

Medical Device/Equipment ALERT

Ref. MDEA(NI)2003/25

Issued: 9 September 2003

For:

IMMEDIATE ACTION	
ACTION	✓
UPDATE	
INFORMATION REQUEST	



**NORTHERN
IRELAND
ADVERSE
INCIDENT
CENTRE**

	Section								
Medical Device/Equipment: Bath and shower seating equipment.	▶ ①								
Problem: Entrapment of genitalia in the drainage holes/slots of bath and shower seating equipment.	▶ ②								
Action by: Those responsible for the purchase, issue and use of bath and shower seating equipment.	▶ ③								
Action: Ensure that any entrapment risk to the user is minimised on all bath and shower seating equipment.	▶ ④								
Distributed by NIAIC to: <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Chief Executive of each HSS Board</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Education and Library Boards (for</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chief Executive of each HSS Trust</td> <td>onward distribution as appropriate)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chief Executive of each Agency</td> <td>Hospices</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NIAIC Liaison Officers</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Chief Executive of each HSS Board	Education and Library Boards (for	Chief Executive of each HSS Trust	onward distribution as appropriate)	Chief Executive of each Agency	Hospices	NIAIC Liaison Officers		▶ ⑤
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Contacts NIAIC contact details.	▶ ⑥								
Feedback Requirements to NIAIC Any safety concerns regarding entrapment hazards should be discussed with the manufacturer/supplier and reported to NIAIC.	▶ ⑦								

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

1. DEVICE/EQUIPMENT:

Examples of bath and shower seating equipment are: bath boards, bath benches, bath seats, bath lifts, bath hoists, shower seats, shower chairs, shower benches, shower stools, shower and changing benches (or stretchers) and foldaway shower seats.

2. PROBLEM:

Some bath and shower seating equipment has drainage holes/slots which have the potential to entrap genitalia, leading to serious injury, pain and embarrassment.

The NIAIC has received a recent report where male genitalia had become entrapped in the drainage holes of shower seating device. The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) have also received similar reports in the last three months concerning a variety of bath and shower seating equipment. These incidents resulted in cuts, lacerations and testicular bruising and in several cases the user had to be freed by the Fire Service. Similarly, an incident was recently reported involving an elderly woman with a rectal prolapse, which became entrapped in the holes of the seat on a bath hoist.

The size, shape and position of the drainage holes/slots influence the risk of entrapment.

NIAIC previously highlighted this problem in Safety Action Notice SAN(NI) 97/20, 'Bath and shower seating equipment: risk of injury'.

Note: British Standard BS EN 12182:1999 'Technical aids for disabled persons - General requirements and test methods' requires that to prevent genitalia traps, holes and clearances between parts shall be less than 8mm or more than 75mm.

3. ACTION BY:

Those responsible for the purchase, issue and use of bath and shower seating equipment.

4. ACTION:

- Check that the size, shape and position of the drainage holes/slots of existing equipment do not present a risk of user entrapment.
- Check that all seating areas are not cracked or distorted. (Cracked and distorted seats can exacerbate the problem and possibly cause the user's skin to be pinched.)
- Ensure that the instructions for use are available and are followed.
- Ensure that the user does not exceed the maximum user weight of the equipment. A plastic seat may distort under heavy loads, increasing the risk of entrapment.
- Where the shape, size and position of the drainage holes/slots present a possible entrapment risk, consider whether it is appropriate to use a folded towel or similar protective material between the seat and the user to minimise the entrapment risk.
- When purchasing, issuing or using bath and shower seating equipment, consider the potential for user entrapment.

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:

- Risk Managers
- Health & Safety Officers/Advisors
- Clinical Governance Leads
- Device Managers
- Estates Managers
- Occupational Therapists
- Nurse Directors
- Nursing and Care Staff
- Supplies Staff (RSS)
- Practice Nurses
- District Nurses
- Health Visitors
- Directors of Public Health
- Social Care Staff
- Community Care Staff
- Day Care Centres
- Independent Health and Social Care Providers including Private Clinics and Residential and Nursing Homes (Through R&I Units).

6. CONTACTS:

Enquires to NIAIC should quote reference number MDEA(NI)2003/25 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:

Any safety concerns regarding entrapment hazards should be discussed with the manufacturer/supplier and reported to NIAIC.



Brian Godfrey
NIAIC 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 Safety Notice SN (NI) 2003/01. 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