



# Method Statement Switchboard Services

## Revision History

Revision	Date	Reviewer	Status
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## **1 Objectives**

Project Co shall provide a comprehensive Switchboard Service, across the Facility that will, in most cases be the first point of contact with the Board. The Service shall provide a high level of customer care to all users and be capable of adapting the varying demands and operations of the Board and accommodate new technologies within the NHS. The key objectives of the Switchboard Service are:

- a) to provide support to the Board's operations through an effective communications system, serving both internal and external users;
- b) to ensure all enquiries to the Board are dealt with professionally and promptly;
- c) to ensure telephone, paging and other communication systems are functioning efficiently;  
and
- d) ensure required standards are achieved through the use of the correct mix of Staff and equipment, effective management systems, clear performance targets and appropriate level of monitoring.

The key customers for the Switchboard service are patients, staff, authorised visitors, service providers, emergency services and approved sub-contractors employed by the Board.

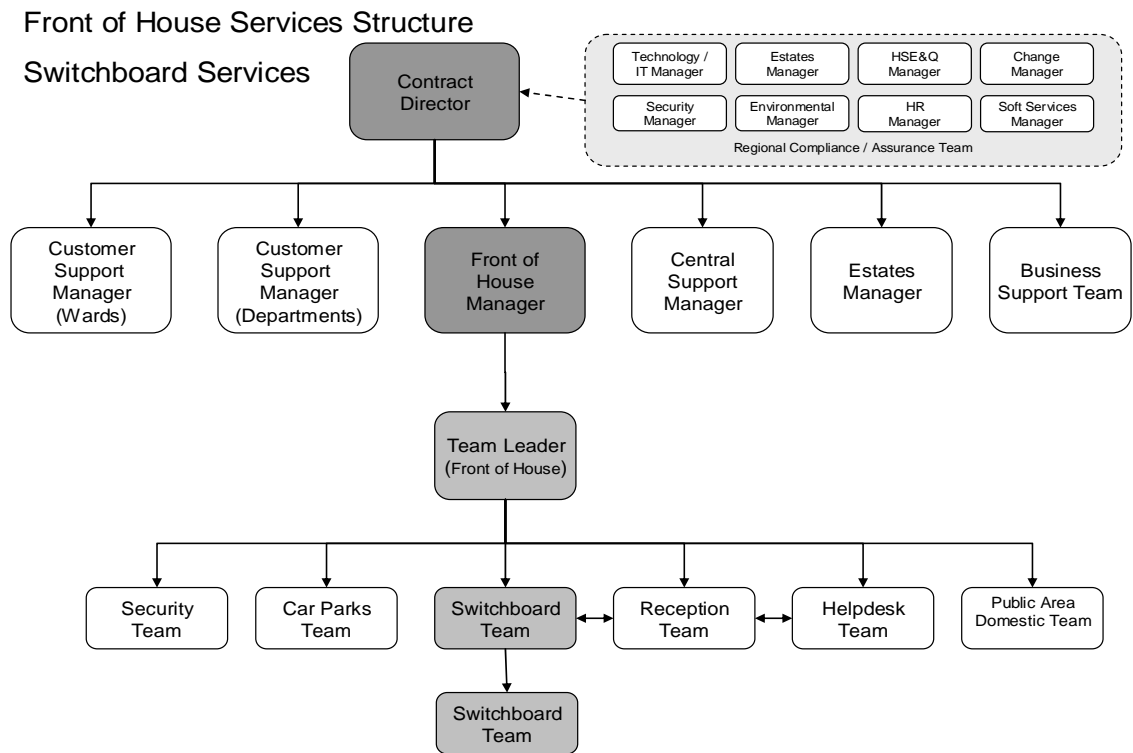
It is agreed between the Parties that the Method Statements shall not apply during the Transition Periods.

## 2 Management Supervision and Organisation Structure

The switchboard is located at the staff entrance and is provided and staffed 24hrs per day 7-days per week. The Front of House Manager has overall responsibility for the provision of the switchboard service, which will be managed day to day by the Team Leader (switchboard). Their responsibilities will include both the liaison with users as well as day-to-day organisation, coaching and training, monitoring of standards and dealing with ad-hoc requests.

The Switchboard Operatives under the Team Leader will be trained to deal with Switchboard duties as well as Helpdesk duties. Rosters will accommodate the variation in call traffic at different times of the day.

