

HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS PROCEDURE[®]

DOCUMENT SUMMARY/KEY POINTS

The following document:

- Details the procedures and practices for the effective management of workplace Hazardous Chemicals.
- Identifies the responsibilities of all hospital workers in the management and storage of Hazardous Chemicals
- Details the importance of Safety Data Sheets (SDS) which provide product information necessary for the safe use, storage and disposal of Hazardous Chemicals.
- Identifies the requirement for education and training for staff that are exposed to, or using, Hazardous Chemicals.
- Details the requirements for the development of Safe Work Practices (SWP) – a written step by step guide on how to perform a task with a minimum risk to health and safety.
- Identifies the requirement for a hazardous substance register – all Hazardous Chemicals held in the hospital must be registered and maintained by each department on ChemAlert, the hospital's hazardous substance database.
- Identifies storage and disposal procedures for Hazardous Chemicals.

Related Ministry of Health Documents

- [Work Health and Safety: Better Practice Procedures: PD2018_013](#) Ministry of Health
- Factsheets - Hazardous Chemicals Management
<http://internal.health.nsw.gov.au/jobs/safety/whs-hazardous-chemicals.html>

Related Information

- SafeWork NSW: Code of Practice - [Managing Risks of Hazardous Chemicals in the Workplace](#) - August 2019.

This document reflects what is currently regarded as safe practice. However, as in any clinical situation, there may be factors which cannot be covered by a single set of guidelines. This document does not replace the need for the application of clinical judgement to each individual presentation.

Approved by:	SCHN Policy, Procedures and Guideline Committee	
Date Effective:	1 st March 2020	Review Period: 3 years
Team Leader:	Manager	Area/Dept: Work Health and Safety

CHANGE SUMMARY

- Updated to Network Policy
- Reflects changes in WHS legislation and Codes of Practice
- Definitions
- Chemical Register/Manifest

READ ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- All SCHN workers should be aware of this policy.
- All SCHN managers should read and acknowledge this document
- All relevant workers should complete ChemAlert Training through HETI online

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Policy Statement

To provide procedural guidance in relation to Hazardous Chemicals to ensure a comprehensive system of management that assists organisational compliance with WHS legislation, Codes of Practice and the Ministry of Health governing the safe management of Hazardous Chemicals.

Background

This procedure will assist managers, supervisors and staff to prevent incidents associated with the use of Hazardous Chemicals, and to effectively respond to incidents if they do occur.

At all times when considering risks associated with Hazardous Chemicals it must be remembered that uncontrolled chemical hazards may without warning cause acute and/or chronic injury and disease. The risks of spontaneous violent reactions from uncontrolled chemical hazards must also be a consideration when assessing the environment and processes where chemicals are involved.

The overarching principle is to provide a systematic method for identifying and controlling potential chemical hazards in order to minimise the risk of adverse health and safety effects to persons, the environment or property.

This procedure applies to all staff, patients, volunteers, students, visitors and contractors. It includes activities such as working with the Chemicals, storing them, labelling or supervising the use or storage of such Chemicals. It applies across the Sydney Children's Health Network in all facilities and other places of work.

Definitions

ChemAlert – Is the state-wide electronic chemical information system which has been introduced by NSW Health to assist Local Health Districts/ Specialised Networks in the management of chemicals in the workplace. All chemicals across SCHN are managed through ChemAlert.

Hazardous Chemical – is any substance, mixture or article that satisfies the criteria of one or more hazard classes in the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS), as modified by Schedule 6 of the WHS Regulation. However some hazard classes and categories of the GHS are excluded by the WHS Regulation.

GHS – is the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals, 3rd Revised Edition, published by the United Nations as modified by Schedule 6 of the WHS Regulation.

PCBU (Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking) means any person authorised to exercise the functions of the employer of staff to which this Policy applies.

