that allow mobile and smartphones to access the internet – 4G offers faster speeds than 3G and 5G even faster
Data Roaming	The ability to use other phone providers networks, most used when abroad. Data Roaming carries additional charges, these vary from country to country.

6 Related documents

The following procedures should be read with this policy as they relate directly to it:

- IT & Telephony Procurement, Re-assignment & Disposal Policy
- Removing Call Restrictions Procedure
- Communicating with Service Users Best Practice Guidance

7 How this policy will be implemented

- This policy will be published on the Trust’s intranet and external website.
- Line managers will disseminate this policy to all Trust employees through a line management briefing.
- All Staff must read this policy.

7.1 Implementation action plan

Activity	Expected outcome	Timescale	Responsibility	Means of verification/ measurement
N/A				

7.2 Training needs analysis

Staff/Professional Group	Type of Training	Duration	Frequency of Training
All staff	Familiarisation with policy	30 minutes	On commencing employment with the Trust

8 How the implementation of this policy will be monitored

Number	Auditable Standard/Key Performance Indicators	Frequency/Method/Person Responsible	Where results and any Associate Action Plan will be reported to, implemented and monitored; (this will usually be via the relevant Governance Group).
1	Monitoring Legislation changes	Digital and Data Asset Team.	Any changes required will be done as part of a procedure review.
2	Monitoring of Data Usage	Monthly, Digital and Data Asset Team	Quarterly reports to the Digital and Data management meeting

9 References

[Data protection: The Data Protection Act](#)

[Human Rights Act 1998 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

[Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

[The Telecommunications \(Lawful Business Practice\) \(Interception of Communications\) Regulations 2000 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

[Road Traffic Act 1988 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

[The Road Vehicles \(Construction and Use\) \(Amendment\) \(No. 4\) Regulations 2003 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

10 Document control (external)

To be recorded on the policy register by Policy Coordinator

Date of approval	15 March 2023
Next review date	15 March 2026
This document replaces	IT-0022-v4.1 Telephone Usage Policy
This document was approved by	Digital and Data Management Meeting 21 February 2023
This document was approved by	Digital Performance and Assurance Group 01 March 2023
This document was ratified by	Management Group
This document was ratified	15 March 2023
An equality analysis was completed on this policy on	13 January 2023
Document type	Public
FOI Clause (Private documents only)	n/a

Change record

Version	Date	Amendment details	Status
1.0	23-Sep-09	New policy	Withdrawn
2.0	15-Jan-14	Renamed Telephone Usage Policy to include all types of telephony. Reformatted onto new template	Withdrawn
2.1	02-Jul-14	Minor amendment to add section 3.26 Client/Patient Telephony Usage	Withdrawn
3	21-Nov-16	Removed 3.16 Best Practice and replaced with 3.16 Data Usage Updated Definitions Minor spelling errors corrected, Section 3.15 re-worded	Withdrawn

		Section 3.26 Call Forwarding added	
4	14-Feb-18		Withdrawn
4.1	24-Jul-19	Policy review 3.2 removed “ <i>NHS Mail provides a free to use text message service and this should be used where possible</i> ”	Withdrawn
4.1	Jul 2020	Review date extended 6 months	Withdrawn
4.2	15 Mar 2023	<p>Full review with minor changes and clarifications, including:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated to new Format; • Job titles updated; • Add section on working abroad 4.20 and re-numbered rest of section 4, Data Roaming added to Definitions; • Information Dept changed to Digital and Data; • Added Communicating with Services users at 4.17 and re-numbered rest of document accordingly; • Added a cost 4.22 reporting faults, that if a replacement handset is required, the service may need to fund; • 4.28 Call Forwarding, added wording around risk if not monitored messages from patients may not be picked up in a timely manner. 	Ratified

Appendix 1 - Equality Analysis Screening Form

Please note: The Equality Analysis Policy and Equality Analysis Guidance can be found on the policy pages of the intranet

Section 1	Scope
Name of service area/directorate/department	Finance and Information
Title	Keith l'Anson – IT Contracts and Asset Manager
Type	Policy
Geographical area covered	Trust Wide
Aims and objectives	To ensure staff are clear on the use of Trust Telephony.
Start date of Equality Analysis Screening	09 Jan 2023
End date of Equality Analysis Screening	13 Jan 2023

Section 2	Impacts
Who does the Policy, Service, Function, Strategy, Code of practice, Guidance, Project or Business plan benefit?	All Trust staff
Will the Policy, Service, Function, Strategy, Code of practice, Guidance, Project or Business plan impact negatively on any of the protected characteristic groups?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race (including Gypsy and Traveller) NO • Disability (includes physical, learning, mental health, sensory and medical disabilities) NO • Sex (Men, women and gender neutral etc.) NO

