Oxygen Cylinder Safety

Intended for health workers and all personnel managing medical oxygen

**DO LEARN PROPER MEDICAL CYLINDER SAFETY HANDLING**
- Read and follow the cylinder labelling instructions.

**DO TRANSPORT CYLINDERS CORRECTLY**
- Use personal protective equipment and mechanical assistance when handling cylinders (e.g. trolleys).
- Ensure cylinder (regardless of size) is firmly secured by a strong chain or strap, capable of preventing the cylinder from falling or being knocked over.
- Ensure valve guards or caps are fitted when cylinders are not in use or when being transported for delivery.

**DO SET UP CYLINDERS FOR CLINICAL USE AT A SAFE DISTANCE FROM THE PATIENT**
- Ensure that the gas is only turned on when it is required. Adequate valves, pressure regulators and flowmeters should be placed to control the desired rates.
- Oxygen cylinder valves should be opened smoothly to avoid (adiabatic) compression and heat generation and associated fire risks.
- Ensure adequate ventilation on the wards to reduce the risk of fire.

**DO STORE CYLINDERS CORRECTLY**
- Always physically separate full and empty medical cylinders.
- Store all oxygen cylinders in upright position and nesting, with three points of contact.
- Ensure that the storage room is well ventilated, clean and not exposed to extremes of temperature and humidity.
- Keep oxygen sources several metres from ignition sources (for example, acetylene used in maintenance).
- Ensure appropriate fire extinguishers are kept nearby and are regularly inspected.

**DO NOT ALTER, TRANSPORT OR HANDLE CYLINDERS INCORRECTLY**
- Do not change the labelling or repaint a cylinder.
- Do not transport gas cylinders in the passenger compartment of a vehicle.
- Do not handle more than one cylinder at a time, or roll cylinders along the ground, except on carts designed for handling gas cylinder.

**DO NOT USE UNCERTIFIED MEDICAL OXYGEN CYLINDERS**
- Do not refill cylinders that are not meant for medical oxygen (e.g. cylinders used for other industrial gases) and that have not passed a quality test by a specialist.

**DO NOT USE OIL, LUBRICANTS OR ALCOHOL-BASED HAND SANITIZER ON CYLINDER’S FITTINGS**

**DO NOT ATTEMPT TO REPAIR A CYLINDER OR A VALVE IF LEAKAGE IS DETECTED**
- Replacement of damaged components is suggested.

Sources: