

Hazardous Substances Disease and Injury and Lead Absorption Notifications via BPAC - Information for GPs

General Practitioners are now asked to notify cases of disease and injury caused by hazardous substances seen in primary care to the Medical Officer of Health. A short electronic form linked to MedTech32 and developed by *bestpractice* Decision Support (BPAC) is available to make notification as simple as possible.

Notification may result in a Public Health Unit (PHU) investigation of a particular event or, a collection of related cases may initiate the investigation of a particular substance in a region or nationwide. Data will be collated and analysed to inform policy and preventive actions.

1 What to notify

Hazardous substances disease or injury

This is a vast group of diagnoses; from children swallowing cleaning products or cosmetics, intentional overdoses with agrichemicals, carbon monoxide poisoning, illness caused by exposure to chemicals such as solvents or chlorine, contact dermatitis from chemicals, a fireworks burn or eye injury, or huffing of butane.

A hazardous substance is officially defined as anything that can explode, catch fire, oxidise, corrode, or be toxic to humans; this is set down in the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996. The same act was amended in 2005 requiring medical practitioners to notify cases to the Medical Officer of Health (section 143 2(A)).

Lead absorption

Notification of cases of lead absorption ≥ 0.48 $\mu\text{mol/L}$ from non-occupational lead exposure is required under the Health Act 1956 (Schedule 2). The electronic form can also be used for these notifications. Please note that clinician notification is encouraged alongside direct laboratory notification.

Chemical contamination of the environment

Cases of disease or injury arising from chemical contamination of the environment eg. health effects following an agrichemical spray drift event, or skin effect following an oil spill event such as the MV Rena in 2011, are also required under the Health Act 1956 and can be notified using this form.

Occupational cases

Both occupational and non-occupational disease and injuries can be notified. However occupational notifications will not be followed up by the PHU. In some instances, the PHU may refer the notification to the Labour Group, Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment (MBIE) for investigation but this will only occur with the consent of the patient.

GPs are asked to notify cases on suspicion, except for lead absorption where a confirmed lead level is required.

2 Accessing the notification form

After logging on at www.bestpractice.org.nz or through MedTech32, look for 'Hazardous Substances & Lead Notifications' on the dashboard. Access to the form for users of other PMSs will be available later in 2013. Please phone your local PHU to notify cases where the electronic form is not available.

The screenshot shows the Best Practice website dashboard. At the top, there is a 'Welcome Test Pilot 2 not you?' message and the Best Practice logo. Below this, there are two main sections: 'Dashboard' and 'Modules'. The 'Dashboard' section includes a date '14 January 2013' and a list of links: 'Modules', 'Parked Modules (2)', 'News', 'Settings', 'Send Feedback', 'Logout', and 'Disclaimer'. The 'Modules' section has two tabs: 'Favourites' and 'Recently Used'. Under 'Favourites', there is a link for 'Hazardous Subs & Lead Notifications'. Below the 'Modules' section is a 'Module List' section. It has two tabs: 'Forms' and 'Clinical Toolkit | Education'. Under 'Forms', there is a list of forms with checkboxes: 'AUDIT', 'Care Plans', 'Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale', 'Exercise Rx', 'First Trimester TOP', 'GAD7', 'Kessler 10', 'PHQ-9', 'Roland Morris Low Back', and 'Well Child Check'. In the 'Module List' section, there is a list of modules with checkboxes. The 'Hazardous Substances & Lead Notifications' module is highlighted with a green checkmark. Two arrows point from the text box below to the 'Hazardous Substances & Lead Notifications' link in the 'Favourites' section and the green checkmark in the 'Module List' section.

Select 'Hazardous Substances and Lead Notifications' from the Module list. Ticking the green box will add it to your favourites.

3 Completing the notification

The notification form can be completed at the time of consultation or for lead absorption, when results are confirmed. If necessary, 'Park' while awaiting further information.

The form has three tabs: 'Exposure Event' and 'Assessment', and Notifier/Patient Details (which is prepopulated from MedTech).

Exposure Event tab

Exposure Event Tab: enter the details of the exposure here.

Assessment tab: click here to access the next tab.

Choose which Public Health Unit to **send the notification to**, based on the patient's address. The default will be based on your practice address

If **workplace** is selected, enter the patient's current occupation. This will not be written back to the PMS.

