

Paul Day  
Director  
Pharmacists Defence Association  
By Email: [paul.day@pda-union.org](mailto:paul.day@pda-union.org)

19 August 2020

Dear Mr Day

Thank you for your recent letter setting out your concerns that community pharmacy employers may be failing to report instances of exposure to Covid-19 in the workplace.

Since that letter, you may have seen the response to a further parliamentary question that 6 notifications have been made to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and Local Authorities between 10 April 2020 and 25 July 2020: <https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-07-29/HL7530/>

As you have highlighted, through our Standards for Registered Pharmacies, pharmacy owners are responsible for ensuring the safe and effective provision of pharmacy services at or from a registered pharmacy. This includes complying with all legal requirements such as health and safety legislation and associated responsibilities.

We expect pharmacy owners to keep up to date with and follow relevant guidance produced by other authorities such as the HSE, to help ensure that they are meeting their legal responsibilities. And, the HSE has published clear guidance on the expectations and duties in relation to reporting cases of Covid-19 transmission that happened in the workplace under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013. This includes guidance for the employer about using their judgement on whether or not a confirmed diagnosis of Covid-19 is likely to have been caused by an occupational exposure and when to report.

We completely agree that all pharmacy employers must comply with health and safety reporting requirements, and particularly in the context of the current pandemic.

Failure to make a RIDDOR report in certain situations is a criminal offence and individuals and companies can be prosecuted for failing to do so. On that basis, concerns about under-reporting or failure to comply with statutory reporting obligations should be raised with the HSE, as the lead agency

responsible for enforcing health and safety legislation and requirements (with certain aspects of enforcement being carried out by Local Authorities).

We have contacted the HSE to raise awareness of this issue more widely, and we will also do this through our inspection work and our contact with pharmacy employers and pharmacy teams on the ground. This includes signposting employers to the relevant requirements.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Duncan Rudkin'. The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

**Duncan Rudkin**  
**Chief Executive & Registrar**