

IRIC Safety Bulletin

Delayed emergency access due to faulty en suite WC door lock

What happened?

A patient collapsed in an en suite toilet and the door lock emergency release failed to operate. Estates were called and the door was forced open after about 20 minutes from call.

What did we learn?

The door lock spindle which connects to the internal thumb-turn mechanism was found to be out of specification as it was too short to engage. This rendered the emergency door release mechanism ineffective.

Investigation was unable to determine whether this was a manufacturing defect or the result of a modification during installation, maintenance or repair.

How can it be prevented?

Preventive measures should focus on checks. Emergency mechanisms should always be tested at the time of installation and handover.

However, it is normal for the condition of fixtures and fittings to deteriorate through use. Periodic function checks should therefore be carried out by a suitably qualified person.

Further guidance can be found here:

- [Building component series - Internal doorsets \(SHTM 58\)](#)
- [Building component series - Ironmongery \(SHTM 59\)](#)

If you become aware of an adverse incident or near miss, or if you have a safety concern about a piece of equipment, report it to IRIC (details below). Incidents and near misses should also be reported to your local incident reporting and learning system which you might know as InPhase, Datix or Ulyses.

IRIC Incident Reporting & Investigation Centre

To find safety alerts: scan the QR code or [click this link to visit our website](#)



To report an incident: scan the QR code or [click this link to visit our website](#)

