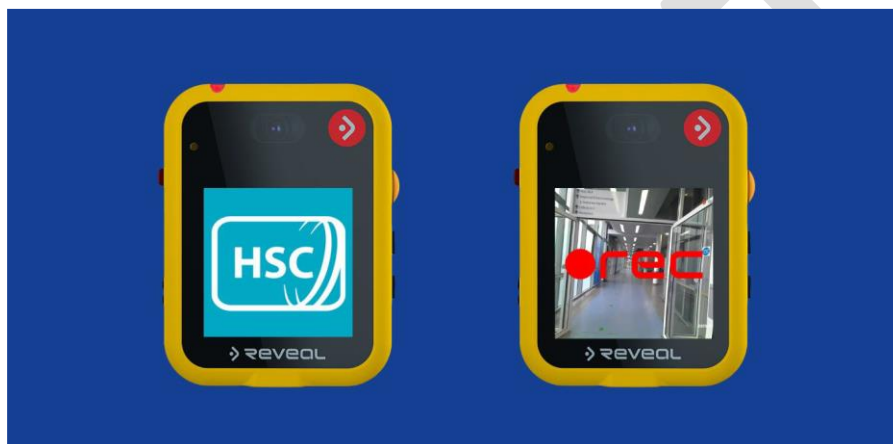


Frequently Asked Questions : Body Worn Cameras (BWCs)

What is a Body Worn Camera (BWC)?

BWCs are small lightweight cameras secured on the uniform of a select number of staff. BWCs objectively records video and audio of interactions between staff and patients and/or third parties. To make a recording the device must be activated as it is not recording 24/7. They will not be worn or used in a hidden or covert manner.



Why are the use of BWCs being proposed?

Belfast Trust is committed to providing a safe environment for staff, patients and third parties who visit Trust premises and for care to be delivered in a fair, transparent and respectful manner. Unfortunately, our staff experience verbal and physical abuse as part of their everyday which cannot be tolerated. The Trust recognises that such incidents can have a negative and detrimental impact on many and in response to this growing problem Belfast Trust is proposing that BWCs can be used by staff when appropriate.

Will using a BWC be mandatory for staff?

No, use of BWCs by staff will be voluntary.

Where will the proposed BWC pilot take place?

In the first instance, as a 6 month pilot, Belfast Trust is proposing to trial the use of BWCs in our two Emergency Departments (ED) at the Royal Victoria Hospital (RVH) and Mater Infirmorum Hospital (MIH).

Who will be involved in the 6 month pilot?

A limited number of Emergency Department staff from both RVH and MIH sites will be trained and authorised to use BWCs including nursing staff, security officers, and/or senior decision makers. Staff participation in the use of BWCs will be voluntary and based on working area within the Emergency Department.

What is the Purpose of using BWCs?

BWCs will be used in Belfast Trust as part of the management of aggression and violence against staff and others. Specifically BWCs will be used to:

- **Deter:** To maximize the deterrence value BWCs will be as visible as possible. They will have a bright yellow colourway along with a customisable front facing screen that can display a still or flashing graphic.
- **De-escalate:** Statistically it is agreed that BWCs change behavior which will support the de-escalation of any given situation.
- **Document:** Recordings will capture evidence needed to manage the violence of aggression against staff and others. Valuable contextual evidence is provided by BWCs as they have a wide-angle lens and a pre-record buffer (up to 2 minutes).

When can staff start recording with a BWC?

A BWC Policy and Standard Operating Procedure will set out activation criteria for staff in terms of using BWCs. The criteria will be aligned with the Trust Zero Tolerance Policy and the regional Management of Violence and Aggression (MoVA) Framework

Staff wearing a BWC will only activate a recording **if** there is an incident in which they feel abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances arising out of or in the course of their employment. This can apply when staff perceive there is a risk that violence and aggression will occur and/or when it is actually experienced.

The camera will not commence full recording until staff presses the record button. There is a pre-record option of up to 2 minutes which means context can be provided to a given situation.

Define Violence and Aggression in work?

The NI Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines work-related violence as:

“Any incident, in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances arising out of the course of their employment”. This includes, threatening behaviour including bullying, intimidation, psychological abuse, harassment, inappropriate use of social media and/or telecommunication and threats with weapons.”

