

Policy applies to:

All Mercy Hospital Staff, Credentialed Specialists and Contractors will be supported in meeting policy requirements.

Related Standards:

- Health and Safety at Work Act, 2015
- Health and Safety at Work (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 2017
- NZS 5433: Transport of Dangerous Goods on Land Standard, 2012
- Management of Healthcare Waste NZS 4304:2000
- Workplace Exposure Standards and Biological Exposure Indices (14th Ed, 2023)
- Nga Paerewa Health and Disability Standards NZ

Rationale

- Protect everyone impacted by Mercy's work and the environment from hazardous substances used at the hospital.
- Comply with all relevant health and safety regulations (e.g., Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, Health and Safety at Work (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 2017).

Objectives

- Ensure staff are equipped to handle hazardous substances safely (e.g., with PPE and proper training).
- Minimize risks associated with hazardous substances through proper storage, handling, and disposal practices.
- Maintain a current inventory of all hazardous substances used at the hospital.
- Provide appropriate education and training to staff on the safe handling of hazardous substances.
- Prioritizing the use of less-hazardous alternatives whenever possible to protect the health of the environment and those who depend on it
- Implement a system for monitoring staff exposure to hazardous substances (where required).
- Ensure safe disposal of all hazardous waste generated by the hospital.
- Achieve and maintain Location Compliance Certification under the relevant regulations.

Cultural Considerations:

Mercy Hospital acknowledges the importance of protecting the environment and natural world, which aligns with Maori concepts of Mana Whenua, Tapu, and Mauri (Māori life force) and the Pacific concept of Va Fealoloa'i (environmental stewardship). This policy reflects this commitment by:

- Minimizing the use and acquisition of hazardous substances to reduce the potential for environmental contamination.

- Ensuring responsible disposal of hazardous waste to prevent harm to the natural world and taonga (treasures) important to Maori culture.
- Working collaboratively with staff, including those with cultural knowledge, to identify and implement culturally appropriate practices for handling hazardous substances.

Definitions:

Hazardous substance

a) Any substance with one or more of the following intrinsic properties:

- Explosiveness,
- Flammability,
- A capacity to oxidise,
- Corrosives,
- Toxicity (including chronic toxicity),
- Ecotoxicity (harmful to animals, plants or the environment)

b) A substance that, when in contact with air or water generates a substance with any one or more of the properties specified in section a) of this definition e.g. lithium reacts with water to produce heat and flammable hydrogen gas

Exposure

This describes conditions that are likely to result in a person absorbing a substance which is hazardous to health by injection, inhalation or through the skin or mucous membranes.

Safety Data Sheet (SDS)

A document that describes properties and use of a chemical product or formulations, identified chemical and physical properties: health hazard information, precautions for use, safe handling, first aid and disposal information.

Health Monitoring

Means the monitoring of a person to identify any changes in their health status because of exposure to certain health hazards arising from conducting their role.

Exposure Monitoring

Means the measurement and evaluation of exposure to a health hazard experiences by a person and includes monitoring of conditions and biological monitoring of people at the workplace.

Implementation:

Roles and Responsibilities

Health and Safety Specialist is responsible for:

- The administration and monitoring of compliance under the Health and Safety at Work (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 2017

- Maintain a current Hazardous Substances Inventory
- Maintaining and monitoring a current safety data sheet folder
- Providing health and workplace monitoring programmes where a risk assessment indicates this is required
- Reviewing and reporting on hazardous substance management as part of regular reporting to Board, Executive and Quality and Risk Committee
- Supporting Heads of Departments team leaders and managers to understand their role and responsibilities relating to management of Hazardous substances.
- Supporting and monitoring the provision of general and area specific hazardous substances education sessions in conjunction with Head of Departments and Health and Safety representatives.
- Ensuring appropriate signage is in place for hazardous substances across the hospital.

Managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring any new product or substance being introduced into the Hospital is considered by the product evaluation committee.
- Working with the Health and Safety Specialist, to assess the risk of all hazardous substances in their department.
- Ensure that the hazardous substances inventory accurately reflects the substances in their department.
- Ensuring all hazardous substances used in their service area have an accessible, safety data sheet (SDS) that has been reviewed within 5 years.
- Providing SDS to the Health and Safety Specialist for any new substances to be included in the Hazardous Substances Inventory.
- Ensuring information on hazardous substances is available and accessible to employees
- Ensuring there is safe storage facilities and equipment, including PPE, for the handling and disposal of hazardous substances.
- Facilitating workplace and staff health monitoring with the Health and Safety Specialist if required. See Health and Environmental Monitoring Policy for more detail on this.
- Ensuring **all** employees in contact with hazardous substances are appropriately trained in the safe use, handling, storage, disposal of these substances as part of their orientation and ongoing education programme
- Arrange appropriate product specific training relating to hazardous substances for relevant workgroups and/or roles.
- Working with Health and Safety Specialist to ensure that appropriate signage and labels are in place in their areas for hazardous substances

Facilities Manager is also responsible for

- Ensuring Mercy attains Location Compliance Certification under the Health and Safety at Work (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 2017 with support from the Health and Safety Specialist.
- Supplying site plan updates for NZFS.

Service Delivery Manager is also responsible for:

- Coordinating collection and disposal of hazardous waste from site.

