

Shrewsbury NHS trust fined after disturbing asbestos

An NHS hospital has been sentenced over the disturbance of asbestos during the refurbishment of an accommodation block.

Builders disturbed Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs) during renovation works for Shrewsbury and Telford Hospitals NHS Trust in June 2012.

The Trust pleaded guilty to two breaches of the Control of Asbestos Regulations. It was fined £16,000 and ordered to pay costs of £18,385 at Telford Magistrates' Court on Wednesday 8th May 2019.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that the Trust did not properly record ACMs at the site.

"Though it had arrangements in place to manage asbestos, the overall management plan for dealing with the material was not clearly recorded nor effectively communicated to employees and contractors working on site," it said.

The Trust's auditing procedures were also "insufficient" and failed to ensure the management plan was fully implemented.

In addition, the HSE found that the procedures in place upon the discovery of asbestos were inadequate and the Trust had failed to prevent re-entry into the contaminated area by other workers.

HSE inspector David Kivlin said: *"The Trust should have controlled this potentially lethal risk by identifying the type, location and condition of any ACMs within the accommodation block at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital by implanting suitable precautions to prevent its disturbance.*

"Although there is no indication that members of the public at the hospital were exposed as a result of the failings, asbestos-related diseases are currently untreatable and claim the lives of an estimated 5,000 people per year in the UK."

