

August 2014

Alert No: 18

## Safety of patients when bathing

In a North London Mental Health Trust there have been two reported deaths by drowning of patients with a history of seizures while bathing on inpatient wards

### ACTIONS

1. Patients who are assessed to be at risk of seizure should, wherever possible, use shower rather than bath facilities.
2. Should these patients have to use bath facilities they must be subject to continuous direct observation.
3. Their risk assessment and care plan must identify the risks associated with seizure, and how staff, in conjunction with the patient, shall manage these risks.
4. The care plan should include details of how the patient will be observed and supervised whilst using any bathroom/washing facilities.
5. All clinical staff must be alert to the risks associated with bathrooms, wet rooms and shower rooms, and must ensure that there are local protocols in place for the use of these areas.