

December 2014

PSNC Briefing 034/14: Reporting patient safety incidents to the NRLS

This PSNC Briefing provides pharmacy teams with a brief explanation of how to report a patient safety incident to the NRLS.

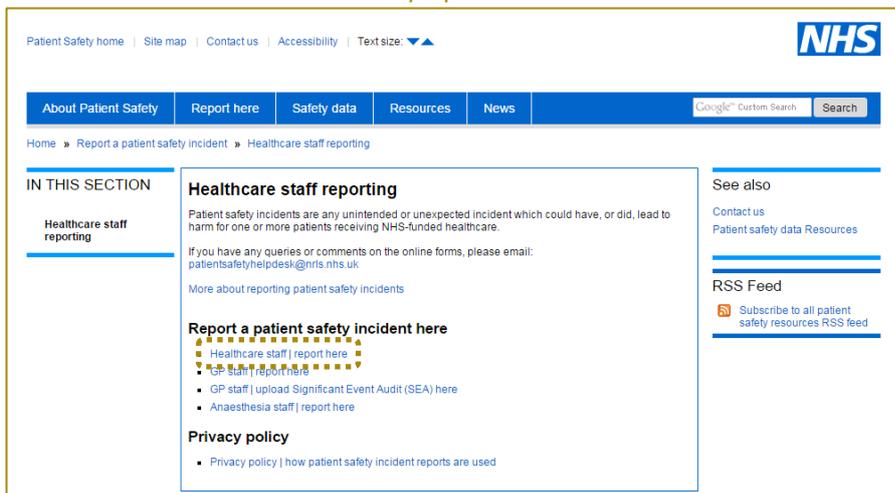
Since 2005, under the terms of the NHS Community Pharmacy Contractual Framework all pharmacy contractors have been required to report patient safety incidents to the National Reporting and Learning System (NRLS).

Due to a low level of reporting of incidents to the NRLS from community pharmacies and in order to help NHS England meet its objective of improving patient safety, it was agreed in the 2014/15 settlement that:

- there must be an increase in the number of patient safety incidents reported by community pharmacies to the NRLS; and
- from the implementation date (still to be confirmed) reports submitted to the NRLS must identify the pharmacy involved in the patient safety incident.

How to submit a report of a patient safety incident

1. Go to www.nrls.npsa.nhs.uk/report-a-patient-safety-incident/healthcare-staff-reporting/.
2. Click on the link 'Healthcare staff | report here'.



3. The first question asks 'In which service did the Patient Safety Incident occur?' This may not necessarily be community pharmacy, for example, if a community pharmacist spotted a prescribing error, the error would have occurred in General Practice, so this should be logged under general practice. A dispensing error, however, would be logged under community pharmacy.
4. Once the location where the incident occurred has been entered, an ID number will appear on the bottom of the screen that is unique to the report. If you need to delay completing the form you can return to the report at a later date without having to start again so it is important to make a note of this number.

Providing details of the incident

5. Complete the sections on when and where the incident occurred, and give a description of what happened. A brief overview of the incident is all that is required as further details about the medicines involved will be requested later in the report. This box can also be used to provide additional details that may help the patient safety team at NHS England understand what happened.
6. Even though a lot of the fields in the medicine incident section are optional, as many boxes as possible should be completed because it will help the patient safety team at NHS England build a better picture of problems affecting patient safety.

Sharing your report

7. The NRLS encourages community pharmacy contractors to share the report submitted with their local NHS England area team so that local learning and action can take place. This can be done anonymously or a pharmacy contractor can add their details so they can be identified.
8. Once a date has been set for implementation of the changes agreed in the 2014/15 community pharmacy contractors will be contractually obliged to identify the pharmacy that is reporting the patient safety incident.

If you have any queries on this PSNC Briefing or you require more information, please contact [Rosie Taylor, Pharmacy and NHS Policy Officer](#).