

Medical Device/Equipment ALERT

Ref. MDEA(NI)2008/073

Issued: 3rd October 2008

For:

IMMEDIATE ACTION	
ACTION	✓
UPDATE	
INFORMATION	



HEALTH ESTATES

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	Section
<p>Medical Device/Equipment: The risk to water supplies, in sensitive hospital areas, from microbiological water treatment.</p>	▶ ①
<p>Problem: Failure to remove chemicals, (Silver-stabilised hydrogen peroxide and similar based chemicals), used for microbiological treatment of water supplies can produce a risk of exposure to potentially dangerous chemicals, which can cause severe injury to patients.</p>	▶ ②
<p>Action by: Chief Executive/Board Member with special responsibility for health and safety, in accordance with local procedures, should ensure that this alert is brought to the attention of appropriate staff.</p>	▶ ③
<p>Action: As a matter of urgency, review water disinfection procedures involving Hydrogen Peroxide and similar based chemicals to ensure that these and other potentially dangerous chemicals cannot be passed on to patients. Particular attention should be paid to sites where haemodialysis treatment (renal dialysis) is performed.</p>	▶ ④
<p>Distributed by NIAIC to: Chief Executive of each HSS Board Chief Executive of each HSS Trust Chief Executive of each Agency NIAIC Liaison Officers</p>	▶ ⑤
<p>Contacts Details of manufacturer and NIAIC contacts for technical and clinical aspects.</p>	▶ ⑥
<p>Action deadlines for the Safety Alert Broadcast System for HPSS Trusts (SABS)</p>	
<p>Acknowledge Receipt of Alert: 8th Oct 2008</p>	▶ ⑦
<p>Action Under Way: 10th Oct 2008</p>	
<p>Action Complete: 31st Oct 2008</p>	

This Alert is on our web site: <http://sabs.dhsspsni.gov.uk>

1. DEVICE/EQUIPMENT:

The risk to water supplies, in sensitive hospital areas, from microbiological water treatment.

2. PROBLEM:

Failure to remove chemicals, (Silver-stabilised hydrogen peroxide and similar based chemicals), used for microbiological treatment of water supplies can produce a risk of exposure to potentially dangerous chemicals, which can cause severe injury to patients.

Background

It was reported that silver-stabilised hydrogen peroxide had been used in dosing a water supply system, with the intention to reduce the incidences of microbiological growth (*Legionella*), on a site where haemodialysis was provided to renal patients.

On the same site a number of patients were re-admitted to hospital after their dialysis treatment with severe symptomatic anaemia. As part of the resulting investigation it was identified that the renal water treatment plant, (including the carbon filters and reverse osmosis (RO) plant), did not filter out all the hydrogen peroxide, thereby exposing patients, using the renal unit for haemodialysis, to potentially high levels of the chemical.

3. ACTION BY:

Chief Executive/Board Member with special responsibility for health and safety, in accordance with local procedures, should ensure that this alert is brought to the attention of appropriate staff.

4. ACTION:

As a matter of urgency, review water disinfection procedures involving Hydrogen Peroxide and similar based chemicals to ensure that these and other potentially dangerous chemicals cannot be passed on to patients. Particular attention should be paid to sites where haemodialysis takes place, including intensive care units or similar locations where sporadic haemodialysis may be performed.

When disinfection of this nature is necessary, procedures must be in place to liaise with staff from sensitive units so they can take appropriate action; and water supplies should be tested for chemical residues before patient treatments recommence.

Additional information

- 1) Trusts are reminded of their responsibilities under the “Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002” (COSHH), which require employers to control exposure to hazardous substances to prevent ill health.
- 2) COSHH regulations requires employers to; amongst other duties:-
 - Assess the risks to health from chemicals and prevent or adequately control exposure.
 - Use those controls and make sure employees use them.
 - Make sure the controls are maintained and working effectively.
 - Inform employees about the risks to their health.
 - Maintain a comprehensive register of all chemicals stored, or to be used on site(s).
 - Train employees.
- 3) Ensure chemicals are only used in accordance with manufacturer’s recommendations.
- 4) Ensure hazardous substances are stored and used in accordance with manufacturer’s instruction and the containers are in a serviceable condition.
- 5) When planning dosing of water systems services within healthcare premises adhere to the good practice guidelines obtainable within HTM 04-01: The control of Legionella, hygiene, “safe” hot water, cold water and drinking water systems - Part A: Design, installation and testing.
- 6) In the interests of patient safety ensure that when planning dosing of water systems:-
 - Close liaison is undertaken with clinicians and departmental heads
 - A risk assessment is undertaken to identify at-risk areas and consider their isolation
 - That the process is not likely to have an adverse effect on other parts of the system or equipment
- 7) Following dosing with silver hydrogen peroxide or other chemicals ensure adequate flushing of the system(s).
- 8) Reference should also be made to the National Patient safety(NPSA) Rapid Response Report number RRR/2008/007

5. ONWARD DISTRIBUTION TO:

Please bring this notice to the attention of all who need to know or be aware of it. This will include distribution to:

- Liaison Officers
- Risk Managers
- Health & Safety Officers/Advisors
- Clinical Governance Leads
- Estates & Facilities Managers
- Nurse Directors
- Medical / Clinical Directors
- Renal Service Managers and Technicians
- Independent Health and Social Care Providers – Private Hospitals and Clinics

6. CONTACTS:

Enquiries to NIAIC should quote reference number MDEA(NI)2008/073 and be addressed to:

Northern Ireland Adverse Incident Centre (NIAIC)
Health Estates
Estate Policy Directorate
Stoney Road
Dundonald
Belfast BT16 1US

Tel: 028 9052 3868

Fax: 028 9052 3900

Email: NIAIC@dhsspsni.gov.uk

7. FEEDBACK:

Action deadlines for the Safety Alert Broadcast System for HPSS Trusts (SABS)

Acknowledge Receipt of Alert:

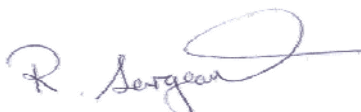
8th Oct 2008

Action Under Way:

10th Oct 2008

Action Complete:

31st Oct 2008



Robert Sergeant
NIAIC Operational Manager

HOW TO REPORT ADVERSE INCIDENTS

Adverse Incidents relating to medical devices, non-medical equipment, plant and buildings should be reported to NIAIC as soon as possible. Advice on how to report is given in MDEA(NI)2007/01. If you are in doubt about how to report incidents, please speak to your liaison officer or contact NIAIC using the telephone number provided. Adverse Incident reporting forms and an on-line reporting facility are available on the NIAIC website at www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/niaic

Heath Estates is an Executive Agency of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety