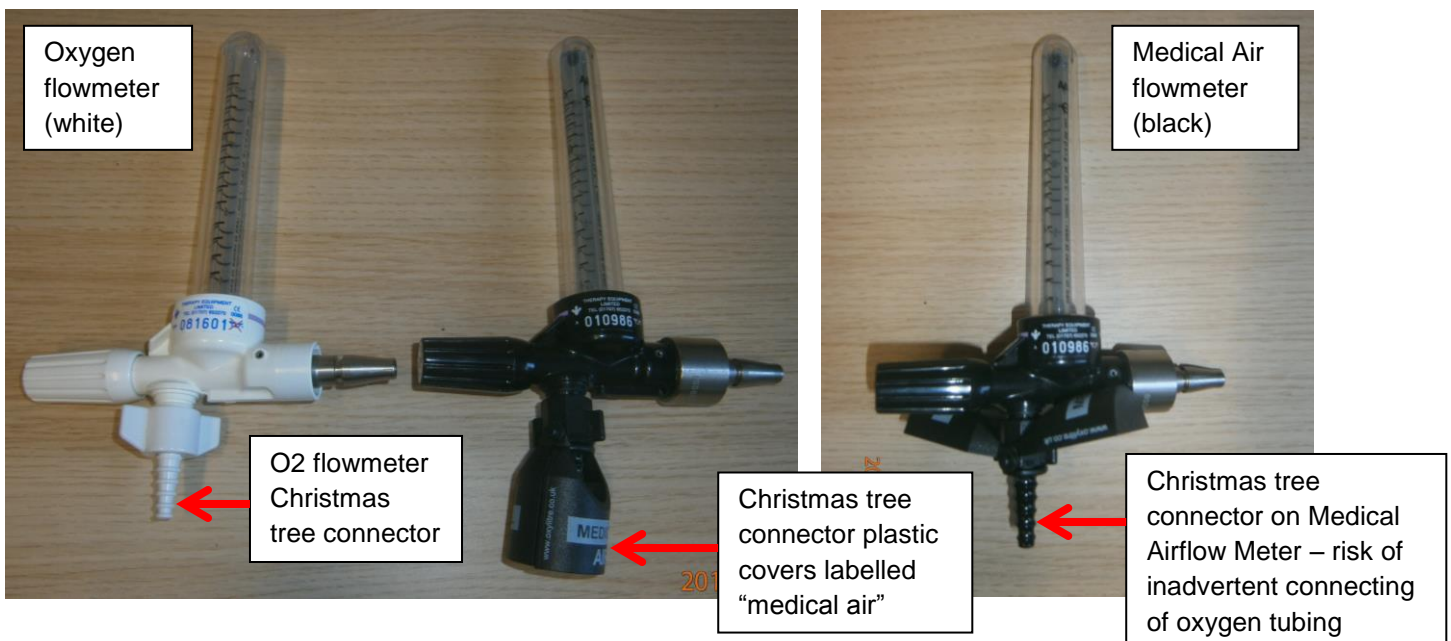


## Patient Safety ALERT: Reducing the risk of oxygen tubing being connected to air flowmeters

Severe harm or death can occur if medical air is accidentally administered to patients instead of oxygen. Unintended connection of oxygen mask tubing to an air flowmeter is a Never Event.

Air flowmeters cannot be fitted to an oxygen outlet as the port connectors are not compatible, however when air flowmeters are correctly fitted to medical air outlets, oxygen mask tubing could mistakenly be attached to the christmas tree connector on the medical air flowmeter. In the South of England, this has occurred on 15 occasions since February 2018.



Risk of oxygen tubing being connected to air flowmeters was originally raised under national patient safety alert NHS/PSA/S016/009. Recent national never events have prompted this alert.

NDHT own three medical air flowmeters. Two are held by EBME in the Medical Devices Store, however the third is currently unaccounted for. Should anyone discover the missing medical air flowmeter, please return to EBME who can be contacted on 01271 322 766, (ext 2766).

Further information on this alert can be provided by Mike Cousins, Health and Safety Manager & LSMS who can be contacted on 01271 311 3725 (ext:3725) or by email [michaelcousins@nhs.net](mailto:michaelcousins@nhs.net)

### **FOR URGENT ACTION BY MANAGERS**

- Ensure that ALL STAFF involved in the care of patients and the administration of oxygen in your team are aware of this alert & the risks associated with the use of medical air flowmeters that could result in patients requiring oxygen therapy mistakenly receiving medical air.
- Could wards, departments and services check store rooms, cupboards and the like for the medical airflow meter that is currently unaccounted for and return to EBME.