



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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Prif Swyddog Nyrsio – Cyfarwyddwr Nyrs GIG Cymru
Chief Nursing Officer – Nurse Director NHS Wales

All Wales Medical Directors
All Wales Nursing Directors

Via e-mail

17 February 2021

Dear Colleagues

The Welsh Government continues to receive notification from the Healthcare Safety Investigation Branch (HSIB) on recommendations it makes to support patient safety improvement. As previously agreed we are sharing the latest notification received from HSIB, published December 2020, relating to the placement of nasogastric tubes.

The link below provides the detail relating to its investigation which cites the case of a 26 year old man who after suffering a road traffic accident and subsequent seizures was admitted to an emergency department, where he was placed in an induced coma and a nasogastric tube (NG) inserted. The young man was transferred to the critical care unit. During an attempted weaning from sedation he became agitated and removed the NG tube. Following further sedation a new NG tube was inserted to ensure his nutritional needs were met, the tube was confirmed as correctly inserted via a pH test of gastric aspirate. It was subsequently found that the NG tube had inadvertently been inserted into his lungs and enteral feed had been delivered into his airways. <https://www.hsib.org.uk/news/hsib-highlights-patient-safety-risks-nasogastric-tube-never-events/>

A patient safety alert, PSA008 - nasogastric tube misplacement, (link below for ease of reference) was issued in Wales in 2017 and provides advice to help mitigate the risks highlighted within the above report. The requirements set out in this alert should help prevent incidents such as the above from occurring and you should ensure your organisations remain compliant with this alert.

<https://du.nhs.wales/files/alerts/psa008/>

We are aware there have been concerns surrounding the accuracy of the pH strips currently in use within the NHS. The Surgical Materials Testing Laboratory (SMTL) has been undertaking



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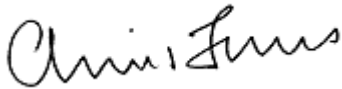
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work to test the efficacy of these strips and is currently finalising a report for consideration by Procurement as part of its next steps in the procurement process. Further advice will be provided as soon as the SMTL has concluded its work and agreed a way forward.

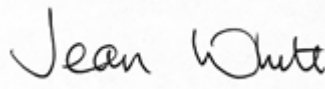
As with previous notifications could you please share the enclosed information with your relevant health professionals to help ensure the continued provision of safe and effective care and compliance with safety standards.

We hope you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely



Professor Chris Jones
Deputy Chief Medical Officer



Professor Jean White CBE
Chief Nursing Officer
Nurse Director NHS Wales