Switchboard Services Organisational Chart – Figure A



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### **3 Scope**

The Switchboard Service shall provide a telecommunications and paging service to include:

- a)* operator service;
- b)* a fault reporting service to the Helpdesk; and
- c)* response to major incidents and major infrastructure failures.

Telephone handsets will be provided by Project Co as part of the telephone system. The handsets shall be maintained and lifecycle replaced by Project Co.

For the avoidance of doubt, upgrades to telephone handsets shall be purchased by the Board.

## **4 Work Schedules and Procedures**

### **4.1 Switchboard Services**

- SP01 Project Co staff working in the Switchboard shall receive customer care training prior to service commencement and through periodic refresher training. This training shall cover the staff attitude, manner, helpfulness and politeness. Staff shall be specifically advised on how to be tactful in dealing with sensitive calls and the importance of discretion at all times. The Team Leader (Front of House) shall monitor staff and provide feedback on their level of customer care skills. This will be done through the use of call monitoring / recording software integrated into the switchboard system and undertaken on at least a monthly basis. Feedback shall be done on a one to one basis. Where there are deficiencies detected these will be addressed through further customer care training, which will be organised and applied on a needs basis. Call recording shall be undertaken in compliance with the Data Protection Act.
- SP02 On receipt of a call asking for directions to the hospital, Project Co shall transfer the call to the Helpdesk/Reception, to free the operator to answer calls, where Project Co shall provide the caller with verbal instructions in line with the Board policy.
- Where Project Co receives a request from the public or other callers via the main switchboard number to ascertain the whereabouts of patients within the building the call shall be transferred to the appropriate Board department as directed under the Board policy. These calls shall be transferred to the correct department in line with the service standards contained in Part 14.
- Other calls shall be dealt with by Project Co in accordance with the Board policy.
- SP03 To enable Project Co to maintain a comprehensive knowledge of key Board staff and their working locations, the Board shall provide Project Co with up to date duty and/or on-call rosters showing the Board staff, designation and contact details. Project Co shall monitor their staff through the use of call recording software and through the number of customer complaints to ensure their level of knowledge is pertinent and to an acceptable level. In addition to duty and/or on-call rosters the Board shall provide Project Co with any changes to their key staff, their contact details or working location. Where the Board representative advises Project Co through the formal agreed protocol, to be agreed prior to service commencement, Project Co will update the rosters and telephone directory to reflect the changes as advised. These will be undertaken in line with the priority response times.
- SP04 Project Co shall monitor the Switchboard performance through the use of call logger reporting. This reporting shall be used to produce statistical

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information for the use of trend analysis. Compliance with performance standards shall be monitored through the use of the call logger and any other software integrated into the switchboard system to enable Project Co to report on the standards as defined in Part 14 Switchboard Service Specific Specification.

Project Co shall meet the performance parameters through the use of technology such as automated call attendants and through adjustments to staff rosters. During periods of high volumes staff from other services such as Helpdesk and Security shall be used to assist with call answering. These staff shall undergo the same level of training as the permanent switchboard operators. This shall be checked and assessed by the Switchboard Team Leader.

The Switchboard Service is based on the assumption that all wards and departments have their own DDI.

SP05 Project Co shall cooperate in the provision of existing services with the Board's IT department. New services shall be agreed between Project Co and the Boards Representative. Where a call is received of an IT nature the call shall be connected to the Board's IT Helpdesk. Out of Hours Project Co shall follow the appropriate Board policy.

SP06 During the recruitment process Project Co staff working within the Switchboard service shall be assessed by an experienced interviewer to ensure they are able to speak the English language clearly. This may involve a practical demonstration involving the interviewee answering telephone calls. Project Co monitor staff use of English and address any concerns through customer care training. This is undertaken as soon as practically possible and on a needs basis.

## **4.2 Telecommunications Services**

SP07 Project Co shall manage and operate the following systems:

- **the co-ordination of telephone line fault reporting** - On receipt of a request to investigate a telephone fault Project Co switchboard staff shall connect the call to the Project Co Helpdesk. The caller shall receive a Helpdesk number and the call shall be passed to the Project Co Estates department for 1<sup>st</sup> line maintenance.

