

EQUIPMENT CHECKING, MAINTENANCE & STORAGE POLICY

Members carry a selection of equipment and drugs that are carefully chosen to cover likely requirements in pre-hospital practice whilst keeping to practical size and weight proportions. BASICS South West has an agreed, standard, core equipment list, which all active medical responders in the schemes can be expected to carry.

It is vital that equipment and drugs used are fit for use, including being within appropriate use-by dates. The use of out-of-date equipment can result in equipment failure or loss of sterility. Out-of-date drugs may be ineffective. Manufacturers will accept no responsibility for equipment failure if equipment is not stored appropriately or is out-of-date.

BASICS South West responders are responsible for ensuring that their equipment is complete, in good condition and in date.

Aims

This policy provides a framework for ensuring equipment is in date and in good condition.

Procedure

Storage:

Equipment should be kept in appropriate storage bags designed for the purpose. During particularly hot or cold weather conditions it is recommended that equipment is not left in the responder's car for long periods. For guidance, drug expiry dates are based on storage at 25°C although they are tested to ensure that they are stable for "short" periods at up to 40°C.

Where practicable, consumable equipment should be kept in its original sealed packaging, (which will be labelled with expiry dates where applicable). In some cases it may be important for equipment to be immediately available and storage in the original packaging may result in delays in use. Where this is the case, and if clinical consideration dictates that the equipment does not need to be maintained in a sterile state, equipment may be kept unpackaged, as long as it is stored in such a way to keep it appropriately clean. If perishable equipment is removed from its packaging, a record should be kept of its Lot/Batch number and expiry date so that it can be replaced when required.

Equipment Replacement:

Consumable equipment that is routinely stocked by South Western Ambulance Service may be replaced from Trust vehicles or Ambulance Stations.

Equipment not stocked by South Western Ambulance Service will be replaced according to local scheme procedure. Replacement equipment should be consistent with the BASICS South West core equipment list.

South Western Ambulance Service have agreed to the replacement of those drugs that fall within their paramedic formulary from Ambulance Service Supplies (with the exception of controlled drugs). Other drug stocks should be replaced by arrangement with a pharmacy or pharmaceutical wholesaler. Controlled Drugs should be replaced according to the schemes' Controlled Drugs policies.

Equipment Checking:

Equipment will be checked in two ways

After use: After use at any incident, kit should be carefully checked by the responder to ensure all is present, clean and correct. Any used consumable or damaged equipment used must be replaced.

Regular Scheduled Equipment Check: All BASICS South West responders are expected to check their equipment regularly every two months. Equipment should be checked for completeness, condition, and expiry date. At this check arrangements should be made to replace (as above) any equipment or drugs that **will expire before the next bimonthly check is due.**

Each scheme should have a nominated equipment officer who will schedule the dates of the equipment check.

After each scheduled kit check, members should complete and sign an equipment check declaration and submit it to their scheme's equipment officer (either by e-mail, by post or in person).

Any member not compliant with this regular equipment check should not respond until they can confirm that they have completed the required check.

Appendix:

Equipment Check Declaration

Document details

Title	Equipment Checking, Maintenance & Storage Policy
Author(s)	Dr J Hickman
Version	1
Date	5 September 2011
Approval	BASICS South West Committee



BASICS South West



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TACTICS

EQUIPMENT CHECK DECLARATION

Name:	
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Date:	
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I confirm that I have checked my equipment used for pre-hospital emergency care response work. It is in good condition and all equipment and drugs have at least 2 months before expiry date or appropriate arrangements have been made for replacement before expiry.

Signature	
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This form should be completed at each routine 2 monthly equipment check and submitted to the scheme's equipment officer. A typed signature will be acceptable if the form is submitted from the responder's personal e-mail address.