

## Safety Huddles – Rules & Standardised Script

### The Culture:

Safety Huddles are designed with the following specific aims:

- Optimised safety through elimination of avoidable harm
- Greater empowerment and accountability of all staff
- Enhanced sense of community and intra-professional trust and respect
- Improved efficiency and cost savings

Their overarching principle is in fostering a collective Situation Awareness for Everyone (SAFE). Everyone means a full range of clinical and non-clinical ward staff members present on the wards on any given day.

The Huddle's primary outcome is to establish shared decision-making for every patient with regards risks and immediate escalation in the anticipated event of deterioration.

Many studies have shown that Huddles improve patient safety. They are everyone's responsibility.

### The Rules:

In order for Safety Huddles to run reliably, efficiently and effectively the following ground rules must be strictly adhered to:

1. **The Huddles always occur in the same place.** This must be as prominent and as central to the ward as possible, encouraging attendance and demonstrating their clinical significance to patients and families.
2. **The Huddles commence on time.** A clock is in sight at the location of the Huddle in order that there is clear agreement in this regard. The Huddle is not delayed until members arrive. There is an expectation that attendees are present 2 minutes *before* the scheduled start time.
3. **The Huddle is time limited.** A maximum of 10 minutes is taken to discuss all patients on the ward. Time is kept by the member of staff leading the Huddle.
4. **The Huddle is protected.** All teams visiting the ward should be aware of the Huddle's occurrence. No interruption to the process is permitted.
5. **Attendance is monitored at each Huddle.** This is not a punitive measure but one by which we can be assured the Huddle is maximally effective.
6. **Delegation is essential in an emergency.** If a staff member is unable to attend, due to an emergency, they must send a delegate, who is familiar with the Huddle structure. This delegate must be able to provide the same quality and depth of information as the staff member who delegated them.
7. **Everyone's contribution is equally valuable.** This acknowledges the importance of multiple perspectives.

### Attendees:

Mandatory Attendees are:

- Nurse in Charge
- Named 'bedside' Nurse for each respective patient, or their delegate
- Medical representation from all clinical specialties with ward patients

Any other staff member who has identified concerns about patient safety is encouraged to attend the huddle.

## Safety Huddle Script

### Nurse in charge

Good morning/afternoon/evening, I am ..... and I will be leading this Huddle. We have a maximum of 10 minutes to discuss all of our patients.

We will run through all of our patients in bed order. For each patient the bedside nurse will present their CEWS score. If the CEWS is higher than 2 or the patient is a “watcher” the nurse will explain why. We will discuss them as a group so that everyone is aware of the management plan and any escalation that needs to happen

### Run through each patient on the ward and ask...

1. What is their CEWS?
2. If CEWS >2 or patient is a “Watcher”:
  - a) Why is the patient a high CEWS / “Watcher”?
  - b) What is the management plan?
  - c) Who should their care be escalated to?

### **What is a “Watcher”?**

The idea of the watcher system is to identify patients who do not have a high CEWS score but who the team feel may still be at risk of getting sicker. Some examples of this are:

1. One of the team has a “gut feeling” about the patient that is not reflected in the CEWS score
2. The family have expressed concern that something isn’t right
3. There are communication concerns with the patient’s care
4. The patients who are on unfamiliar or high risk treatments

*[Once the team have run through every patient...]*

### Nurse in charge

Does anybody wish to identify any other concerns which have not been raised, or offer a different perspective on anything we’ve discussed?

Thanks for attending. The Huddle is now finished.