**internal pagers** (including the issue of pagers and the supply of batteries)  
- Project Co shall issue the internal pagers to the Board staff as per the Board policy. Project Co shall be responsible for the supply and issue of batteries which shall be undertaken on an old for new basis. The Board staff shall be responsible for checking the internal pager battery life and where they require a replacement battery they must present themselves in person to the Security Control room. Where replacement pagers are

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required the Board staff member must present themselves in person in the security control room where Project Co shall assess the working condition of the pager. If the pager is found to be faulty a replacement pager shall be provided by Project Co. The pager shall be sent to the pager manufacturer or service agent for repair. Where damage has occurred to the pager, either accidental or not the Board shall be responsible for the full costs of the repair or replacement of the pager.

- **wide area pagers (including the issue of wide area pagers and the supply of batteries)** - Project Co shall issue the wide area pagers to the Board staff as per the Board policy. Project Co shall be responsible for the supply and issue of batteries which shall be undertaken on an old for new basis. The Board staff shall be responsible for checking the wide area pager battery life and where they require a replacement battery they must present themselves in person to the Security Control room. Where replacement pagers are required the Board staff member must present themselves in person in the security control room where Project Co shall assess the working condition of the pager. If the pager is found to be faulty a replacement pager shall be provided by Project Co. The pager shall be sent to the pager manufacturer or service agent for repair. Where damage has occurred to the pager, either accidental or not the Board shall be responsible for the full costs of the repair or replacement of the pager.
- **call logging system** - Each Month Project Co shall produce agreed reports which will be emailed to the heads of each department / functionality. Other reports as agreed shall be emailed to the Board Representative.
- **private call charging systems** - Where requested Project Co shall produce reports from the call logger showing call charges. These reports shall be emailed to the Board Representative. The Board shall be responsible for recovery of all monies in relation to private call charging.
- **moves and changes** – Where informed from the authorised Board Representative of a change or move, e.g. call restrictions, classification or change of person (this list is not exhaustive) Project Co shall update the telephone directory and telephone system. This shall be done in line with the Performance Parameters and Priority response times. LAN patching, or work requiring the hard wiring, patching or porting of extensions or data ports is carried out in line with Board Policy and by the Board IT department. Project Co. shall liaise with the Board IT Department to ensure the requests are processed seamlessly.
- **fault reporting procedure** – Project Co shall undertake investigatory checks where informed of a fault. These checks shall test that the phone line is functional and that the permissions are



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not causing the problem. The caller shall be asked to check the telephone handset by unplugging the unit and plugging a neighbouring handset into the socket. Alternatively the caller shall bring the telephone handset to the Security Control room where the handset shall be checked by Project Co. In all cases where the handset is found to be faulty the handset unit must be presented to the Security Control room where the unit will be replaced on an old for new basis. Where the line is suspected of being faulty the caller shall be transferred to the Helpdesk. The Helpdesk Operator shall log the fault on the Helpdesk system. This will be done immediately but within 5-mins of the fault being transferred to the Helpdesk. Project Co shall notify their telecommunications specialist sub contractor and the fault diagnosed and repaired on a priority basis.

- SP08a Project Co shall provide the Board at least 4 months prior to service commencement with written instructions on how to use the telephone handsets and telephone system. The instructions shall be issued to the Board representative and it shall be the responsibility of the Board to distribute to the Board staff.
- SP08b Where there are agreed changes to the use of the telephone service, Project Co shall at all times ensure that the telephone operational instructions are updated. Project Co Switchboard Team leader shall have responsibility for updating these instructions. Annually Project Co shall audit these instructions against the operational practice to ensure they are up to date and relevant.
- SP09 Project Co shall provide access at all times to the Board Representative to the records pertaining to the Switchboard service. This access shall be through read only access.
- SP10 Project Co shall through rostering ensure that the Switchboard Service is staffed throughout the 24-hour period, 365(6) days per year by trained and competent staff. Additionally staff working in the security and helpdesk services shall be trained to undertake the Switchboard duties. This training will be to the same level that permanent switchboard staff receive.

### **4.3 Operator Services**

- SP11 Project Co shall produce a contingency plan, prior to service commencement, in the event of a telecoms system or component failure. These contingencies shall cover incoming and outgoing lines, internal system (full or partial) failure, Switchboard hardware and software and Pager system failure.
- SP12 Project Co shall instruct, through training and through operational

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procedures, Switchboard staff to answer incoming and outgoing calls in a professional manner. Project Co supervisor shall monitor calls and take necessary action where the Switchboard staff are deemed not to have answered calls in an appropriate manner. From time to time the Project Co supervisor shall play back recorded voice calls to the operators. This allows the operators to self access their telephone manner with the objective of improving their overall telephone manner and skills. Call recording shall be undertaken in line with the Data Protection Act.

