

Lithium Battery Fire Safety: Protect Our Patients, Protect Our Staff

Lithium-ion batteries pose a significant and rapidly escalating fire risk in NHS environments. These batteries can ignite without warning, producing intense heat and toxic smoke that spreads with devastating speed — threatening lives, patients, and critical infrastructure.

Rapid Fire Spread

Thermal runaway can occur in seconds — intense heat and toxic smoke spread immediately, posing a direct threat to life in enclosed ward environments.

Device Danger

E-scooters, e-bikes, personal electronics, and medical devices all carry risk. Larger battery capacity means greater fire potential. *Any* rechargeable device is a hazard.

NEVER

Charge unapproved devices in patient areas or anywhere near piped or cylinder oxygen supplies.

REPORT

Any battery that appears damaged, swollen, or is generating heat must be reported immediately to your line manager and estates team.

FOLLOW

Strict Trust protocols for the storage, charging, and safe disposal of all lithium-ion batteries at all times.

BE AWARE

Fires develop rapidly. Know your local fire evacuation plan and RACE (Rescue/Remove, Alarm/Alert, Confine/Contain & Extinguish/Evacuate) procedure — every second counts.

☐ If you discover a battery fire: activate the nearest fire alarm call point, evacuate the immediate area, and dial 300 immediately. Do NOT attempt to extinguish a lithium battery fire yourself, cover with a fire blanket if it is safe to do so to contain any potential thermal runaway.