

**Issue: Essential Checks Frequency**

Raised by: Annette Cotterill. Milingimbi Health Centre

Background: Request for a reduction in frequency of routine checking of some of the standard emergency equipment. This is based on the use of emergency equipment in some health centres being infrequent.

Discussion: The Best Practice Group acknowledges the task of checking emergency equipment is a time consuming exercise.

Checking of equipment is well recognised as being important for the two main purposes of familiarising staff with equipment, and the providing the moral and legal assurance that emergency equipment is ready for use. Delegating the task of checking equipment to ensure all individual staff are participating in checking the equipment ensures the familiarity with equipment. While recognising the imposition of extra workload in busy health centres, the Best Practice Group does not believe it can be recommended to reduce the interval of checking emergency equipment.

On review of the Essential Checks, it is recognised that some of the equipment/kits may not be used to deliver emergency care (i.e. Trauma Site Extra Bag) or may be used in a "controlled emergency care / procedure" fashion (i.e. Chest Drain Kit and Obstetric Kit). Re-consideration has been given to the frequency of checking these kits, and it is recommended that checking of this equipment become monthly or on an after use basis, then sealed to prevent "borrowing" from the kits.

Changes to the Quality Return – Essential Check Forms should be made to reflect this, however, to reduce wastage of currently supplied forms this change would occur in the production of next year's forms. For the remainder of 2006, it will be acceptable for Health Centre staff to simply check the above mentioned kits on a monthly basis

Consultation: Within Best Practice Group.

References: Nil

Outcome: Checking of equipment on the Essential Checks Form to continue on a weekly or daily basis as per the form with the exception of:

- Trauma Site Extra Bag,
- Chest Drain Bag,
- Obstetric Kit.

These three kits are to be checked on a monthly basis (or after use) and sealed by placing a signed and dated strip of masking tape across the zip. It must be sealed in such a way to identify if the kit has been accessed.