SP13a Project Co shall provide, maintain and operate an internal and area wide pager system in line with the manufacturer's recommendations and the Board policy.

The internal pager system shall work through the use of the internal telephone system. Users shall access a menu using a short code access number for example 888. The users will be asked to insert the pager number and their telephone extension number. Pager numbers can be found in the telephone directory accessed on the Boards intranet.

The Area Wide pager shall work through the use of the internal telephone system. Users shall access a menu using a short code access number for example 777. The users will be asked to insert the pager number and there contact telephone number or short message. Area Wide Pager numbers can be found in the telephone directory accessed on the Boards intranet.

SP13b Project Co shall maintain the duty and on call rosters. The Board are responsible for notifying Project Co of amendments to the duty and or on call rosters in line with the agreed protocol.

SP13c Where requested and in line with the Board policy Project Co shall provide all relevant employees with a functional pager. Project Co shall replace, issue and retrieve pagers from the Board's staff. The Board are responsible for pursuing their staff for the return of pagers where they do not respond to requests from Project Co to return pagers. Where replacement pagers are required the Board staff member must present themselves in person in the security control room where Project Co shall assess the working condition of the pager. If the pager is found to be faulty a replacement pager shall be provided by Project Co. The pager shall be sent to the pager manufacturer or service agent for repair. Where damage has occurred to the pager, either accidental or not the Board shall be responsible for the full costs of the repair or replacement of the pager.

SP13d Project Co shall retrieve pagers from Board staff on request by the Board Representative and in line with the agreed policy. The Board are responsible for pursuing their staff for the return of pagers where they do not respond to requests from Project Co to return pagers. The Board are responsible for the replacement of all non returned, damaged or lost pagers.

SP14a Project Co shall maintain the call logging facility at all times. This shall

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be done through the use of a suitable maintenance contract, through the use of reliable equipment and UPS. Project Co shall inform the Board Representative if there is a need to power down the call logger at anytime for routine maintenance activity. This shall be avoided where possible.

- SP14b Project Co shall provide the Board through automatic reporting on the information contained in the call logger. This shall be emailed to the Board Representative. The reports shall include:
- Frequently dialled calls;
  - Duration and time of call;
  - Units used/cost of call; and
  - Any other reasonable request for information that the call logger is able to produce.
- In all cases the Board shall agree with Project Co a timescale to prepare and issue any ad-hoc reports. The reports shall be as provided from the call logger.
- SP15a Project Co shall operate and maintain a call recording system for all emergency calls. This system shall have a manufacturer's maintenance contract. The call recordings shall be stored on the server in a secure manner and backed up daily to prevent the loss of data. Emergency calls are calls that are made using the dedicated emergency telephone lines.
- SP15b On receipt of an emergency call, Project Co shall immediately broadcast the appropriate emergency message. This will be measured by the elapsed time from the completed emergency call and the time the emergency broadcast was issued. In all cases the elapsed time shall be no more than 5mins.
- SP16a Project Co shall provide an immediate response to emergency calls. Emergency calls take precedence on all other Switchboard activities.
- SP16b In the event of an emergency where Project Co are required to contact the Board's staff, Project Co switchboard staff shall follow the agreed call out list. The list shall be called in order of priority.

#### **4.4 Equipment and Maintenance Services**

- SP17a Project Co shall maintain through annual auditing and renew licences pertaining to the use of the Switchboard consoles or paging systems.
- SP17b On receipt of a fault notification, Project Co Switchboard staff shall coordinate and log all faults relating to the Switchboard system. This shall usually be undertaken by the Switchboard Team Leader but in his/her absence this duty shall be undertaken by trained switchboard staff following the operational procedure. Their competence shall be assessed frequently throughout the day by the Switchboard Team Leader to ensure they are capable of undertaking these duties.

