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CO ORDINATOR OF CIRCULARS
LEVEL 17

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| B. 40 | |
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| E. 14 | <u>HAYMARKET.</u> 2000. |
| F. 26 | |
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| H. 17 | |
| I. 17 | File No. C5421 |
| J. 61 | |
| K. - | Circular No. 84/78 |
| L. - | |
| M. - | Issued: 30 March, 1984 |
| N. - | |

(Distributed in accordance with Circular Lists A,B,C,D,E,F,H,I,J)

NOTIFICATION OF CHILDREN AT RISK

The issue of Circular No. 84/41 Notification of Children at Risk on 17 February 1984 created considerable interest among health and welfare workers. Additional information was sought on the matters of:

(a) written notification;


(b) legal liability for health workers who are not medical practitioners registered under the Medical Practitioners Act (1938).

- Under the Child Welfare Act (1939), medical practitioners in New South Wales are required to notify the Department of Youth and Community Services of children suspected of being assaulted, ill-treated or exposed.
- It is Department of Health policy that all health workers should notify the Department of Youth and Community Services regarding children about whom they have similar concerns despite the fact that this is not yet a requirement under the Act.
- Notifications, according to law, may be made either verbally or in writing, to the Department of Youth and Community Services. Verbal notifications are preferred as they facilitate a rapid response, and they may be made on a 24-hour basis to the Child Protection and Family Crisis Service, Department of Youth and Community Services, tel. 745 2283.
- At the time the verbal notification is made, health workers must obtain the Identifying Number allocated by the Department of Youth and Community Services and record this on the relevant file.
- In every case a written record must be kept on the Departmental file attesting to the fact that a notification has been made. This record must contain the Identifying Number (described in 4. above), the date and time of notification, in addition to the usual data contained in case notes.
- Compliance with these simple procedures will protect staff against the possibility of prosecution for failure to comply with the provisions of the Act.

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7. The provisions of the Child Welfare Act which protect the person making a notification, are as outlined in Circular No. 84/41.
8. Further information about these and other procedural guidelines for Department of Health staff can be obtained from Mr. John Gavaghan, Southern Metropolitan Health Region, telephone 818 0200.



B.V. McKay
Secretary.