

HAZARDS TO HEALTH



E-notification of Hazardous Substances Disease and Injury

By law, the following must be notified to the Medical Officer of Health:

- Injuries and diseases caused by hazardous substances*
- Lead absorption $\geq 0.24\mu\text{mol/L}$
- Poisoning arising from chemical contamination of the environment.

GPs can use electronic notification within MedTech, Profile, My Practice or Indici:

Look for 'Hazardous Substances & Lead Notifications' on the module list of the BPAC dashboard.

In practices without these Practice Management Systems:

Notify the Public Health Unit (PHU) as for other notifiable diseases (e.g. call or fax).

* A hazardous substance is legally defined as anything that can explode, catch fire, oxidise, corrode, or be toxic to humans. This definition does not cover medicines in finished dose form, alcohol when classified as a food item, chemical toxins associated with food (food poisoning), nor radioactive materials as these are covered by different legislation. Manufactured articles are also not included (eg, batteries) except those with explosive properties (eg, fireworks).

E-notification of Hazardous Substances Disease and Injury

The notification process

In MedTech, Profile, My Practice or Indici, Hazardous Substances Disease and Injury Reporting Tool (HSDIRT) is a module on the *bestpractice* dashboard. Submitting the short form will send it to the local Medical Officer of Health via a secure system.

Primary care practices that do not use MedTech, Profile, My Practice or Indici should still inform their Public Health Unit (PHU) of any cases. PHUs will then manually enter relevant details into HSDIRT.

A notification is required even when there has been direct laboratory notification to the PHU. Without it, PHUs will not have all the information needed to follow up the notification.

Once a notification has been received at a PHU, it is reviewed and investigated where necessary. Non-identifiable data are then transferred to the national surveillance system at Massey University.

The reporting tool has been designed by the Environmental Health Intelligence NZ (Massey University) and *bestpractice* Decision Support, and funded by the Ministry of Health.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For questions regarding a patient or notification, please contact your local public health unit.

For more articles and training see: www.ehinz.ac.nz and search 'HSDIRT publications'.

Examples of cases that should be reported:

Pb

Lead absorption
≥0.24µmol/L



A fireworks injury



Ingestion of cleaning products or cosmetics by children



Poisoning with agrichemicals (including spraydrift incidents)

CO

Carbon monoxide poisoning



Illness caused by exposure to solvents or chlorine



Contact dermatitis due to chemicals



'Huffing' (inhaling) of butane