

Chief Executive/General Manager
Health and Social Services Boards
Chief Executive
Health and Social Services Trusts
General Manager
Central Services Agency
Chief Executive
Regional Medical Physics Agency
Chief Executive
Northern Ireland Blood Transfusion Service
General Medical Practitioners
General Dental Practitioners
Optometrists
Community Pharmacists

Our Ref: PEL(00) 15

Date: 10 November 2000

Dear Sir/Madam

**REPORTING ADVERSE INCIDENTS AND DISSEMINATING
WARNING NOTICES RELATING TO MEDICAL EQUIPMENT,
NON-MEDICAL EQUIPMENT, BUILDINGS, AND PLANT**

Distribution:

- Staff with responsibility for setting organisational policy for medical and non-medical equipment management.
- Liaison Officers with responsibility for receipt and distribution of warning notices.
- Risk Managers, Health & Safety Managers/Co-coordinators.
- Medical Directors
- Nurse Directors
- Estates Managers
- R&I Units

Summary:

Following consultation with HPSS organisations earlier this year, we have reviewed the Northern Ireland Defect and Investigation Centre documentation and procedures and are making the changes as outlined in this letter. These changes reflect a balanced assessment of HPSS requirements and how we can effectively deliver them at present.

This letter replaces PEL(93) 35 and PEL(93) 36 which are cancelled.

Action:

TO NOTE:

- **The name of the Northern Ireland Defect & Investigation Centre (NIDIC) has been changed to the Northern Ireland Adverse Incident Centre (NIAIC).**
- **The format of warning notices has been updated, with Safety Action Notice now titled Safety Notice.**
- **The procedures for reporting adverse incidents and disseminating warning notices will be issued annually by means of a Safety Notice. The first in the series, SN (NI) 2000/NIAIC is enclosed. It will have parallel distribution to all liaison officers. An updated version of this notice will be issued at the beginning of subsequent years.**
- **Hazard and Advice Notices will be faxed to all liaison officers in parallel with normal hard copy distribution by first class post. Liaison Officers who have provided NIAIC with an e-mail address will also receive warning notices using this channel of communication. Posted copies will retain the colour coding system (PINK for Hazard Notice, WHITE for Advice Notice and BLUE for Safety Notice).**

Background:

The role of the Northern Ireland Adverse Incident Centre is to take all reasonable steps to protect the health of patients, staff and clients. One way we aim to achieve this is by investigating reports of events relating to medical equipment, non-medical equipment, buildings and plant. The new centre name now reflects this, as we are interested in any event that may have implications for patients, staff and clients and not just when something has failed.

In support of this, the format of all warning notices has been updated to make them clearer to recipients and the title of Safety Action Notice has been changed to Safety Notice to provide consistency across the warning notice range.

To ensure that safety information is available to recipients as quickly as possible, all Hazard Notices and Advice Notices will be faxed to liaison officers in parallel with the normal hard copy distribution by first class post. Posted copies will retain the colour coding system (PINK for Hazard Notice, WHITE for Advice Notice and BLUE for Safety Notice). Liaison Officers who have provided NIAIC with an e-mail address will also receive all warning notices by using this channel of communication. We will be reviewing distribution arrangements on a regular basis to ensure that we can make best use of available technologies, including the Internet.

The current procedures for reporting adverse incidents to NIAIC and information on the dissemination of warning notices has been produced in a Safety Notice format.

The first notice of this type, SN (NI) 2000/NIAIC is enclosed with this letter. To assist with ensuring that the procedures are publicised as widely as possible on a regular basis, an updated version of this notice will be issued at the beginning of subsequent years.

Should you require any further information concerning this letter, please contact;

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Yours faithfully

S Blayney
Director