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| Emergency Incident Casualty Data Collection Protocol |
| State Health Emergency Response Arrangements  v3.0. Effective December 2018 |

# Introduction

The *Emergency Incident Casualty Data Collection Protocol* details the process for the sharing of emergency incident information between health services and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

The protocol applies to all private and public health services with an Emergency Department or Urgent Care Centre located in Victoria. It is activated by DHHS in an emergency, for example a Level 2 or Level 3 event under the state health emergency response arrangements.

This document should be read in conjunction with the State Health Emergency Response Plan, Edition 4 (SHERP4).

# Objective

To collate reliable, accurate, timely and consistent information on presentations to health services resulting from an emergency incident, to enable DHHS to:

* facilitate information sharing between key stakeholders
* meet its responsibilities under SHERP4
  + provide information to Victoria Police for law enforcement purposes.

# Activation and notification

The protocol is activated by DHHS when specific data is required as a result of an emergency incident.

Notification is provided to health services through two communication channels:

* a SMS text message to the Hospital Single Contact Point
  + a ‘First Wave Notification’ email[[1]](#footnote-1). Instructions for the Patient portal and a User Guide is attached to First Wave Notification.

The notification advises:

* that the protocol has been activated for data collection, impact assessment, and intelligence sharing with Victoria Police for law enforcement purposes
* of the Lead Agency[[2]](#footnote-2) for the incident
  + of the details to where all media inquiries are to be directed.

The State Health Coordinator (SHC) may update the notification from time to time, and the protocol remains active until the SHC issues a deactivation notification.

# Procedure

Once the protocol is activated, all health services must strictly adhere to the procedure below, subject to change by the SHC:

* The health service acknowledges receipt of the protocol activation notification.
* The designated Hospital Commander[[3]](#footnote-3) coordinates the response within the health service and is responsible for the provision of data.
* The health service enters the relevant patient data onto the portal, as advised in the instructions attached to the First Wave Notification.
* The health service updates the patient information on the portal (or provides a “nil” response, if no casualties were received) by the deadline provided in the First Wave Notification and thereafter by 6am and 3pm daily, unless specified otherwise.
* The health service provides immediate notification to DHHS of the death of a casualty to the SHC on 1300 159 486 (24 hours) and confirms in writing via email to [semc@dhhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:semc@dhhs.vic.gov.au).
  + The SHC will issue a deactivation notification when reports are no longer required.

# Media

During an activation of this protocol, all health services must immediately notify communications and media personnel that the protocol for an emergency incident has been activated and direct all communications relating to the incident as directed.

# Immediate information to be provide by health services

Health services must immediately notify DHHS of the death of an incident presentation, directly to the SHC on 1300 159 486 (24 hours) and confirm in writing to [semc@dhhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:semc@dhhs.vic.gov.au).

# Information collection, use and disclosure

Health information collected, used, stored and disclosed by DHHS under this protocol will be in accordance with the Health Privacy Principles as set out in the *Health Records Act 2001*, unless the event is a potential law enforcement matter. It is expected that in most events, health services will only be required to provide deidentified information under this protocol.

If the SHC has notified health services that the event is a potential law enforcement matter, health services must also provide personal and health information of the affected patients. A request of this nature is made on behalf of Victoria Police and will only be made in circumstances where the information is reasonably necessary for the law enforcement function of Victoria Police. Therefore, DHHS will disclose the information received from health services to Victoria Police for law enforcement purposes.

# Responsibilities

* The designated Hospital Commander[[4]](#footnote-4) at each health service is responsible for the provision of accurate patient data via the portal by the specified deadlines.
  + The SHC is responsible for activating the protocol and subsequent notification to health services, receiving the data provided via the portal and notifying health services of protocol deactivation.

# Review Period

This Operational Response Plan should be reviewed following the management of an incident or emergency, or after a 3-year period.

# Related documents

* State Health Emergency Response Plan, Edition 4
  + DHHS Emergency Incident Casualty Data Collection Protocol SOP (Internal document only)

# Revision History

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Version | Date | Revisions | Status |
| 0.1 | February 2017 | Initial draft | Draft |
| 1.0 | 01/03/2017 | Edits to clarify procure, final version for approval by Director Emergency Resilience. | Approved |
| 2.0 | 15/09/2017 | Minor edits to version 1.1 with approval by SHERA Steering Committee | Approved |
| 3.0 | 31/12/2018 | Final version for release | Approved |

1. As described in SHERP4 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The lead agency is determined for each incident and is responsible and accountable for the all the functions of incident management. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. As described in SHERP4 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. SHERP4 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)