

Local Anaesthetic Block Policy

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Approved by:	Anaesthetics, critical care, theatres and sterile services	
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Policy Overview:

Analysis by the Royal College of Anaesthetists showed a total of 67 incidences of wrong site local anaesthetic blocks in the 15 months to November 2010. Reports gave a number of reasons as to why this had occurred including distraction of the anaesthetist, lack of mark specific to the block, lack of anaesthetic time-out, and discrepancy between the operating list and mark or consent form. These have also been identified as factors in recent wrong site blocks within WAHT. Performing a wrong site block has in some instances resulted in wrong site surgery. The national 'stop before you block' campaign was launched in 2011 in an attempt to highlight and address these issues. This policy attempts to address the key issues above and is intended to supplement the WAHT WHO Surgical Safety Checklist (WAHT-CG-751) to minimise the risk and therefore incidence of administration of wrong site local anaesthetic block before surgery.

Key amendments to this Document:

Date	Amendment	By:
July 13	This Guideline is new	
July 2015	Document extended for 12 months as per TMC paper approved on 22 nd July 2015	TMC
October 2016	Further extension as per TMC paper approved on 22 nd July 2015	TMC

1. Introduction

Analysis by the Royal College of Anaesthetists showed a total of 67 incidences of wrong site local anaesthetic blocks in the 15 months to November 2010. Reports gave a number of reasons as to why this had occurred including distraction of the anaesthetist, lack of mark specific to the block, lack of anaesthetic time-out, and discrepancy between the operating list and mark or consent form. These have also been identified as factors in recent wrong site blocks within WHAT. Performing a wrong site block has in some instances resulted in wrong site surgery. The national 'stop before you block' campaign was launched in 2011 in an attempt to highlight and address these issues.

This policy attempts to address the key issues above and is intended to supplement the WAHT WHO Surgical Safety Checklist (WAHT-CG-751) to minimise the risk and therefore incidence of administration of wrong site local anaesthetic block before surgery.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the current version of the WAHT WHO Surgical Safety Checklist policy (WAHT-CG-751).

2. Scope of this document

This policy applies to all WAHT staff involved in the administration of local anaesthetic blocks before surgery, namely anaesthetists, anaesthetic practitioners and theatre assistants present in the anaesthetic room. This policy does *not* apply to spinal or epidural nerve blocks nor does it apply to surgeon-delivered local anaesthesia.

3. Definitions

The terms 'Local blockade', 'Local block' and 'Regional blockade' are commonly used to describe the technique of local anaesthetic blocks. For the purpose of clarity the term 'local anaesthetic block' will be used throughout this document.

The designation 'administering anaesthetist' will be used to describe the anaesthetist responsible for administering the local anaesthetic block.

4. Responsibility and Duties

In addition to the roles and responsibilities set out in the *Procedure for administration of local anaesthetic blocks* detailed in Appendix A, the administering anaesthetist, anaesthetic practitioner and theatre assistant where present, must follow the responsibilities as defined by the WAHT WHO Surgical Safety Checklist policy:

- Participation in the pre-operative *Team Briefing*.
- Conducting, along with the anaesthetic practitioner the *Sign In* procedure in the anaesthetic room.
- Participation in the *Time Out and Verification* procedure.
- Participation in the *Sign Out* procedure.

Where the administering anaesthetist is teaching a procedure, they should give consideration on each occasion as to whether they are competent to do so whilst also safely administering the local anaesthetic block.

5. Policy detail

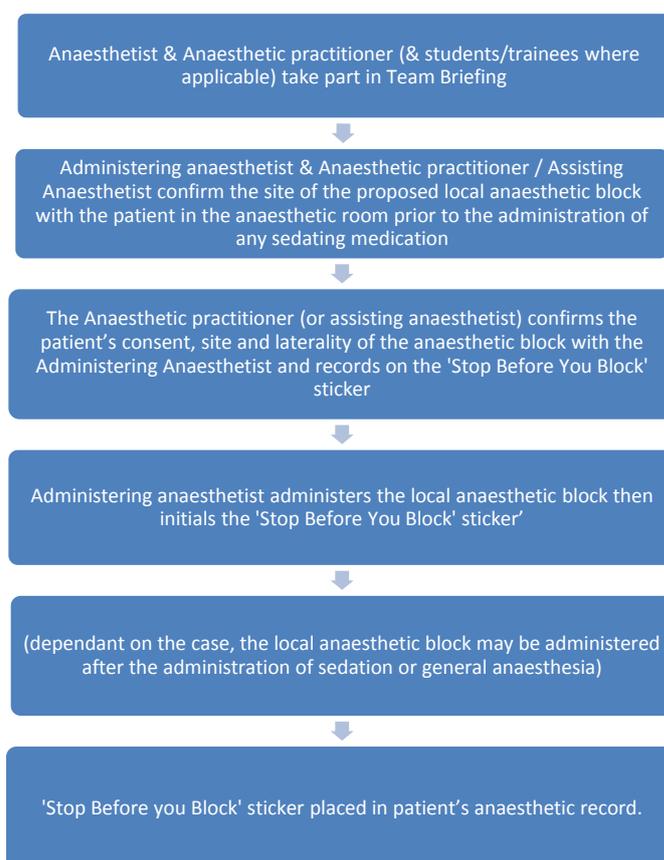
- 5.1** Prior to the administration of sedating medication, the operative site and side will be exposed by the theatre assistant (where applicable) or another member of the anaesthetic team, checked with the patient and their identity band, verified against the consent form, the operating list and surgical site marking(s), and an anaesthetic site mark will be made.
- 5.2** The block equipment may be prepared and placed on a block trolley or designated block tray, these items will then be withheld pending the stop before you block check.
- 5.3** Immediately prior to performing the local anaesthetic block, the anaesthetic room will be silent and the 'stop moment' will take place, the site marking(s) will be checked against the patient's consent form and identity band and checked against the theatre operating list. Once this is complete and agreed by those present, the block equipment and needle will be made available to the anaesthetist. .
- 5.4** A 'stop before you block' sticker must be completed and attached to the anaesthetic record and the 'stop before you block' moment will be recorded in the WHO check on the Bluespier theatre management system.
- 5.5** If any member of staff present during the 'stop before you block' has any doubt as to whether the 'stop before you block' procedure has been carried out correctly they must feel able to voice their concern without fear of repercussions.

Appendix A – ADMINISTRATION OF LOCAL ANAESTHETIC BLOCKS

General principles for the administration of local anaesthetic blocks

To minimise the risk of distraction:

- No one should enter or exit the anaesthetic room without valid reason between the time that the patient is checked in and the time that the patient enters the operating theatre.
- Consideration should be given to the number of students and other non-essential persons present in the anaesthetic room.
- Where the administering anaesthetist is teaching a procedure, they should give consideration on each occasion as to whether they are competent to do so whilst also safely administering the local anaesthetic block.



Appendix B – ‘Stop Before You Block’ sticker

STOP BEFORE YOU BLOCK	
<u>BEFORE INDUCTION</u> PLACE ANAESTHETIC MARK <i>AT BLOCK SITE</i> : <input type="checkbox"/>	<u>BEFORE BLOCK</u> CHECK: NAME <input type="checkbox"/> BOTH MARKS <input type="checkbox"/> CONSENT FORM <input type="checkbox"/>
SIGNATURES BELOW:	
ANAESTHETIST	ASSISTANT