

Guidance on how to proceed if the number of dressings removed does not correspond with those inserted

Patient/wound review – essential

- Thoroughly examine dressing material removed (in line with Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) guidelines) to confirm no faults with counting or separation of dressings i.e. dressings have not stuck together
 - Thoroughly examine wound for dressings that may have been left in the cavity. Extra lighting, such as a torch, may be helpful
 - Assess the patient for:
 - Discomfort (specifically in the wound area)
 - Unexplained pain
 - Pyrexia
 - Deviation in general baseline observations
- Note for medical information.

Staff/Carer review – if possible

- Gain history of previous dressing application from appropriate person e.g. patient, carer; regarding date, time etc. and if this corresponds with the cavity chart
- Communicate with colleagues who applied the previous dressing to confirm dressing application and check if there is any fault with the documentation.

Recording/Reporting – essential

- Inform medic managing the patient that a dressing cannot be accounted for at dressing removal
- Baseline observations and general assessment of patient should be undertaken
- Datix incident, inform your line manager/nurse in charge and document all actions and correspondence with medics
- Consultation with senior medical staff and/or surgeon may be required.

Developed by NHS Lothian Tissue Viability Service