



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive



Internal Memorandum

To: Emergency Medical Controllers, Paramedics, Advanced Paramedics
c.c.: NAS Leadership Team
From: Medical Director
Date: 22nd April 2011
Subject: **SUICIDE BY HYDROGEN SULPHIDE GAS**

There have been recent reports from North America, Japan and the UK of successful suicide attempts with hydrogen sulphide gas. There has been one reported unsuccessful case in Ireland. Hydrogen sulphide gas can be generated by mixing common household chemicals and detailed instructions are available on the internet. Patients have in most (but not all) cases affixed signs warning emergency services of the dangers.

Hydrogen sulphide gas can be fatal, and this represents a significant risk to NAS staff if encountered. The gas smells like rotten eggs. If you encounter hydrogen sulphide gas on a call **the scene is not safe**-take immediate action to protect you, your colleagues and the public, and inform ambulance control immediately with a request for assistance from the Fire Service and An Garda Síochána.

Cathal O'Donnell
Medical Director
National Ambulance Service
Health Service Executive

Seirbhís Náisiúnta Otharchair
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