If the substance is **lead**, include the blood lead result from your inbox

Enter the **substance name** in at least one field. Where multiple substances are involved click on the plus sign to enter further names.

If waiting on further information, **park** the notification form. Parked forms can be accessed later from the BPAC dashboard.

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TOOL

Exposure Event Assessment Notifier / Patient Details

Send notification to Medical Officer of Health at: Public Health South

Exposure Event

Exposure route Ingestion Inhalation Skin contact Eye contact

Date exposure began [calendar icon] OR Month/Year [input] OR Unknown

Exposure length < 1 day between 1 day & 1 month ≥1 month Unknown

Place of exposure Home Workplace School/preschool Public place Unknown Other

Specify Other [input]

Intent Unintentional Intentional Unknown

Is this case known to be linked to other cases of the same exposure event Yes No

Substance

Substance category(s) Household chemical Agrichemical Industrial chemical Fireworks/explosive Lead Unknown Other

Household: eg. cosmetic, dishwashing powder, fumigants / Industrial: eg. solvent, chlorine
Agrichemical: eg. pesticide, animal remedies, spraydrift / Other: eg. asbestos, mercury, arsenic

Specify Other [input]

Lead exposure

Did you obtain a whole blood lead specimen for this lead exposure event?
 Yes No

Whole blood lead concentration - µmol/L
26/09/2012 [calendar icon] [input] 9

Main source of lead exposure Occupational Close contact with person whose occupation involves lead exposure Paint Hobby Traditional medicine Drinking water Other

Enrolled in workplace lead monitoring Yes No Unknown

Was exposure event spraydrift Yes No

Substance name (complete at least 1 field)

Chemical name	Product name	Common name	Unknown
e.g. sodium hypochlorite	Janola	bleach	<input type="checkbox"/>
[input]	[input]	[input]	<input type="checkbox"/>

Exposure Event Assessment Notifier / Patient Details

Refresh Park Cancel Submit

Assessment tab

Hazardous Substances Disease & Injury Reporting Tool

Exposure Event
Assessment
Notifier / Patient Details

Systems affected (tick all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/> Central nervous system	<input type="checkbox"/> Eye	<input type="checkbox"/> Skin
<input type="checkbox"/> Cardiovascular	<input type="checkbox"/> Respiratory	<input type="checkbox"/> Gastrointestinal
<input type="checkbox"/> Musculoskeletal	<input type="checkbox"/> Psychological	<input type="checkbox"/> Nil
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other		

Specify Other

Symptoms / signs

<input type="checkbox"/> Symptoms only	<input type="checkbox"/> Symptoms and signs	<input type="checkbox"/> No signs or symptoms
<input type="checkbox"/> Poisoning	<input type="checkbox"/> Corrosive burn	<input type="checkbox"/> Explosive/traumatic damage
<input type="checkbox"/> No injury/disease	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other	

Poisoning: plausible exposure, with consistent symptoms
Corrosive burn: direct skin contact with hazardous substance

Specify Other

Treatment required Yes No

Lab tests requested None requested Pending Confirmed

Include Inbox items? ←

Date	Title	Who
<input type="checkbox"/> 26/09/2012	Chl Sendaway	Dr Sam Entwistle
<input type="checkbox"/> 28/06/2012	Complete Blood Count	Dr Sam Entwistle
<input type="checkbox"/> 28/06/2012	Hba1C	Dr Sam Entwistle ←

Selected Results

Referral Yes No Emergency department Specialist Other

Specify Other

Additional Information ←

Exposure Event
Assessment
Notifier / Patient Details

Refresh
Park
Cancel
Submit ←

Diagnosis: if the clinical findings are **not** consistent with the exposure select no injury/ disease. Alternatively, select other and provide further detail in text box.

If there are **relevant lab results**, include these by selecting from your inbox.

Any **additional information** on case or substance can be entered here.

Click **submit** to send completed form to the Medical Officer of Health.

Notifier/Patient Details tab

Data will be entered directly from the PMS.

After submitting the form a version will be saved in your outbox for future reference.

4 Feedback or queries

If you have questions regarding the patient or notification, please contact your local PHU. If you have feedback or questions regarding the BPAC system this can be entered using the 'Send Feedback' link in the BPAC dashboard, or by calling 0800 633236.