Worker – means any person working in a permanent, temporary, casual, termed appointment or honorary capacity within NSW Health such as:

- A SCHN employee
- Agency staff
- Contractor, including VMOs
- Student
- Other

Responsibilities

Workers

- A worker has a duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety while at work and also to take reasonable care so that their conduct does not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons at the workplace, comply with WHS instructions, procedures and safe work practices in relation to chemical management.
- Attend training as required for the management of chemicals in the workplace.
- Be aware of safety data sheets (SDS's) information for chemicals used, stored and handled in the workplace
- Participate in the SCHN Work Health and Safety risk management process to ensure they meet their obligations under the WHS Act 2011 and WHS Regulation 2017.
- Workers and others exposed to chemicals as part of their duties, have access to the "search" mode of ChemAlert on the SCHN Intranet without need for a password.

Managers and Supervisors

- Ensure they complete ChemAlert training on HETI and that staff receive suitable and sufficient training for ChemAlert;
- Ensure local procedures for the governance, maintenance, and use of ChemAlert are implemented. Complete an annual review of ChemAlert Stock Holdings and regular update of chemical manifest quantities;
- Ensure workers, WHS Committee members and any other person working at a site have access to a computer and the necessary information on ChemAlert proportionate to their level of risk and responsibility;
- Implement a risk management approach through the consultation, identification of hazards, risk assessment, elimination or when not practicable the minimisation of risk, as well as the review of the effectiveness and monitoring of the controls when new chemicals are introduced or making any changes to plant, the work environment, procedures or systems;
- Ensure workers receive appropriate training and education relating to hazardous chemicals and spill management;
- Ensure appropriate storage, signage/placarding, handling, transport, usage and disposal is compliant for hazardous chemicals in the workplace;

- Monitoring workers health where required in consultation with WHS as per SDS and legislation;
- Having documented departmental emergency procedures which are regularly checked and evaluated for their effectiveness;
- Reporting WHS performance to their Managers/ Directors;
- Escalating chemical hazard risks to their Managers/Directors for resolution where the control is beyond their delegation;
- Reporting notifiable incidents in line with SCHN procedures and WHS Act and Regulation requirements. Refer to SCHN WHS Incident Management and Notification to WorkCover NSW.

Directors

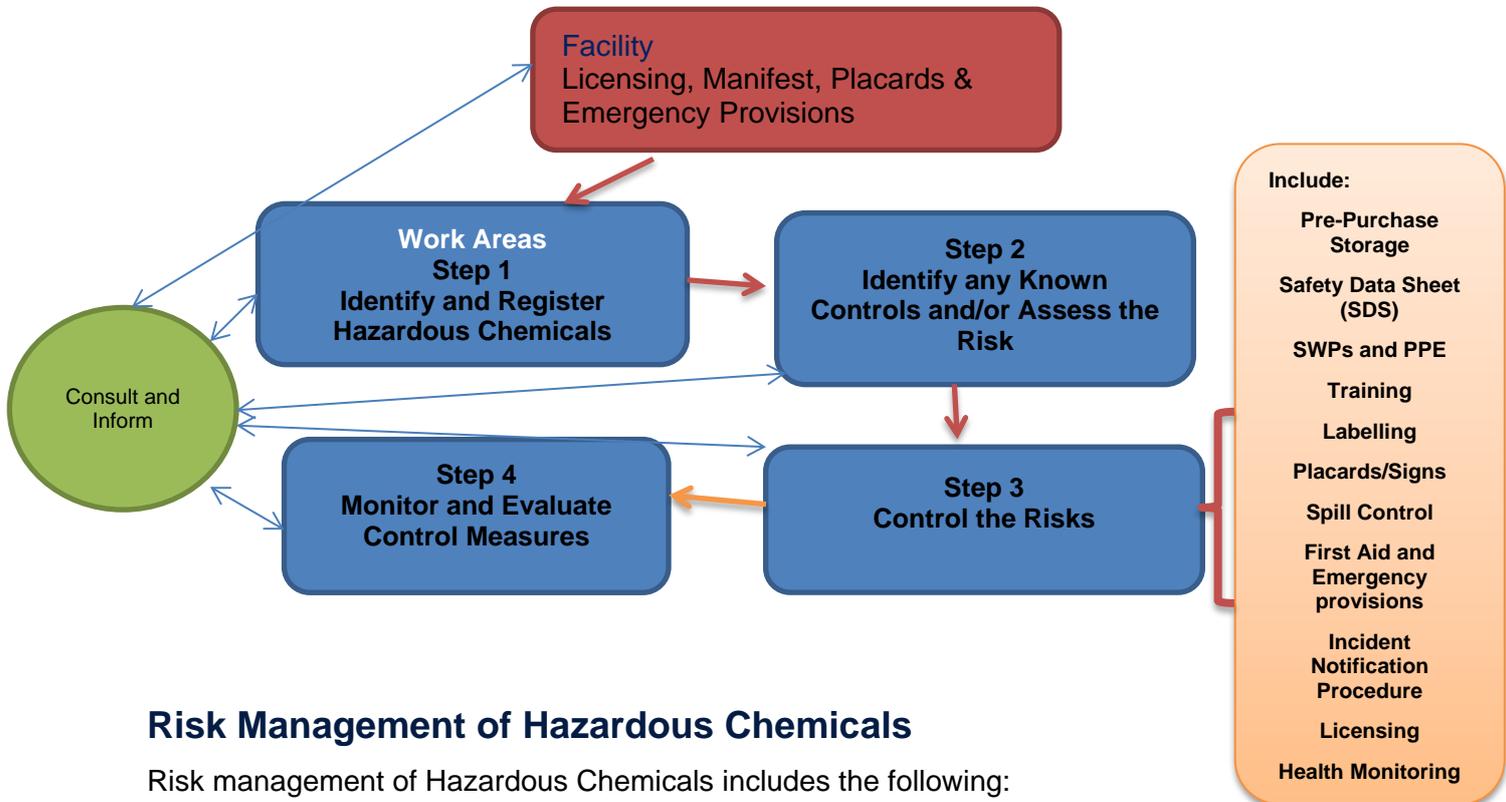
- Apply due diligence by monitoring the implementation of the Hazardous Chemicals procedure and confirming the establishment and maintenance of the chemical risk management procedures.
- Resolve WHS issues brought to their attention in a timely and informed manner.
- Report the Departments/Services Chemical risk management achievements and deficits to the Chief Executive.
- Apply due diligence to show every reasonable precaution has been taken to ensure the departments and services under their control are acting to prevent harm to its workers and others in the workplace.
- Ensure a site chemical manifest is maintained for Departments/Services under their control for inclusion of the Facility Chemical Manifest.

