



Consultation – Installation of CCTV (closed circuit television)

Background

In the past year we have seen more and more occasions when people became aggressive or abusive towards staff. Some of you may have seen these while visiting the surgery.

We try to calm them down and find ways to help them, but that has not always worked, sometimes we had to call the police.

Staff have become wary of dealing with problems at the counter, and this is not good for patients in general. Moreover, we have a duty to keep the surgery a safe place to work in.

There are various avenues to request medical or administrative assistance, and channels for raising dissatisfaction, and asking to discuss matters in a controlled fashion.

We believe that the presence of CCTV may make people think twice before acting inappropriately.

Reason for consultation

The CCTV will record video of persons passing within the scope of the camera(s). This may be cause for concern for some people. We would like to hear if you have any issues, or any suggestions to make it more acceptable.

Legally, the video counts as personal data and so storing and using it is controlled by law. Alexandra Surgery will put systems in place to make sure we comply with legislation.

Principles

The Surveillance Camera Code of Practice published by the Home Office in June 2013 states that system operators should adopt the following 12 guiding principles:

1. Use of a surveillance camera system must always be for a specified purpose which is in pursuit of a legitimate aim and necessary to meet an identified pressing need.
2. The use of a surveillance camera system must take into account its effect on individuals and their privacy, with regular reviews to ensure its use remains justified.
3. There must be as much transparency in the use of a surveillance camera system as possible, including a published contact point for access to information and complaints.
4. There must be clear responsibility and accountability for all surveillance camera system activities including images and information collected, held and used.
5. Clear rules, policies and procedures must be in place before a surveillance camera system is used, and these must be communicated to all who need to comply with them.
6. No more images and information should be stored than that which is strictly required for the stated purpose of a surveillance camera system, and such images and information should be deleted once their purposes have been discharged.
7. Access to retained images and information should be restricted and there must be clearly defined rules on who can gain access and for what purpose such access is granted; the disclosure of images and information should only take place when it is necessary for such a purpose or for law enforcement purposes.

8. Surveillance camera system operators should consider any approved operational, technical and competency standards relevant to a system and its purpose and work to meet and maintain those standards.
9. Surveillance camera system images and information should be subject to appropriate security measures to safeguard against unauthorised access and use.
10. There should be effective review and audit mechanisms to ensure legal requirements, policies and standards are complied with in practice, and regular reports should be published.
11. When the use of a surveillance camera system is in pursuit of a legitimate aim, and there is a pressing need for its use, it should then be used in the most effective way to support public safety and law enforcement with the aim of processing images and information of evidential value.
12. Any information used to support a surveillance camera system which compares against a reference database for matching purposes should be accurate and kept up to date.

Questions

Do you have concerns about safety in the reception/ waiting areas, with people acting aggressively?

Do you feel installation of CCTV can help make you feel safer?

Do you have issues with the use of CCTV recording?

Do you have suggestions about how we can make CCTV less intrusive or more effective?

Response

Please write or speak in confidence to Abhi Sivananthan, our practice manager:

Tel: 020 8888 2518

Email: a.sivananthan@nhs.net

The timeframe for this consultation is the month of April 2022.

We shall of course be happy to hear your comments at any time, but we may make a decision about the CCTV soon after April.

28 March 2022.