

PUBLIC HEALTH ETC. (SCOTLAND) ACT 2008

EXPLANATORY NOTES

THE ACT – OVERVIEW

Part 2

Notifiable Diseases, Notifiable Organisms and Health Risk States

Duties to notify

Section 14 Health risk states: duties on registered medical practitioners

28. This section places a duty on a registered medical practitioner who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a patient has been exposed to a health risk state to notify the health board of that area in writing no later than 3 days after forming the suspicion. The notification must include the patient's name, address and postcode, the patient's occupation, the name, address and postcode of the patient's place of work or education (if considered relevant by the practitioner), the patient's sex, the patient's date of birth, the health risk state to which the patient has been exposed and the patient's NHS identifier.
29. A registered medical practitioner who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a patient has been exposed to a health risk state and considers that the case is urgent must orally notify the health board as soon as possible. In determining whether the case is urgent, the practitioner must have regard to the nature of the health risk state, the nature of the exposure to that state, the patient's circumstances (such as the patient's age, sex and state of health) and any guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers. A registered medical practitioner does not need to notify if there are reasonable grounds to believe that another registered medical practitioner has complied with this section or section 13 in respect of the patient.
30. A "health risk state" is defined as meaning a highly pathogenic infection (i.e. an infection highly likely to cause a serious disease), or exposure to any contamination, poison or other hazard that is a significant risk to public health. A patient's exposure to a health risk state means either physical contact with or contamination by a health risk state or physical contact with or contamination by a person who, or an object which, has been in physical contact with, or been contaminated by, a health risk state.