

19<sup>th</sup> July 2016

## NHS - Requirement to remove socket inserts



The NHS has stated: “that in certain circumstances, the use of plastic 13A electrical socket inserts (sold as safety accessories), can overcome the safety features designed into socket outlets.

- 13A electrical **socket inserts should not be used in health or social care premises**, nor supplied for use in a home or residence
- Any socket inserts currently in use should be **withdrawn** and responsibly disposed of.”

The NHS require this to be completed by 01 December 2016.

The IET Wiring Regulations - BS7671:2008 (2015) and BS1363 (regarding the manufacture of sockets e.g. 13A wall socket-outlets, multi way adaptors and flexible extensions) require socket outlets to have shutter locking mechanisms fitted to stop contamination entering the socket tubes.

Unfortunately socket inserts on the market do not meet any electrical or other safety standard and can damage the safety design of the socket or can introduce contamination into the live parts of sockets which could then result in an electric shock.

For further information on this subject for care or NHS related businesses please direct enquiries to:

### England

[Mb-defects&failures@dh.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Mb-defects&failures@dh.gsi.gov.uk)

### Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland Adverse Incident Centre, CMO Group, Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety.

### Scotland

Incident Reporting and Investigation Centre, Health Facilities Scotland, NHS National Services  
Scotland Tel: 0131 275 7575

### Wales

Principal Engineer, NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership – Specialist Estates  
Services, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Companies House, Crown Way, Cardiff, CF14 3UB, Tel: 029 2090 4100

# Estates and Facilities Alert

Ref: EFA/2016/002

Issued: 30 June 2016

Valid to: 30 June 2022

13A electrical socket inserts (socket covers or protectors)

## Summary

In certain circumstances, the use of plastic 13A electrical socket inserts (sold as safety accessories), can overcome the safety features designed into socket outlets.

## Action

- 13A electrical socket inserts should not be used in health or social care premises, nor supplied for use in a home or residence
- Any socket inserts currently in use should be withdrawn and responsibly disposed of.

### Action by

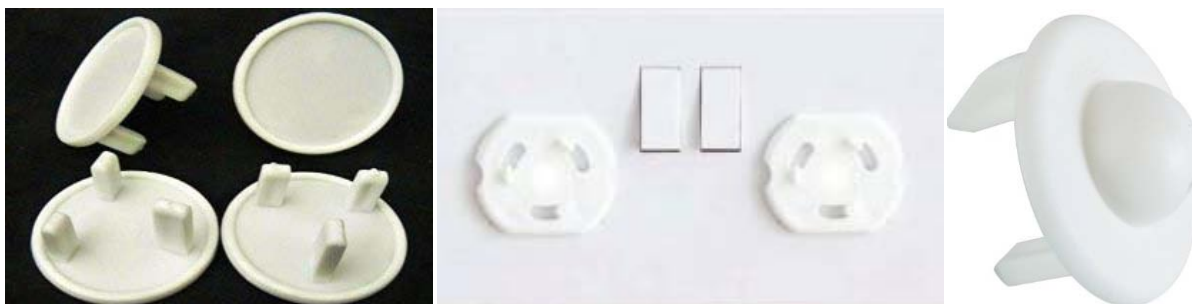
- All users

### Deadlines for action

Actions underway: 18 July 2016

Actions complete: 01 December 2016

## Device details (typical only)



## Problem / background

It is a requirement of the IET Wiring Regulations - BS7671:2008 (2015), that socket outlets have shutters and preferably be of a type complying with BS1363. Electrical sockets that are manufactured to BS1363 (13A wall socket-outlets, multi way adaptors and flexible extensions) must have an interlocking shutter mechanism to stop the insertion of foreign material into the socket tubes. The BS1363 standard also sets a distance which a plug pin has to be inserted before coming in contact with live parts.

Socket covers are not constructed to any electrical or other safety standard. The pins on the socket covers may be larger than the socket tubes which can cause damage to the socket and defeat the safety design of BS 1363.

In certain circumstances the insertion of socket covers, or their breakage whilst in use, can allow foreign objects to be inserted directly onto live parts within the socket, thus presenting a high risk of electric shock.

## Manufacturer contacts

Not applicable

## Distribution

Estates Managers, Risk Managers, Health Centres, Health & Safety, Care Home Services, Community Care, Learning Disability Units, Loaned Equipment Stores, Safety Representatives, Social Services, Supplies/Procurement, Wards, All users

## References

IET Wiring Matters 2012 number 44

<http://electrical.theiet.org/wiring-matters/44/wall-socket-protectors.cfm?type=pdf>

Fatally flawed:

[www.fatallyflawed.org.uk](http://www.fatallyflawed.org.uk)

## Enquiries

The above sections of this Alert were compiled by Health Facilities Scotland and distributed nationally without modification.

If you have enquiries about this notice, contact appropriate Regional Office, quoting reference number found at the top of this alert.

### England

Enquires should quote reference number EFA/2016/002 and be addressed to:-

[Mb-defects&failures@dh.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Mb-defects&failures@dh.gsi.gov.uk)

### Reporting adverse incidents in England

Defects or failures should be reported on this system: <http://efm.hscic.gov.uk/>

The web-based D&F reporting system is managed by the NHS and Social Care Information Centre on behalf of the Department of Health. For further information on this system, including obtaining login details, please contact the efm-information Helpdesk. Tel 0300 303 5678.

### Northern Ireland

Enquiries and adverse incident reports in Northern Ireland should be addressed to:

Northern Ireland Adverse Incident Centre, CMO Group,  
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety

Tel: 028 9052 3868 Fax: 028 9052 3900

Email: [niaic@health-ni.gov.uk](mailto:niaic@health-ni.gov.uk)

[www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/niaic](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/niaic)

### Reporting adverse incidents in Northern Ireland

Please report directly to NIAIC using the [forms on our website](#).

**Scotland**

Enquiries and adverse incident reports in Scotland should be addressed to:

Incident Reporting and Investigation Centre, Health Facilities Scotland, NHS National Services Scotland

Tel: 0131 275 7575 Fax: 0131 314 0722

Email: [nss.irc@nhs.net](mailto:nss.irc@nhs.net)

**Reporting adverse incidents in Scotland**

NHS Boards and Local Authorities in Scotland – [report to Health Facilities Scotland](#).

Contractors such as private hospitals carrying out NHS work and private care homes that accept social work funded clients – [report to Health Facilities Scotland](#).

Private facilities providing care to private clients report to the [Care Inspectorate](#) and [MHRA](#).

**Wales**

Enquiries and adverse incident reports in Wales should be addressed to:

Simon Russell, Principal Engineer, NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership – Specialist Estates Services, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Companies House, Crown Way, Cardiff CF14 3UB

Tel: 029 2090 4100

E-mail: [Simon.Russell@Wales.nhs.uk](mailto:Simon.Russell@Wales.nhs.uk)

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