Work Health and Safety Staff

- Ensure local procedures for the governance, maintenance, and use of ChemAlert are implemented
- Provide Administrative Assistance to SCHN in relation to the ChemAlert System by monitoring training of those accessing the system and providing access to the appropriate department.
- Provide WHS assistance to managers and staff in relation to Chemical Hazards.
- The Manager of WHS and IM is the local Administrator for ChemAlert at SCHN. All questions and issues related to access or updating of SDS should be addressed to them.

Procedure

Hazardous Chemical Flowchart



Risk Management of Hazardous Chemicals

Risk management of Hazardous Chemicals includes the following:

- Hazard identification.
- Risk assessment – able to be completed in ChemAlert.
- Risk control.
- Spill management process.
- Risk review and monitoring.
- Provision of relevant information such as Safety Data Sheets (SDS) – available in ChemAlert.
- Provision of training and education.
- Development of Safe Work Practices.
- Maintenance of the chemical register (ChemAlert Stock Holding Report).
- Provision of health surveillance for staff, if indicated.

Assistance with the above may be sought from the Work Health and Safety Department. It is the responsibility of managers/supervisors to assess Hazardous Chemicals in the workplace in consultation with workers who are likely to be exposed.

Refer to NSW Ministry of Health factsheets for other information:

<http://internal.health.nsw.gov.au/jobs/safety/whs-hazardous-chemicals.html>

Review and monitoring

- Risk assessments must be reviewed at least every five years. However, risk assessments need to be reviewed earlier if;
 - there is a significant change in the work practices.
 - new information regarding the chemical has been released.
 - the current control measures have not reduced the risk.
- Risk Assessments for Hazardous Chemicals must be kept in the department for at least 5 years. However, risk assessments relating to health surveillance must be kept for at least 30 years. Risk assessments related to health surveillance must be sent to Work Health Safety & Injury Management Department.

Provision of Information

Safety Data Sheets (SDS) – provided by the manufacturer/supplier for Hazardous Chemicals.