All Employees are responsible for:

- Ensuring they have read and understood any relevant information on the safe use of a substance provided to them
- Ensuring they understand the requirements for working with or handling any substances.
- Ensuring that prior to using, they have received the appropriate training to handle or work with any hazardous substance on site.
- Following safe work practices
- Using appropriate PPE
- Complying with health monitoring requirements

Labelling and Signage

Labelling

Labelling of Hazardous Substances:

All containers must be correctly labelled in English with product name, hazard pictogram, and statement. If this is not the case they should be returned.

Containers must be relabelled if the original label is illegible.

Containers which have held hazardous substances must only be used for the specified hazardous substances.

Packaging:

Containers of hazardous substances must have the manufacturer label for that substance in legible condition.

Labelling of Hazardous Waste:

Label hazardous waste with identification, contact information, and hazard information.

Packaging of Decanted/Transferred Substances:

Packaging of decanted or transferred hazardous substance must be packaged in a container that:

- ✓ *Is in good condition.*
- ✓ *Can safely contain the hazardous substance within the appropriate temperature range and during packaging.*
- ✓ *Is made of material that is compatible with the hazardous substance and will not be negatively affected by it.*

- ✓ *The container should not typically be used for storing food or beverages and should not be easily mistaken for such products.*

If the above labelling requirements are not met staff should:

Staff must:

1. **Remove from Service:** Immediately take the container out of service.
2. **Report to Supervisor/Manager:** Inform your supervisor or manager about the container.
3. **Replacement:** Your manager can arrange for a properly labelled container (either a new label or a replacement product) with the supplier.

Signage Requirements:

For Class 5 substances stored on site HazChem signage must be positioned at every vehicular and pedestrian entrance to the building and land that:

- a. states that hazardous substances are present; and
- b. states the general type of hazard of each of them; and
- c. describes the immediate response action to be taken in an emergency.

Spills

The safety of staff and others is our top priority when handling hazardous substances. To ensure a safe and effective response to spills and breakages, all staff members must follow the established spill procedure outlined in Appendix 1. This procedure details the essential steps for managing spills, including prioritizing safety, assessing risk, containing the spill, and proper disposal of contaminated materials.

Health and Exposure Monitoring

The Head of Departments / Manager of each department must coordinate with the Health and Safety Specialist to ensure workplace monitoring is required. This would follow the processes set out in the 'Monitoring Workplace exposure and staff Health Policy' carried.

The assessment for a particular process/ hazardous substance shall be revised when:

- A new hazardous substance or process is introduced
- The process or hazardous substance use is altered /modified
- New information or regulation on the hazards or the substance becomes available
- Monitoring indicates inadequate exposure control
- The installation of new or improved control measures becomes practicable
- There is reason to believe the last assessment is no longer valid

If the assessment indicates potential harm to health may result from exposure to hazardous substances, then the Health and Safety Specialist will identify the appropriate Occupational Health referral pathway and to work with Managers who are responsible for budgeting for the costs for health and environmental monitoring and ensuring it is undertaken as agreed.

- A copy of results of all Workplace Exposure Monitoring must be forwarded to the Health and Safety Specialist
- Workplace Exposure Monitoring shall be carried out by a suitably qualified person(s). Mercy Hospital will provide the results of Workplace Exposure monitoring to those employees with the potential for exposure to the monitored hazardous substances. Refer to the Health and Environmental Policy for the breakdown of monitoring procedures.

Safe Transportation

All hazardous substances must be transported in accordance with NZS 5433: Transport of Dangerous Goods on Land Standard. This ensures that the following is managed:

- driver education,
- labelling,
- signage,
- handling,
- loading of vehicle and
- incident/ accident procedures.

Disposal

- The disposal of any hazardous substance must be in line with information set out in the appropriate Material Safety Data Sheet and follow local guidelines.
- If unsure of appropriate disposal methods the Waste Officer or Health and Safety Specialist can be contacted to discuss.
- The Manager of each department must work with the Health and Safety Specialist and the Waste Officer to ensure hazardous substances are disposed of in accordance with any agreed process and in line with the Mercy Waste Management policy and waste management contract.
- The Service Delivery Manager is responsible for ensuring contractors engaged to dispose of hazardous waste do so in an approved manner.
- Any unknown substance for disposal must be analysed to determine contents prior to disposal. Contact the Health and Safety Specialist for assistance.
- Waste chemical collection is arranged by the Service Delivery Manager in consultation with the Health and Safety Specialist on an annual basis, or as required, with an accredited waste collector.

Evaluation:

Will be through:

- Service area audits
- Management of Hazardous Substances audit
- Reporting of environmental and health screening monitoring records
- Incident reports
- Training records
- Location Compliance Audit

Associated Documents

External

- Workplace Exposure Standards and Biological Exposure Indices, 2023, WorkSafe
- Working Safely with Hazardous Substances, 2022, WorkSafe
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Internal

- Cytotoxic Safe Handling, Disposal and Storage policy
- Emergency Management Policy
- Hazard Management Policy
- Health and Environmental Monitoring Policy
- Incident Policy
- Product Evaluation Policy
- Radiation Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Waste Management Policy
- Mercy Hospital Information Book for Contractors
- Bone Cement (Methyl Methacrylate) Safety Precautions (Clinical Services Work Manual)