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender reassignment (Transgender and gender identity) NO • Sexual Orientation (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Heterosexual etc.) NO • Age (includes, young people, older people – people of all ages) NO • Religion or Belief (includes faith groups, atheism and philosophical beliefs) NO • Pregnancy and Maternity (includes pregnancy, women who are breastfeeding and women on maternity leave) NO • Marriage and Civil Partnership (includes opposite and same sex couples who are married or civil partners) NO • Armed Forces (includes serving armed forces personnel, reservists, veterans and their families) NO
Describe any negative impacts	Some phone systems are not accessible currently to some deaf patients, work is currently in progress to resolve some of these systems i.e. Crisis services.
Describe any positive impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and others undertaking business for the Trust will understand their corporate and legal responsibility when using Trust telephones; • Efficiency of telephony usage is improved; • Staff comply with legislation relating to driving and the use of mobile phones. • Staff who require specialist handsets/equipment will be assessed via the access to work procedure

Section 3	Research and involvement
What sources of information have you considered? (e.g. legislation, codes of	<p>The following was considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data Protection Act - Human Rights Act

practice, best practice, nice guidelines, CQC reports or feedback etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Road Legislation regarding using mobiles in vehicles - Telecommunications Regulations
Have you engaged or consulted with service users, carers, staff and other stakeholders including people from the protected groups?	No
If you answered Yes above, describe the engagement and involvement that has taken place	
If you answered No above, describe future plans that you may have to engage and involve people from different groups	Groups will be involved in future plans to review the Trusts use of various telephony as part of wider work to review how overall service is provided.

Section 4	Training needs
As part of this equality analysis have any training needs/service needs been identified?	No
Describe any training needs for Trust staff	Read available guidance relating to specific handsets
Describe any training needs for patients	Ward staff may need to show patients how to use Trust provided patient telephones
Describe any training needs for contractors or other outside agencies	None

Check the information you have provided and ensure additional evidence can be provided if asked

Appendix 2 – Approval checklist

	Title of document being reviewed:	Yes / No / Not applicable	Comments
1.	Title		
	Is the title clear and unambiguous?	Yes	
	Is it clear whether the document is a guideline, policy, protocol or standard?	Yes	
2.	Rationale		
	Are reasons for development of the document stated?	Yes	
3.	Development Process		
	Are people involved in the development identified?	Yes	
	Has relevant expertise has been sought/used?	Yes	
	Is there evidence of consultation with stakeholders and users?	Yes	
	Have any related documents or documents that are impacted by this change been identified and updated?	Yes	
4.	Content		
	Is the objective of the document clear?	Yes	
	Is the target population clear and unambiguous?	Yes	
	Are the intended outcomes described?	Yes	
	Are the statements clear and unambiguous?	Yes	
5.	Evidence Base		
	Is the type of evidence to support the document identified explicitly?	Yes	
	Are key references cited?	Yes	
	Are supporting documents referenced?	Yes	
6.	Training		
	Have training needs been considered?	Yes	
	Are training needs included in the document?	Yes	

	Title of document being reviewed:	Yes / No / Not applicable	Comments
7.	Implementation and monitoring		
	Does the document identify how it will be implemented and monitored?	Yes	
8.	Equality analysis		
	Has an equality analysis been completed for the document?	Yes	
	Have Equality and Diversity reviewed and approved the equality analysis?	Yes	
9.	Approval		
	Does the document identify which committee/group will approve it?	Yes	
10.	Publication		
	Has the policy been reviewed for harm?	Yes	
	Does the document identify whether it is private or public?	Yes	public
	If private, does the document identify which clause of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 applies?	n/a	

Appendix 3 – Undertaking for staff overseas using Trust equipment

1. I understand that TEWV is allowing me to use my Trust supplied equipment from somewhere other than the UK. In my case, the country will be **<insert country here>**
2. I agree to maintain the physical security of this equipment at all times. This includes keeping the equipment secure and out of sight of others when not in use, and not allowing any other person access to this equipment.
3. I also recognise that I also need to transport the equipment securely (e.g. in the boot of a car) and must not leave it unattended at any time when on public transport.
4. I also agree not to store written notes with Person Identifiable Information (PII) or business sensitive information within the laptop bag.
5. I will also undertake any updates as necessary which come though to my equipment to maintain their security. I will also maintain compliance with Mandatory and Statutory training.
6. I understand that I must only use the supplied Virtual Private Network (VPN) software on the laptop, namely Always On, to connect to the TEWV network. I also understand that I must remain vigilant in terms of internet browsing and opening emails.
7. I also recognise that my access may be restricted/controlled in certain circumstances, and in line with the Trust Disciplinary policy, that access may be totally removed.
8. I accept the proviso that access may also be restricted/removed should the UK Government enforce restrictions or are made aware of foreign governments controlling and restricting access to websites, bandwidth and access to the World Wide Web/Internet in general.
9. I understand that using my Trust smartphone outside of Europe Zone 1 will incur charges for the Trust and will only use my Trust smartphone for Trust business when necessary.

I understand that when requested, I must return the equipment to TEWV in a secure and appropriate way after discussion with my manager/supervisor as to the best way possible.

** Where applicable – It is my intention to return to the UK to work on **<insert date here>**

Staff member Print name:

Signature:

Date:

Manager Print name:

Signature:

Date:

[World map of encryption laws and policies | Global Partners Digital \(gp-digital.org\)](https://www.gp-digital.org/)