



**TITLE:**

**ULTRAVIOLET (UV) PHOTOTHERAPY  
CABINETS**

**MANUFACTURER/SUPPLIER**

Various

**PROBLEM**

Risk of laceration from unguarded UV tubes and reflectors in phototherapy cabinets, following falls.

**DISTRIBUTED BY NIAIC TO:**

Chief Executive of each HSS Board, Trust and Agency.

NIAIC Liaison Officers.

**For onward distribution as appropriate to:**

This notice should be brought to the attention of all who need to know or be aware of it, including those listed below, in accordance with local procedures. This will include:

Risk Managers	Dermatology Clinics
Health & Safety Officers/Advisors	Dermatologists
Clinical Governance Leads	Physiotherapy Departments
Medical Directors	Phototherapists
Nurse Directors	Directors of Public Health
Medical, Nursing and Care Staff	Independent Health and Social Care Providers

Boards/Trusts should ensure that if appropriate, this information is passed to all persons having the responsibility for the premises registered under "THE REGISTERED HOMES (NI) ORDER 1992.

**ACTION**

- Consider fitting protective guards to UV Phototherapy cabinets
- Consider measures to prevent falls during treatment.

**BACKGROUND**

NIAIC has been informed that the Medical Devices Agency (MDA) has received a report of an injury caused to a patient who fainted during UV phototherapy treatment. As there was no protective guarding over the UV tubes and the reflectors, the patient was badly lacerated when he fell against the back wall of the cabinet and broke the UV tubes.

Some makes of UV cabinet can be purchased without protective guarding as standard. Users should consider retro-fitting such cabinets with guarding to improve treatment safety. The manufacturer or supplier should be contacted for the available options.

Protective guarding is usually made from a metal grid or transparent acrylic sheeting. The grade of the acrylic is crucial to the correct operation of the cabinet and to ensure efficacy of treatment; it must not affect the output by impeding the UV transmission or alter its wavelength. Do not make guards in-house.

To help prevent patient falls during treatment in UV cabinets, phototherapists should examine or implement other measures where practicable. These may include reducing the

ambient temperature of the cabinet and incorporating rest periods in the treatment.

## ENQUIRIES

Enquires to the NIAIC should quote the reference number SN(NI) 2003/07 and be addressed to:

Northern Ireland Adverse Incident Centre (NIAIC)  
Health Estates  
Estate Policy Directorate  
Stoney Road  
Dundonald  
Belfast BT16 1US  
Marked for the attention of Mr Brian Godfrey

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Brian Godfrey  
NIAIC Manager



HEALTH ESTATES  
ESTATE POLICY

**NORTHERN  
IRELAND  
ADVERSE  
INCIDENT  
CENTRE**

**SAFETY**

**NOTICE**

### 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](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/niaic)

*Heath Estates is an Executive Agency of the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety  
Áisíneacht Feidhmeannach don Roinn Sláinte. Serbhísí Sáisialta agus Sábháilteacht Phoiblí*