

From the Chief Medical Officer
Professor Sir Michael McBride



HSS(MD) 40/2023

BY EMAIL

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PLEASE SEE ATTACHED FULL CIRCULATION LIST

Dear Colleague

WORLD PATIENT SAFETY DAY 17 SEPTEMBER 2023

This year's World Health Organization (WHO) [World Patient Safety Day](#) (WPSD) is taking place on 17 September 2023. World Patient Safety Day is one of WHO's global public health days. Its objectives are to increase public awareness and engagement and enhance patient safety and reduce patient harm.

The WHO has selected 'Engaging patients for patient safety' as the theme for this year's World Patient Safety Day, in recognition of the crucial role patients, families and caregivers play in the safety of health care. Through the slogan "Elevate the voice of patients", the WHO calls on all stakeholders to take necessary action to ensure that patients are involved in policy formulation, are represented in governance structures, are engaged in co-designing safety strategies, and are active partners in their own care.

We are writing to advise that this year's World Patient Safety Day in Northern Ireland will have a particular focus on the launch of a Northern Ireland Yellow Card Centre.

Yellow Card Centre Northern Ireland
'Yellow Card reporting for patient safety in Northern Ireland'

The work of the Yellow Card Centre forms an integral part of the Department of Health's ['Transforming Medication Safety in Northern Ireland \(NI\)'](#) strategy to meet the WHO 'Medication Without Harm' challenge. The NI strategy commits to work with health and social care providers, patient groups, community and voluntary organisations to raise public awareness of the benefits of reporting medication issues, and support patients and carers to report any issues and concerns by

addressing barriers to reporting. The establishment of a Yellow Card Centre Northern Ireland is a key step to meet these commitments and improve medication safety within Northern Ireland.

The Yellow Card Centre (YCC) Northern Ireland will be the sixth UK regional adverse drug reaction (ADR) monitoring centre, acting on behalf of the [Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency \(MHRA\)](#). It will be a regional centre for all of NI based in the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust in the regional NI Medicines and Poisons Advice Service, with a multidisciplinary team of staff.

The YCC Northern Ireland has a vital educational and communicating role to encourage suspected adverse reaction reporting via the Yellow Card scheme to both patients and their representative organisations, and local health professionals in NI. Staff at YCC Northern Ireland will provide advice on Yellow Card reporting for healthcare products and offer education and training sessions about suspected ADRs to all healthcare professionals and patient groups.

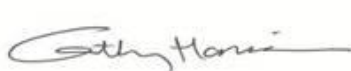
The launch of the YCC Northern Ireland is planned ahead of WPSD on 17 September 2023, with further patient and staff engagement events to take place from September onwards. We would ask that you work with, and encourage, staff and colleagues within your organisation to promote and support the work of this very important centre which will be highlighted via a press release and social media posts around WPSD.

We hope you enjoy the opportunity to celebrate World Patient Safety Day and would like to thank you for your support to improve safe practices with medicines and embed a medication safety culture within our population.

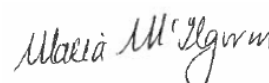
Yours sincerely



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