

Chief Medical Officer  
**Sir Dr Michael McBride**

**HSS(MD) 41/2021**

For Action:

Chief Executives, Public Health Agency/Health and Social Care Board/HSC Trusts/NIAS  
GP Medical Advisers, Health and Social Care Board  
All General Practitioners and GP Locums (*for onward distribution to practice staff*)

**Please see attached full addressee list**

Castle Buildings  
Stormont Estate  
Belfast BT4 3SQ  
Tel: 028 9052 0658  
Fax: 028 9052 0574  
[Email:cmooffice@health-ni.gov.uk](mailto:cmooffice@health-ni.gov.uk)

Your Ref:

Our Ref: HSS (MD) 41/2021

Date: 17 June 2021

Dear Colleague

**HEPATITIS C BECOMES A NOTIFIABLE DISEASE IN NORTHERN IRELAND**

***Action required***

Chief Executives must ensure that this information is drawn to the attention of all clinical staff to enable them to respond accordingly.

The HSCB must ensure that this information is cascaded to all General Practitioners and OOH facilities immediately.

1. The Public Health Act (Northern Ireland) 1967 has been amended to make hepatitis c a notifiable disease. The changes come into effect on 8 July 2021.
2. The Department has made The Public Health Notifiable Diseases Order (Northern Ireland) 2021 under powers conferred by section 1(2) of the Public Health Act (Northern Ireland) 1967. The Statutory Rule is subject to negative resolution procedure before the Assembly.
3. The Statutory Rule will mean that medical practitioners are required to share patient information with the Public Health Agency if they become aware, or have reasonable grounds for suspecting, that a person they are attending has hepatitis c.
4. The Director of Public Health and the Public Health Agency have a range of powers available in relation to notifiable diseases by virtue of the provisions of the [Public Health Act \(Northern Ireland\) 1967](#).

Yours sincerely

GRO-C

Sir Dr Michael McBride  
**Chief Medical Officer**

**CIRCULATION LIST**

Director of Public Health/Executive Medical Director, Public Health Agency  
*(for onward distribution to all relevant health protection staff)*  
Assistant Director Public Health (Health Protection), Public Health Agency  
Director of Nursing, Public Health Agency  
Assistant Director of Pharmacy and Medicines Management, Health and Social  
Care Board, *(for onward distribution to all Community Pharmacies)*  
Directors of Pharmacy HSC Trusts  
Director of Social Care and Children, HSCB  
Family Practitioner Service Leads, Health and Social Care Board *(for cascade to  
GP Out of Hours services)*  
Medical Directors, HSC Trusts *(for onward distribution to all Consultant  
Obstetricians, Paediatricians and other relevant staff)*  
Directors of Nursing, HSC Trusts *(for onward distribution to all Community  
Nurses, and Midwives)*  
Directors of Children's Services, HSC Trusts  
RQIA *(for onward transmission to all independent providers including  
independent hospitals)*  
Regional Medicines Information Service, Belfast HSC Trust  
Regional Pharmaceutical Procurement Service, Northern HSC Trust  
Professor Donna Fitzsimons, Head of School of Nursing and Midwifery QUB  
Professor Sonja McIlpatrick, Head of School of Nursing, University of Ulster  
Caroline Lee, CEC  
Donna Gallagher, Open University  
Professor Paul McCarron, Head of School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences,  
UU  
Professor Colin McCoy, Head of School, School of Pharmacy, QUB  
Professor Colin Adair, Director of the NI Centre for Pharmacy Learning and  
Development, QUB  
Joe Brogan, Assistant Director of Integrated Care, HSCB  
Donncha O'Carolan, HSCB *(for distribution to all General Dental Practitioners)*  
Raymond Curran, Head of Ophthalmic Services, HSCB *(for distribution to Community  
Optometrists)*  
Trade Union Side  
Clinical Advisory Team  
Louise McMahon

This letter is available on the Department of Health website at  
[https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/professional-medical-and-environmental-  
health-advice/hssmd-letters-and-urgent-communications](https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/professional-medical-and-environmental-health-advice/hssmd-letters-and-urgent-communications)