

## Risk Assessment & Management of Surgical Masks for Patient Use Action Card

2<sup>nd</sup> April 2020 (v1)

- All patients who have suspected or confirmed symptoms of Covid-19 should be encouraged to wear a fluid resistant surgical mask in line with Covid-19 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) guidelines.
- Due to their composition fluid resistant surgical masks could be utilised as a means of ligature
- A risk assessment should be completed for all patients who have suspected or confirmed symptoms of Covid-19 prior to a fluid resistant surgical mask being issued to them.
- If an individual is assessed as having a risk of self-harm, a risk management plan should be developed to ensure they are able to utilise fluid resistant surgical masks safely.
- Risk management approaches may include increasing levels of observation for the individual or only issuing a fluid resistant surgical mask when the individual is in an area of the ward where they are likely to come into contact with other patients and can be observed by staff.
- For individuals who are assessed to be a high risk of self-harm by ligature, consideration should be given to refrain from providing a fluid resistant surgical mask if this is likely to lead to a higher risk of harm than not wearing the mask.
- The risk management plan should be documented in the individual's care notes and communicated to all staff.
- All staff should ensure that they wear all recommended PPE in line with the guidelines when supporting patients with suspected or confirmed symptoms of Covid-19.