

Guidewires, Introducers and Stiffeners - Full Clinical Guideline

Reference no.: CG-TRUST/2023/001

Guidelines for the Use of Guidewires in clinical procedures

Please refer to the Trust guideline or SOP for the procedure you are carrying out. This guideline is for use alongside all procedures whereby Guidewires (or similar) are used.

1. Introduction

Never Events are serious incidents that are entirely preventable because guidance or safety recommendations providing strong systemic protective barriers are available at a national level and should have been implemented by all healthcare providers. One such event is an inadvertently retained guidewire or introducer (or similar e.g. stiffener) following a procedure. Despite numerous published evidence of guidewire retention, there is no national guidance on management of guidewires – guidewire removal is currently reliant on the memory of the operator.

In the interests of readability, the term 'Guidewire' is used throughout this Guideline, but relates to, and not limited to Guidewires, Introducer, Stiffeners or other similar object that is used in any surgical or invasive procedure.

2. Aim and Purpose

This guideline summarises the procedure for guidewire management

3. Keywords

NG tube, drains, ascitic drains, central line, cardiac catheter, introducer, stiffener and guidewire.

4. Key Responsibilities/Duties

Senior Clinical Staff: Ensure that staff are aware of trust guideline and staff should have appropriate training and supervision on the use of the device they are using, prior to carrying out the procedure.

Doctors: Aware of trust guideline and competent on the use of the device using, prior to carrying out procedure.

Matrons and Ward Sisters: are responsible for ensuring this guideline is disseminated to clinical staff in their areas of responsibility and staff should have appropriate training and supervision on the use of the device they are using, prior to carrying out the procedure. Ensure any untoward incident that occurs in relation to the standards laid down in this guideline are reported on the Trust's electronic incident reporting system (Datix) and investigated.

Individual staff: Adhere to and follow Trust guideline and competent on the use of the device using, prior to carrying out procedure.

Report any untoward incident that occurs in relation to the standards laid down in this guideline on the Trust's electronic incident reporting system (Datix).

5. Guidelines

Required Actions for all procedures using a guidewire, stiffener, introducer or similar

Please use a Guidewire/introducer removal sticker to document practice

- Two person process (operator and observer);
- Visual confirmation of guidewire removal and completeness by both persons;
- Verbal confirmation of guidewire removal and completeness by both persons; and
- Documentary confirmation of guidewire removal by both persons

If unable to remove, please document and discuss with a senior clinician.

If no sticker available, please document the procedure, including the actions above.

Exception for NG Feeding Tubes – complete Trust NG Feeding tube insertion sticker documenting as above re: removal of guidewire.

Exemption for Interventional Radiology where guidewire removal is recorded on the Interventional Radiology Procedure Record.

Trust Guidelines

There are a significant number of procedures carried out in the Trust whereby a guidewire/introducer (or similar) is used. This guideline relates to **ALL** procedures where a flexible guidewire is used, in any setting or location across the Trust.

Following any procedure where a guidewire is used, visual and verbal confirmation of removal and completeness needs to be recorded in the patients' medical notes – either via local computerised system, a patient sticker or local checklist agreed by Patient Safety. The patient sticker, (see Appendix A) should be completed and fixed in the patient records. This does not replace the WHO Surgical Checklist.

All staff should have appropriate training and supervision on the use of the device they are using, prior to carrying out the procedure.

6. References

Never Events List January 2018, NHS England, January 2018. Available at:
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/2018-Never-Events-List-updated-February-2021.pdf>

Documentation Controls

Development of Guideline:	Reviewed – Patient Safety Lead Nurse
Consultation with:	Medical Director Quality and Safety
Approved By:	Trustwide Guideines Group – November 2023

Review Date:	December 2026
Key Contact:	Lisa Lamb

7. Appendices

Appendix A

Trust Sticker

Guidewire / Introducer / Stiffener Removal		
Patient: _____	Hos No: _____	
Date: _____	Ward/Area: _____	
Procedure: _____		
	Operator Initials	Observer Initials
Verbal Confirmation of Guidewire Removal		
Visual Confirmation of Complete Guidewire following removal		
	Operator	Observer
Sign		
Print		
Designation		