

**To:** Local Coordinators, Bargaining Unit Presidents, Health and Safety Network Leads, and Joint Health and Safety Committee Members from the Executive Booklet

**From:** Andy Summers, RN, Vice-President Region 3, Occupational Health and Safety Portfolio



**Date:** July 25, 2013

**Re:** **Health Canada Notice to Hospitals about Hospira Infusion Pumps**

**C:** Board of Directors, District Service Teams, Provincial Services Team

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ONA recently learned of a March 2013 Health Canada notice about “important safety information” concerning specific Hospira infusion pumps used in many Ontario hospitals and, we believe, are also used by patients/clients in the community (attached and at [www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/recall-alert-rappel-avis/hc-sc/2013/26209a-eng.php](http://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca/recall-alert-rappel-avis/hc-sc/2013/26209a-eng.php)). The Health Canada notice advised, “Please distribute to all relevant departments, other involved professional staff, and any others for whom this information is relevant, and **post this NOTICE** in your institution.” The notice referred to Hospira, addressing “issues in its quality management system.”

At least one hospital employer circulated a memo to staff with information and instructions including, “Promptly report device failures and remove pump from service.”

### **Impact to our Members**

Malfunction or failure of medical devices may have implications for patient safety and/or worker safety and registered staff have professional and occupational health and safety responsibilities to ensure that problems and hazards are reported to supervisors/employers, who should ensure proper investigation and rectification of any problems before patient or worker safety is compromised.

### **Next Steps**

Please share this notice with members. Advise them if any of the identified equipment is in use in their units or among their patients/clients and these concerns have not been previously fully addressed, raise the issue with their supervisors, asking for full information about potential equipment failure and steps taken and required to be taken to protect patients/clients and workers from risk of exposure to hazards.

Also, share this information with the the ONA Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) member and ask her/him to raise the issue at the next meeting. If the employer does not provide information about where any identified pumps are used in your facility or by your patients/clients and what steps have been taken and are to be taken to eliminate or control worker safety risks, the JHSC should make written recommendations to the employer including, where necessary, the need for the employer to:

- Identify where any of the listed equipment is in use.
- Share the notice and explain potential patient/client and worker safety risks associated with the failure of these units.
- Explain steps taken to eliminate and/or control hazards.
- Establish and implement, in consultation with the JHSC, measures, procedures, training and education about the equipment, risks and protection from hazards.

We have attached a sample recommendation that you can adapt to your needs.

The *Occupational Health and Safety Act* requires that employers “take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for protection of a worker.” If your employer does not comply with this obligation, consult your ONA Labour Relations Officer (LRO) and consider calling the Ministry of Labour.

It is also important to remember that professional regulated staff have obligations to ensure that patients/clients are protected from harm. Please advocate for safe patient care and report any known equipment issues to administrative nurses by using the Professional Responsibility Workload (PRW) report form. Inform your manager about the completed PRW report form and request a timely and effective resolution.

If you have any questions, please contact your ONA Labour Relations Officer.

Attach.