- SDSs can be obtained from the ChemAlert database – no password is necessary login as Anonymous User: <https://chemalert.rmt.com.au/nswhealth/>
- SDSs contain important information about hazardous chemicals which includes identify of the chemical and ingredients, health and physical hazards, PPE; safe handling and storage procedures; emergency procedures and first aid information; disposal considerations.
- SDSs are required when completing risk assessments or developing safe work practices.
- The Manufacturers SDS must be obtained for each hazardous chemical before, or on the first occasion, (and subsequently if necessary) when it is supplied to the workplace, identifying the Australian Manufacture/Supplier contact details.
- Where a Hazardous Chemical is still in use/stored in the workplace and the Manufacture is no longer in business or ceased supply the last know SDS must be kept.
- SDS's are required for therapeutic goods that are also Hazardous Chemicals, such as cytotoxic preparations.
- Access to SDS's must be available to all relevant workers, close to the work area as is reasonably practicable and not secured in an isolated area such as a locked office.
- SDS's are required to be "current", that is, less than five years old from date of preparation or after last review date.

Provision of Education and Training

- HETI ChemAlert Training (ChemAlert eLearning 3.2) is required for workers who are working with chemicals on a regular basis.
- HETI ChemAlert - For Stock Controllers, Managers and Administrators – is required for all managers or staff updating the ChemAlert Register. Once this training is completed if

access to ChemAlert is required then they should contact the WHS and IM Manager on 9845 3647 who is the local administrator for SCHN.

Induction Training at Department Level

This is basic level training for all workers in areas where Hazardous Chemicals are used, stored or there is potential of worker exposure. The induction training is the responsibility of the Department Manager and should include:

- identification of a hazardous chemical
- nature of work carried out by the worker in relation to Hazardous Chemicals
- reading and understanding labels and SDS's
- location of, and access to, SDS's in the work area and ChemAlert system
- procedure for introducing new Hazardous Chemicals into the workplace
- information on hazards and risks associated with Hazardous Chemicals that are likely to be encountered in the workplace
- Safe Work Practices for management of Hazardous Chemicals
- the effective use, fitting and maintenance of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- emergency procedures, including spill management procedures
- details on monitoring and health surveillance procedures (if required)
- Reporting of any incidents related to chemical hazards/exposure in [Safety at Kids IIMS electronic incident reporting system](#)

Training records must be kept at department level, with a copy forward the Education Centre. Records should include trainer's name, type of training, date of training, participants name, signature and staff identification number, a brief explanation of the content, and skills' assessment results. Training records must be kept for at least 5 years from the date of the last entry.

Developing Safe Work Practices

A Safe Work Practice (SWP) is a written step by step guide on how to perform a task. It is developed following a risk assessment which is to be documented in ChemAlert. A SWP aims to minimise the risk to the health and safety of all persons involved or affected by the task. SWP's are to be developed for all tasks involving the use of Hazardous Chemicals.

Note:

- Developed SWP's and related safety rules must be prominently displayed alongside the relevant piece of equipment or process. A SWP template is available on the WHS&IM intranet site.

Maintaining ChemAlert

- ChemAlert is a chemical management system that can be viewed by all workers. It provides information about chemicals. Access to view SDS and chemical information and does not require a password.
- ChemAlert identifies Hazardous Chemicals used in the workplace and where the Chemicals are located. ChemAlert must be updated as new Hazardous Chemicals are introduced to the workplace and the use or production of existing Hazardous Chemicals is discontinued.
- All Hazardous Chemicals held in the workplace must be registered and details maintained by each department in ChemAlert.
- Workers who may be exposed to, or use Hazardous Chemicals, must have ready access to ChemAlert and SDSs during working hours. Paper copies of the Manufacturers SDS must be readily available in the work area.
- Each area should maintain stock holdings on ChemAlert with Risk Assessments and updated copies of SDSs. Stock holdings should be regularly maintained and a stocktake completed annually.

Storage of Hazardous Chemicals

- Hazardous Chemicals need to be stored as per product classification (refer to SDS, and ChemAlert).
- ChemAlert provides information on chemical storage and storage incompatibilities.
- If Hazardous Chemicals and other chemicals are stored in a locked area such as a flammable or corrosive cabinet, then a list of contents should be attached to the door.
- Dedicated Chemical Storage Areas should be clearly labelled and signposted with appropriate hazard labels/placarding.

