

# Keeping safe tips - working in community settings

We need to take extra care when working in the community. Incidents are rare, but it's wise to stay alert. Here's some useful tips from our security team.

- **Whenever possible, do not walk alone. Be alert, walk with purpose and confidence and avoid shadows**
- Where possible check EMIS systems for patient alerts
- **Avoid short cuts through unlit or deserted areas such as alleys or waste ground**
- Whenever possible do not overload yourself with packages or bags and try to keep one arm free
- **Walk and drive in clearly lit areas**
- When parking especially in cul-de-sacs, park facing the road, so that in the event of an emergency you are not having to do a three-point turn
- **Walk near to the kerb edge and away from buildings and alleys to keep your escape options open**
- If walking, face the traffic, so that a car cannot pull up behind you unnoticed
- **If you believe you are being followed, try crossing the road a couple of times**
- If you continue to be followed, make your way to the closest place where people are likely to be e.g., a shop, bus stop or house with lights on. As soon as you can, telephone the police from a safe place
- **If staff have a lone Worker Device, it must be turned on, fully charged, and utilised as per the training - your team also need to know where you are at all times**
- If a vehicle drives slowly next to you, ignore it and continue walking briskly. If they persist, make a mental note of the registration number, turn, and walk briskly in the opposite direction. (It is more difficult to reverse)
- **If someone approaches for directions, don't let them get too close. Keep your distance**
- Keep any bags close to your body. If someone makes a grab for your bag - it is better to let it go rather than risk injury to yourself
- **Try to avoid carrying large sums of cash. If you do have to carry cash, try to divide it up and carry it in different pockets etc.**
- Do not use your mobile phone whilst walking, this can easily be snatched
- **Do not carry your car keys in your handbag - keep them handy in your pocket**
- If you carry a works and or personal mobile telephone, ensure that it is easily accessible and consider pre-setting your emergency call number
- **If you encounter large groups or you are worried at all in the location you are in, avoid them, drive on, or return back to the office and report them**
- Report any incident using the Trust incident system.

If you need any further advice or information for your team, please contact Matt Purvis, security management specialist for community premises. You can email Matt at [matthew.purvis@mft.nhs.uk](mailto:matthew.purvis@mft.nhs.uk)