

From the Chief Medical Officer
Dr Michael McBride



Department of
**Health, Social Services
and Public Safety**

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AN ROINN

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

MÄNNYSTRIE O

**Poustie, Resydënter Heisin
an Fowk Siccar**

URGENT COMMUNICATION

HSS(MD)6/2010

Chief Executives, Public Health Agency/Health & Social
Care Board/ HSC Trusts/NIAS
Director of Public Health/Medical Director, Public
Health Agency
*(for onward distribution to relevant public
health staff)*

Director of Nursing, Public Health Agency
GP Medical Advisers, Health & Social Care Board
All General Practitioners
(for onward distribution to practice staff)

GP Locums
Family Practitioner Service Leads, Health & Social
Care Board
(for cascade to GP Out of Hours services)

Medical Directors of Trusts
*(for onward cascade to:
Staff in A&E Departments
Consultants in Infectious Disease
Consultant Microbiologists
Consultant Pathologists
Services dealing with drug misuse)*

Nursing Directors, HSC Trusts
*(for onward distribution to all Community
Nurses)*

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Your Ref:
Our Ref: HSS(MD)6/2010
Date: 5 February 2010

Dear Colleague

**CONFIRMED CASE OF ANTHRAX INFECTION IN AN INJECTING DRUG USER
IN ENGLAND**

This letter follows on from two previous HSS MD letters alerting you to possible contaminated heroin causing anthrax in injecting drug users (IDU). Links to the previous letters are: HSS(MD) 59/2009: <http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/hss-md-59-2009.pdf> and HSS(MD) 1/2010: <http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/hss-md-1-2010.pdf> .

It has now been confirmed that an injecting drug user in London has contracted anthrax. This case follows the recent outbreak amongst Scottish heroin users of whom 19 have been confirmed as contracting anthrax with 9 of these patients dying.