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- SP17c Project Co shall provide the Board Employee's with manufacturers and operational procedures training in relation to telephone handsets, pagers and other equipment associated with the switchboard service. Training shall be provided through the use of instructions issued to the Board by Project Co. Also the Switchboard service can be telephoned to ascertain advice, instruction and information relating to the Switchboard service.
- SP18 Project Co shall undertake basic investigatory checks where informed of a fault. The caller shall be asked to check the telephone handset by unplugging the unit and plugging in a neighbouring handset into the socket. Alternatively the caller shall bring the telephone handset to the Security Control room where the handset shall be checked by Project Co. In all cases where the handset is found to be faulty the handset unit must be presented to the Security Control room where the unit will be replaced on an old for new basis. Where the line is suspected of being faulty the caller shall be transferred to the Helpdesk. The Helpdesk Operator shall log the fault on the Helpdesk system. This will be done immediately but within 5-mins of the fault being transferred to the Helpdesk. Project Co shall notify the telecommunications specialist sub contractor and the fault diagnosed and repaired on a priority basis.

#### **4.5 Administration Service**

- SP19a Where informed by the Board Representative, the Project Co Team Leader will ensure that an internal telephone directory and user telephone guides are made available on the Board's intranet. A maximum of 500 A5 printed copies of the internal telephone directory will be made available and distributed internally by Project Co to an agreed list of recipients. Where required, additional hard copies of the directory can be obtained through the print facility locally. The costs associated with printing additional telephone directories shall be borne in full by the local Board department Project Co shall issue such directory and guide in accordance with a distribution list and at intervals specified by the Board but no more than twice in any Contract Year.
- Project Co shall circulate the telephone directory or user telephone guide by way of email at the request of the Board Representative.
- The Board are required to follow the agreed protocol when informing Project Co of a change to the telephone directory.
- SP19b Project Co shall provide information to the Board Representative relating to the switchboard service by way of agreed reports. The exact detail of the reporting shall be agreed between the Board Representative and Project Co prior to service commencement.
- SP19c Project Co shall develop prior to service commencement, test and provide planned response to clinical emergencies and other situations as required by the Board. These emergencies shall be jointly defined prior to service

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commencement between Project Co and the Board and the necessary contingencies developed by Project Co to meet and respond in line with the service level specifications and the Board policy. Jointly, the Board and Project Co shall practice and test the planned response to ensure its effectiveness. The frequency of these tests shall be agreed between Project Co and the Board.

- SP19d Project Co staff shall participate in emergencies and emergency exercises. Project Co shall agree with the Board Representative prior to service commencement action cards that shall be used in the event of emergencies and exercises. These action cards shall provide clear instructions to Project Co staff on the tasks and activities expected to be followed in the event of an emergency or exercise. The exact level of participation shall be defined and agreed between Project Co and the Board. This shall be done during the first 12 months of service commencement and reviewed annually or as necessary.
- SP19e Project Co shall provide advice and recommendations on the telecommunications service to the Board. The recommendations shall be made after the Front of House Manager has evaluated the and interrogated historical data relating to the switchboard activity. These may be for example recommendations on the use of directory inquiries or on call barring numbers. Also the Front of house Manager shall attend trade shows and keep up to speed with technology advances. This will be done from time to time in the agreed switchboard monthly reports submitted to the Board.
- SP20a Project Co shall provide the ‘medical house’ service in relation to the change over of pagers. The Board shall present a list of staff changes by designation in advance of any ‘medical house’ change over. Medical staff shall be instructed by the Board to present themselves at the Security Control room to collect their pager.
- SP20b Project Co shall implement the major incident procedure as defined in the Board’s Major Incident Policy. This will involve Project Co staff following the action cards / escalation procedure which sets out the names and designations of the Board personnel to be called and alerted in the event of a ‘stand by’ or ‘confirmed’ major incident.
- SP20c Project Co shall agree a course of action to be followed in the event of Project Co Staff receiving notification of a bomb or other threat. Project Co shall provide staff training to ensure that the agreed course of action is followed in the event of a threat of this nature. This training shall be undertaken as part of the induction process and regularly through bi-annual refresher training. During annual audit undertaken by Project Co, the staff competency and knowledge in relation to this procedure shall be checked and assessed. Further training shall be provided by the Switchboard Team Leader as soon as can be arranged where there is any suggestion from the audit findings that there are gaps in staff competency or knowledge.