Disposal of Hazardous Chemicals (and Other Chemicals)

- The department that generates the waste initiates the waste removal and disposal process. A representative from the department MUST accompany the waste to the Waste Collection Area.
- To dispose of Hazardous Chemicals, workers need to contact the Domestic Services Manager or the Work Health Safety & Injury Management Department who will organise for access to the Waste Collection Area.
- All Hazardous Chemicals taken to the Waste Collection Area must be accompanied by an SDS and all Chemicals are to be registered in the Disposal Register (held in the Waste Collection Area).
- Hazardous Chemicals are stored in the Waste Collection Area according to the nature of the chemical. For example, the Collection area consists of a flammable and a

corrosive cabinet and the different classes of Chemicals are stored in each. This is a safety measure to prevent incompatible loading/storage of the different chemicals.

- Domestic Services Manager organises for all hazardous substance held in the Waste Collection Area to be disposed of by a licensed waste transporter in accordance with Environmental Protection Authority requirements.
- If a previously listed Hazardous Chemical is no longer used in the department then it is the Departmental Manager's responsibility to update data on ChemAlert.

First Aid

- First Aid provisions must be provided in accordance with the SDS specifications.
- The Department is to ensure that where a hazardous chemical is used the first aid items and systems match those stipulated by the SDS including:
 - the provision of first aid equipment
 - that each worker must have access to the equipment
 - an adequate number of workers are trained to administer first aid or workers have access to an adequate number of people who have been trained to administer first aid relevant to the chemical
 - all workers have access to facilities for the administration of first aid.

Department Emergency Plans

- Emergency procedures need to be in place with workers trained in their implementation for each Chemical used, handled, generated or stored in the workplace.
- The Department's emergency plan should typically include:
 - Potential emergency event/s the chemical may cause
 - Injuries that would be expected and their first aid
 - Immediate actions to prevent escalation of the incident
 - Secondary actions to escalate the incident where it becomes uncontrolled – (Site Code Yellow incident response request).
 - Responsibilities
 - Resources needed to contain and manage the incident.

Spill Kits

Where necessary an appropriate spill kit which complies with the relevant Australian Standard, and which includes any necessary PPE must be readily available. Training in the use of the spill kit must also be provided and documented. The spill kit must be kept up to date and monitored as part of the monthly inspections checklist.

Spill prevention must be incorporated in the instructions for use of all Chemicals using:

- The advice provided in the SDS
- Risk Assessment conducted on the Hazardous Chemical
- SWPs informed by the SDS and/or Risk Assessment.

SWPs must include advice on action/s to be taken in the event of a Chemical spill as defined by the SDS or any associated Risk Assessment. Spill Kits must be readily available at all locations where Hazardous Chemicals are stored or used. All relevant staff must be trained in the SWP's and spill kit use.

A spill kit must contain all equipment and PPE necessary to deal with spills or leaks, including absorbent material, neutralising or decontaminating material, and relevant SWPs must be maintained at all sites where Hazardous Chemicals are used or stored. Any spills or leaks must be cleaned up immediately. Contaminated or spilt Hazardous Chemicals should not be returned to their original packaging, except for the purposes of disposal or where this will not increase the risk. Spilt Hazardous Chemicals which are unsafe to be reused must be disposed of as chemical waste.

Relevant SWP's and/or RA's should be reviewed after a spill to and amended as necessary to reduce the likelihood of another spill.

Bunding (liquid containment facilities that prevent leaks and spillage from spreading or escaping) is to be provided in areas where bulk quantities of Dangerous Goods/Hazardous Chemicals are stored.

Emergency Spill Procedures

If unable to safely contain a spill in accordance with the Department's Safe Work Practice, then dial 2222 and state "Hazardous Chemical Spill" and the location. For further details refer to local Disaster Response Plans available on the intranet:

- [CHW Disaster-response Plan](#)
- [SESLHD Healthplan SCH Emergency Response](#)

Facility Chemical Register/Manifest

Managers are responsible for ensuring areas under their responsibility have a current ChemAlert Stock Holding Register/Manifest that contains details of Hazardous Chemicals used and stored in the workplace and is regularly updated.

