

4 March 2026

To employee exposure to formaldehyde (formalin) in the Trust's operating/surgical theatres.

- 1. Please provide the current COSHH risk assessment(s) relating to formaldehyde (formalin) exposure for staff working in operating/surgical theatres, produced to meet the Trust's duties under COSHH Regulation 6.**

Please find attached for:

- 2. Please provide copies of all formaldehyde (formalin) exposure monitoring data held by the Trust for operating/surgical theatre staff for the last 12 months, including:**
 - o **Fixed/static air monitoring results**
 - o **Personal exposure or badge monitoring results (with personal data redacted as appropriate)**

This request includes monitoring undertaken for any purpose, including baseline, verification, and/or investigation monitoring, in line with COSHH Regulation 10. It is noted that COSHH Regulation 10(5)(b) requires such records to be kept for a minimum of five years.

Mater Infirmorum Hospital Theatres monitoring completed December 2025. Belfast Trust hope to make this available later in 2026.

See attached exposure monitoring data held by the Belfast Trust.

- 3. How does the Trust prevent or control employee exposure to formaldehyde (formalin) in its operating/surgical theatres, including but not limited to engineering, procedural, and/or organisational controls?**

COSHH risk assessment completed for all activities where formaldehyde may be used or released, exposure routes, frequency and control measures reviewed regularly or after changes.

Local Standard Operating Procedure on the use, storage, handling and disposal of Formaldehyde/Formalin, including responsibilities, training, monitoring and emergency arrangements shared with staff and displayed in the department for reference,

Please see attached COSHH risk assessment

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4. Does the Trust undertake regular scheduled formaldehyde (formalin) exposure monitoring in operating/surgical theatres? If so, please state the frequency.

Exposure Monitoring Result % Against Exposure Limit	Frequency
100%+ Exposure Limit	Monitoring should be repeated as soon as the actions highlighted are in place and no longer than 8 weeks after report is issued.
70-100% of the Exposure Limit	Monitoring should be repeated following the completion of highlighted actions and no longer 6 months after report is issued. (Further repeat monitoring based on outcome of the monitoring report results)
30-69% of the Exposure Limit	Monitoring should be repeated following the completion of highlighted actions and no longer than 1 year after report is issued. (Further repeat monitoring based on outcome of the monitoring report results)
0-29% of the Exposure Limit	Monitoring to be repeated every 3 years (on the basis that controls in palace are maintained and monitored)

5. Please state the total number of occasions on which regular scheduled formaldehyde (formalin) exposure monitoring has been undertaken in operating/surgical theatres in the last 12 months.

Based on the above table and the exposure monitoring result Theatres require monitoring to be repeated every 3years. Exposure monitoring has occurred **once** in the last 12 months

6. If regular scheduled formaldehyde (formalin) exposure monitoring is *not* undertaken, please provide documentation held by the Trust that demonstrates the effectiveness of current controls and supports the decision that routine monitoring is not required. If no such documentation is held, please confirm how the Trust assures compliance with COSHH Regulations 7 and 10 in the absence of routine exposure monitoring.

COSHH Risk Assessment confirms that controls rely on the use of sealed, closed-system SECUR BIOP histology pots.