

From: hfshazards
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To: NHS-LA@scotland.uk.com
Subject: Information Message IM/2020/017 - Skin creams dried on fabric can lead to fire deaths

IRIC Incident Reporting &
Investigation Centre

Reference: IM/2020/017
Subject: Skin creams dried on fabric can lead to fire deaths

This information message is sent to draw the attention of Equipment Co-ordinators to information which may be relevant to the safety of equipment and facilities in NHS Boards and Local Authorities. Please find the information below:

MHRA Press Release
Skin creams dried on fabric can lead to fire deaths (29 July 2020)

MHRA issued the above press release to highlight the launch of a new campaign to raise awareness of the fire risk and the precautions that need to be taken when using skin creams

[For full press release click here](#)

Some skin creams, when dried on to fabric, can create a highly flammable combination that can cause serious injury and death. Research has shown that the risk arises, even if the creams do not contain paraffin.

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), the National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC), Fire and Rescue Services and health charities have launched a new campaign to raise awareness of the fire risk and the precautions that need to be taken when using skin creams.

[For details of the new campaign guidance click here](#)

The guidance includes a "[Safe Use of Emollients](#)" video, posters and web links to provide further advice and resources to help minimise the risk when using emollients. The following recommendations should be given to affected patients:

- Avoid smoking whilst wearing clothing or a bandage that has been in contact with skin creams
- Change and wash clothes and bedding frequently to reduce build-up of skin cream
- Keep cream off furniture
- Tell relatives and carers about your treatment and ask how they can help reduce the risk
- Tell your healthcare professional if you normally smoke

This guidance supports and updates previous warnings and advice given by MHRA in 2018 which were highlighted by IRIC in Information Message IM/2019/07 Emollient cream build-up in fabric can lead to fire deaths (distributed 26/07/2019)

As the Equipment Co-ordinator for your organisation, we recommend that you assess whether or not to forward this information to managers and staff within your area of responsibility who might benefit from being aware of it.

If you received this message directly from IRIC, email us at nss.irc@nhs.scot or phone 0131 275 7575 quoting the IM reference number. Alternatively, if you have received this message from someone in your own organisation, please direct all enquiries to them and they will liaise with IRIC as required.

Incident Reporting & Investigation Centre (IRIC)

Health Facilities Scotland

NHS National Services Scotland

Contact us:

IRIC Email nss.irc@nhs.scot

Helpline 0131 275 7575

<https://www.nss.nhs.scot/health-facilities/incidents-and-alerts/report-an-incident/>

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