

Issue: Hoffman Rescue Tool

Raised by: Mark Russell (former HCM, Papunya), Tiwi Health Service and others

Background: Requests to have a tool that enabled quick and effective release of victims in hanging attempts.

Discussion: Initial discussion centred around the need to have a “cut down knife” available for staff attending hangings. However, as suitable instruments were investigated it became apparent that appropriate tools that were available also had the merit of being a useful tool in other trauma situation i.e. suitable for cutting seatbelts etc.

The tool cannot be used as a weapon to slash or stab yet it will safely and rapidly cut all clothing and materials including leather rope or tubing. Its unique design enable it to be used to cut items from close to the skin without the danger of cutting the client. It may not succeed in cutting metal cord, however no similar tool appears to be available that would safely handle metal cord.

Consultation: Within Best Practice group, ex RANs, suppliers, Ahousaht Health Service (Canada)

References: Internet searches regarding suitable rescue tools

Outcome: The Hoffman Rescue Tool is the most suitable instrument identified.

An order has been placed centrally and one instrument will be distributed to each Remote Health Branch health centre. An amendment to the standard emergency equipment lists will be made and circulated with the tool.