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- SP20d                      Project Co shall maintain up to date on call rotas to include the contact point for a wide range of teams including the Board Employees such as managers, consultants, estates personnel, paramedical and external contacts such as social services, emergency midwives, Public Health Consultant, District and psychiatric nurses, providing Project Co are advised of the changes through the agreed notification procedure. This procedure shall be agreed prior to service commencement. The changes shall be undertaken in line with the agreed service response times by the Switchboard staff.
- Project Co Switchboard staff shall have responsibility for updating these call rotas. The Switchboard Team leader shall have responsibility to check that the rotas are being updated by the Switchboard staff in line with the agreed procedure. Annually Project Co shall audit these procedures against the operational practice to ensure they are up to date and relevant.
- SP20e                      Project Co shall maintain records of all equipment. This will include serial number of equipment, date and time of issue and the person in receipt of the equipment. The equipment shall include pagers and telephone handsets. This will be undertaken in written format on forms completely when equipment is provided or returned. This information shall be entered into a database or spreadsheet by the Switchboard Team leader. The database shall be backed up daily to ensure no loss of data.
- SP20f                      Project Co shall produce and issue policies and procedures for all activities to telephony users. These policy's and procedures, such as the fire alarm, cardiac, security incidents, pager testing and battery replacement and requests for changes to the classification of telephone extensions shall be issued electronically to the Board for distribution on the Board's intranet. This shall be done prior to service commencement.
- SP20g                      Project Co shall order taxis by telephone call and maintain records in the agreed format of the taxi requests. The procedure for ordering taxis shall be defined and agreed between the Board and Project Co prior to service commencement. The cost of the taxi contract shall be paid in full by the Board. Project Co shall not be responsible for the tendering and/or maintenance of the taxi contract.

**4.6 Work Schedules**

Prior to service commencement Project Co shall meet with the Board Representative to agree the scheduling of services. This information shall be consolidated and issued. The frequency and timings of all scheduling shall be based around the parameters set out in schedule 14, the Service Level Specifications.

## **5 Quality Standards**

Project Co shall ensure that the delivery of the Switchboard Service shall meet the requirements of the Service Specific Specification and associated documents. The delivery shall be monitored and recorded in accordance with the Performance Parameters and any deviation from the required standard of service shall be rectified as soon as it becomes apparent.

These will be backed up by Project Co's Quality Systems.

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## 6 Contingency Plans

An indicative contingency plan has been provided below. Service specific contingency plans will be developed in conjunction with the Board and will be completed 3 months prior to Service Commencement for the individual service mobilisation.

Scenario: Loss of incoming telephone lines	Time Period:	Description of Contingency arrangements: To manage continuity of service.	
Triggers/ Escalation	When to invoke	Actions	Assumptions
Loss of part or all incoming and/or outgoing telephone lines into and out of the site.	On notification by users, the telecoms service provider or the telecoms system alarming.	<p>In the unlikely event that all incoming lines are inoperative the telecoms provider will be contacted by an emergency mobile phone. In order to minimize the risk of total failure the service provider will normally make provision to split the incoming lines. Project Co does not have any control over the incoming line provision to the Site.</p> <p>Each switchboard console will have independent control in the event of partial failure or failure of one or more consoles</p> <p>Switchboard Team Leader to be notified of the failure of the incoming telephone lines.</p> <p>Switchboard Team Leader to contact telecoms service provider to establish line check and rectification period.</p> <p>Helpdesk to inform the Front of House Manager. Who in turn will notify the Board Representative.</p> <p>Estates department to be notified so that the fault and rectification can be recorded against the asset on the CAFM system.</p> <p>Switchboard to inform wards and departments of the loss of incoming calls to the site. The order of notification to be agreed with the Board, based on clinical importance.</p> <p>Once the fault has been rectified the Helpdesk and Switchboard shall notify the Board Representative, wards and department and the Front of House Manager.</p>	<p>The incoming and outgoing telephone lines have built in resilience in the form of dual redundancy capability</p> <p>The internal telephone system remains functional.</p> <p>The restoration period is minimal due to hospital status.</p> <p>Switchboard mobile phone is available should the outgoing lines fail.</p>
Name/title of staff member authorized to invoke plan: Switchboard Operator/ Front of House Management Team			
Criteria for returning to normal service: Confirmation that telephone lines have been returned to operational functionality.			
Procedures for returning to normal service: Inform Board Representative and FM Heads of Department.			
Protocol References: Helpdesk action card Ref. Switchboard Management action card Ref. Incident Report Record			