This definition includes both:

- **Verbal Abuse** eg using inappropriate words, shouting, swearing or behaviour causing distress including shouting, swearing or insults with racial or sexual intent and intimidation.
- **Physical Violence** eg slapping, punching, nipping, biting, kicking, spitting, head-butting, stamping or sexualised abuse. It may also include more extreme forms of violence using weapons that are not just restricted to sharp implements, chemicals and firearms.

When are staff not permitted to use a BWC?

Staff will be advised not to use a BWC if the recording risks adversely impacting the safety, dignity and/or on-going care of any person. BWCs will not be used in situations where personal care and intimate treatment/care is occurring. Body-worn cameras will not be used in toilets, bedrooms or when someone receiving personal care. In addition, training is essential prior to staff using a BWC.

Is consent needed before a BWC device can be switched on?

No. Consent is only one lawful basis for recording and retaining data.

Given the setting, practicalities and purpose, BWC devices will not be operated on the basis of consent. For Belfast Trust staff, in most situations, when devices are likely to be activated it would be difficult to obtain valid, informed and freely given consent of all affected individuals.

The lawful basis adopted by the Trust for proposing to use BWCs is the “legitimate interests” rationale as per the UK General Data Protection Regulation Article 6(1) (e).

A **Legitimate Interests Assessment** has been completed as part of Belfast Trust’s preparations for the BWC proposal. Legitimate interests noted in terms of BWCs being proposed include: ...for the protection and enhanced experience of our patients, staff and others who access the ED, to help provide a safer and calmer environment and to enhance the security and the wellbeing of staff.

What if a patient who does not have capacity or has complex medical issues is violent and aggressive? Can BWCs be used?

Yes. Belfast Trust acknowledge that in some situations some violent and aggressive behaviours can be beyond the control of an individual concerned due to lack of capacity and/or complex medical conditions. This means that not all aggression and violence can be prevented or eliminated. The decision to activate a BWC will be taken as part of dynamic decision making process with the risks being assessed on an individual case to case basis. Central to this decision making will be the wellbeing and safety of staff and others and the need to not to use if personal care is being delivered and when the recording could adversely impact a person’s dignity.

Will patients/carers know a BWC is recording?

Yes. BWC devices will be clearly visible on staff uniforms and will have a front-facing screen. When recording they will emit a solid red light. The member of staff wearing the BWC will, when reasonably possible, give a verbal warning that they are activating their device and why. Public notices on a variety of platforms (eg posters, website) will be used to ensure the public are aware that BWCs may be used by staff. A specific privacy notice will be created and available for the BWC pilot.

What happens to the data on a BWC device following a recording?

When staff wearing a BWC are finished their shift they will dock the device. By docking the BWC the recording will automatically upload to a secure cloud storage.

How long is the BWC recording kept?

The recording is automatically deleted after 28 days unless a Datix incident is made by the member of staff which means the footage is required for evidence. Data will not be kept for in accordance with the Department of Health (DoH) Good Management, Good Records Disposal Schedule 2017 (last updated 18 May 2022).

Who can view a BWC recording?

Access to data is controlled via software User Authentication and Permissions and the system retains a complete audit log of system activity. Footage can only be accessed by designated senior staff. Footage cannot be viewed or deleted from the camera itself.

Can the BWC recording be edited?

The original version of the video cannot be edited by anyone, including system administrators. Redacted copies of the video to blur out people/objects, remove audio and/or narrow the video to relevant sections/length can be created by authorised users only, who will be selected senior managers with training. The original version of the video will remain unchanged.

**How can I access data if I am recorded?**

Under the UK-GDPR a person can request access to their personal data. If a person wants to see the information we hold about them they can speak to staff identified within the Trust Privacy Notice. Each request for the release of footage will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Will BWCs be introduced to areas other than ED?

Depending on the outcome of the public consultation and the pilot evaluation, consideration will be given to in other locations and sites. Using BWCs in other locations and sites will require unique local engagement with key stakeholders, an updated DPIA and an Equality Screening prior to introduction.

Has there been Equality, Human Rights & Data Protection assessment completed?

Yes. A full Data Protection Impact Assessment and Equality Impact Assessment has been drafted in respect of this proposal as part of the documentation that can be read during the 12 week public consultation.

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