

SFHHP11

Gather information to identify people who may have been exposed to a hazard to health



Overview

This standard concerns gathering information to trace individuals or groups who may have been exposed to an infectious or a non-infectious hazard – an activity that includes contact tracing. This may be in relation to small numbers of contacts or exposures affecting a large number of people. You will gather information from individuals who have been exposed (cases), or people who have knowledge of the situation, in order to identify who else may also be affected. Communication with individuals affected by the hazard may often take place in circumstances that are stressful and difficult for them. The activities described in this standard will take place after the identification of a need for contact tracing, with reference to national or local guidelines.

This standard does not cover informing the case about their exposure to a hazard or their diagnosis, nor providing them with information, screening or treatment for their condition. Providing information and advice to at-risk contacts is covered by another standard in this suite.

Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

- P1 ensure that you have a clear understanding of:
 - P1.1 the nature of the hazard to health
 - P1.2 the reasons for identifying people who may have been exposed to the hazard
 - P1.3 the information you need to collect
 - P1.4 the timescales within which you are working
- P2 act with an appropriate degree of urgency, relative to the nature of the hazard and the levels of risk that are indicated
- P3 communicate with individuals in a vocabulary, manner and pace that is appropriate to them and their situation, to encourage a free flow of information
- P4 seek information from individuals to identify who else might be at risk from the hazard
- P5 encourage individuals to provide details of contacts who might be at risk by providing relevant advice and information, where relevant, on:
 - P5.1 the exposure/condition
 - P5.2 the level of risk
 - P5.3 actions advised for contacts
 - P5.4 conditions of confidentiality, where appropriate
- P6 listen carefully to the responses, and probe for more information where this is justified to gather complete information about contacts
- P7 seek additional data on contacts from other sources, such as databases and records, where the information you have gathered from individuals is incomplete
- P8 make an accurate record of the information you have gathered and any advice and information you have provided
- P9 use the information you have gathered in a timely way, so that you or your colleagues can communicate with, or to provide or arrange interventions for, those who may have been exposed to the hazard

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K1 your legal powers and duties, and your responsibilities and accountability under organisational and professional policies and protocols
- K2 the importance of working within the limits of your own competence and seeking support and advice when faced with situations outside your competence
- K3 the roles and responsibilities of local health and social care agencies and departments and other agencies at regional and national level
- K4 the principles and benefits of collaborative working with other agencies
- K5 the importance of, and how to achieve, effective communication with a range of individuals and groups about hazards and risks in order to protect the population's health and wellbeing
- K6 how to employ questioning techniques to assess a health protection challenge
- K7 what influences behaviour and perceptions of risk in relation to health protection
- K8 good record keeping criteria and how to write contemporaneous notes
- K9 the nature, causes and occurrence of major communicable and non-communicable diseases due to infectious and non-infectious environmental hazards
- K10 the principles of the modes of transmission, latency, incubation periods, exposure, herd and individual immunity
- K11 different modes of exposure to environmental hazards, and the effects on health of acute and long-term environmental hazards
- K12 the nature of outbreaks and incidents and how they are managed, including local emergency response protocols and procedures
- K13 the principles of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention programmes as they relate to major communicable and non-communicable diseases due to infectious and environmental hazards
- K14 the methods employed in assessing, investigating and communicating risks to health and wellbeing including long-term exposure to non-infectious environmental hazards

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Additional Information

External Links

This standard links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004):

Dimension: HWB3 Protection of health and wellbeing

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Developed by	Skills for Health
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