

SN (NI) 2001/31

DATE: 24 July 2001

**For Attention and Action by:
Chief Executive of each HSS Trust
General Manager/Chief Executive of each HSS Board
Chief Executive of each Agency**



HEALTH ESTATES
ESTATE POLICY

**NORTHERN
IRELAND
ADVERSE
INCIDENT
CENTRE**

TITLE:

**FERNO Mk 1, MOBYLE CARRY CHAIR – RISK
OF FRAME COLLAPSE DUE TO FAILURE OF
PIVOT PINS**

MANUFACTURER/SUPPLIER

Ferno (UK) Ltd

PROBLEM

There have been instances of partial frame collapse due to the failure of a pivot pin in the chair folding mechanism. Some of these failures have resulted in injury to attendants and pose a risk to patients.

DISTRIBUTION

This notice should be brought to the attention of all who need to know or be aware of it, including those listed below, in accordance with local procedures. This will include:

- Liaison Officers
- Risk Managers
- Health & Safety Officers/Advisors
- Device Managers
- Estates Managers
- Medical Directors
- Clinical Directors
- Nursing Directors
- Medical, Nursing and Care Staff
- Wheelchair Repair Services
- Wheelchair Reconditioning Services
- Community & Social Services Staff
- Hospices
- Day Care Services for Elderly or Disabled People
- British Red Cross (NI)
- Loan Store Managers
- Ambulance Staff and Paramedics
- Wheelchair Service Managers

Boards/Trusts should ensure that if appropriate, this information is passed to all persons having the responsibility for the premises registered under "THE REGISTERED HOMES (NI) ORDER 1992.

ACTION

Existing equipment should be checked in accordance with the manufacturer's servicing schedule, to ensure that the pivot pins are properly secured and lubricated and not showing signs of wear.

All relevant staff should be made aware of the potential for failure and of the need to regularly maintain the chair in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions (see Appendix A).

Reference should also be made to previously issued guidance on repair and maintenance in the following documents:

- Safety Action Notice SAN(NI)2000/07: "Wheelchairs, Seating and Accessories – Validated Inspection, Maintenance and Repair"
- Device Bulletin DB9904(NI): "Medical Device and Equipment Management for Hospital and Community Based Organisations."

SAFETY

NOTICE

BACKGROUND

This type of chair is widely used by ambulance and welfare services to aid the movement of patients in a seated position. It is a compact folding wheelchair that can be easily stowed in a vehicle, for use by competent persons trained in its use. There are currently in excess of 10,000 in service throughout the UK.

The pivot pins, which are riveted in place, allow the two halves of the carry chair frame to fold flat for storage. When the chair is in use these pins support the weight of the patient. Reports have been received where the riveting has failed, allowing the pin to fall out of the frame, resulting in the chair dropping to one side, causing a sudden weight transfer. This had led to injury for attendants who have attempted to restrain the movement. Patients in the carrying chair are also at risk of falling.

The pivot failures are primarily due to inadequate maintenance and the manufacturer has issued a bulletin to emphasise the need for regular lubrication (see Appendix A). On later models, the pins have been replaced by a nut and bolt system but regular maintenance including lubrication is still required.

ENQUIRIES

Enquiries to the manufacturer should be addressed to:

Mr R J Williamson – Quality Manager or Mr Jon Ellis – Operations Director
Ferno (UK) Ltd
Ferno House
Stubs Beck Lane
Cleckheaton
West Yorkshire BD19 4TZ
Tel: +44(0) 1274 851999
Fax: +44(0) 1274 851888

Enquires to NIAIC should quote the reference number SN(NI) 2001/31 and be addressed to:

Northern Ireland Adverse Incident Centre (NIAIC)
Health Estates
Estate Policy
Stoney Road
Dundonald
Belfast BT16 1US
Marked for the attention of Mr Brian Godfrey

Tel: 02890 523714
Fax: 02890 523900
Email: brian.godfrey@dhsspsni.gov.uk

Brian Godfrey
NIAIC Manager

HOW TO REPORT ADVERSE INCIDENTS

Adverse Incidents relating to medical devices, non-medical equipment, plant and buildings should be reported to NIAIC as soon as possible. Advice on how to report is given in Safety Notice SN (NI) 2001/01. If you are in doubt about how to report incidents, please speak to your liaison officer or contact NIAIC using the telephone number provided.

*Heath Estates is an Executive Agency of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
Áisíneacht Feidhmeannach don Roinn Sláinte. Serbhíst Sóisialta agus Sábháilteacht Phoiblí*



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