The Facility Chemical Manifest is to be updated on a regular basis and kept in a central location for access in the event of an incident for Emergency Services. The Chemical Manifest is a requirement of the [WHS Regulation](#), when quantities of Hazardous Chemicals that exceed those in Schedule 11 of the WHS Regulation 2017 are, or will be, stored, handled or processed, a manifest of Hazardous Chemicals must be created according to the specifications in Schedule 11 including a site emergency plan. Notice of the manifest quantities must be provided to SafeWork NSW and NSW Fire & Rescue including emergency site plans.

SafeWork NSW Notifiable incidents are:

- Incidents involving a fatality or a serious injury or illness;
- Dangerous incidents that expose a worker or any other person to a serious risk to their health or safety but do not necessarily result in an injury to them e.g. exposure to a chemical, uncontrolled escape of gas or energy, containment vessel rupture, storage system collapse, entrapment and inundation by a material or Chemical, or explosion or exposure to a prohibited Chemical or carcinogen.
- Implement SCHN WHS Incident Management and Notification to SafeWork NSW.

In the above cases the WHS Act requires that the organisation (most senior person on site) calls SafeWork NSW (formerly WorkCover) on 13 10 50 immediately after the area is made safe and any victims are cared for. The Manager of WHS and IM should be contacted also to manage the notification.

Note: The Work Health and Safety legislation requires preservation of the incident site until an Inspector attends (or the inspector or regulator directs otherwise) actions to prevent further injury, remove people from harm, prevent the incident from escalating, attending to first aid are accepted.

Health Monitoring

Health monitoring may be required for Hazardous Chemicals which are toxic or have other health hazards and risks. Further advice on the control of individual exposure to Hazardous Chemicals is provided in - [Managing Risks of Hazardous Chemicals in the Workplace](#). Many Hazardous Chemicals have personal exposure standards that must not be exceeded ([WHS Regulation](#)) – see the Managing Risks of Hazardous Chemicals in the Workplace Code of Practice, and the Workplace Exposure Standards for Airborne Contaminants, the Hazardous Chemicals Information System (HSIS), and the Globally Harmonised System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals. For information on Health Surveillance for exposure to Hazardous Chemicals, contact the WHS Coordinator.

Records of health monitoring must be provided to the following persons, as soon as is practicable:

- To the worker
- To the regulator, if the results indicate that the worker may have contracted an injury or illness from work related exposure to Hazardous Chemicals, or if the report recommends the service/facility/department manager must undertake remedial measures.
- To all other organisations or contractors who have a duty to provide health monitoring to the worker.

SDS requirements for Pharmaceuticals and Laboratories

SDS must be provided by suppliers of laboratory reagents and pharmaceuticals if the product is known or considered to be Hazardous or Dangerous. SDS are not required for subsequent preparations, laboratory samples or reaction intermediates, or for retail pharmacies. SDS are required where a laboratory or pharmacy manufactures a Dangerous Goods or a Hazardous Chemical and supplies this for use at work (e.g. in a hospital).

The importer of a hazardous chemical must review the Safety Data Sheet at least once every 5 years, and amend the SDS whenever necessary to ensure that it contains correct current information as per clause 2 of schedule 7.

SDS is to be made available for workers who are working with the Hazardous Chemical or is likely to be effected by the Hazardous Chemical.

Notification of Intended Use of Carcinogenic Chemical

Prohibited or restricted carcinogens, e.g. cyclophosphamide, must not be used unless the manager has notified SafeWork NSW in writing following consultation with the WHS and IM Department. A full list of prohibited and restricted carcinogens can be located in the [WHS Regulation 2017 Schedule 10](#)

For more information regarding notification please contact the WHS and IM Department.

Statement of exposure to be given to workers

Any worker who may have been exposed to a prohibited carcinogen or restricted carcinogen, must be provided, with a written statement of the following at the end of their employment:

- the name of the prohibited or restricted carcinogen to which the worker may have been exposed during the engagement,
- the time the worker may have been exposed,
- how and where the worker may obtain records of the possible exposure,
- whether the worker should undertake regular health assessments, and the relevant tests to undertake.

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