

- The treating team, who has carried out the assessment, must document the request for a special observer for a patient in the clinical notes and inform nursing administration of this request. Discontinuation of the special observation should also be documented.



- Best practice advises that the special observer role should rotate among nursing/care staff every two hours. Arrange breaks to facilitate this rotation where possible. (It would be beneficial for purpose of assessment if a senior nurse or member of regular nursing team can cover special observer's breaks.)

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Created by the CNSps in the Psychiatry service

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	<p><b>Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin, Dublin 12</b></p> <p><i>.....where children's health comes first</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>GUIDELINES ON SPECIAL OBSERVATIONS FOR SENIOR NURSES ON DUTY</b></p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Our Lady's Children's Hospital Crumlin Dublin 12</b></p>	

## GUIDELINES ON SPECIAL OBSERVATIONS FOR SENIOR NURSES ON DUTY

Special observation for a patient may be indicated due to acute medical, behavioural or emotional needs. This request should be assessed on an individual patient basis as required.

### **Some examples:**

- Drug-related confusion, Delirium
- Drug-induced / organic psychosis
- Disinhibited, impulsive behaviour
- Disturbed, distressed behaviour
- Patients who have attempted suicide and have ongoing suicidal ideation and / or intent
- Patients at risk of harming self or others



- The special observer should receive a handover report regarding the patient from the senior nurse on the ward and

from the special observer going off duty to ensure continuity of care.



- The senior nurse or delegated nurse is expected to link in with the special observer regularly throughout the shift.
- Ensure the special observer reads and follows the relevant guidelines - *'Guidelines on Special Observations for Nurses and Carers'*.
- When a non-nursing staff member is in the special observer role, the allocated ward nurse, must review and countersign the report sheet for non-nursing staff and file it with the nursing notes. The allocated ward nurse on duty is required to document care in the nursing notes also.
- The patient and their parents / guardian must be given an explanation, by a member of the treating team or the senior nurse on duty, for the reason for special observation and what this will involve.



- The issue of confidentiality should be addressed.
- Patients are expected to be on the ward at all times. All absences from the ward should be planned and agreed with nursing staff / treating teams. If the patient is leaving the ward, they must have an appropriate level of supervision. Consideration must be given to the supervision of all vulnerable children.
- The senior nurse should ensure that special observer is competent to accompany patient off ward, if permitted.