

Annual Report 2024



The National Poisons Information Centre

Healthcare professional line:

01 837 9964 / 809 2566 (24 hr)

Public poisons line:

01 809 2166 (8 am -10 pm)



Website: www.poisons.ie

Email: npicdublin@beaumont.ie

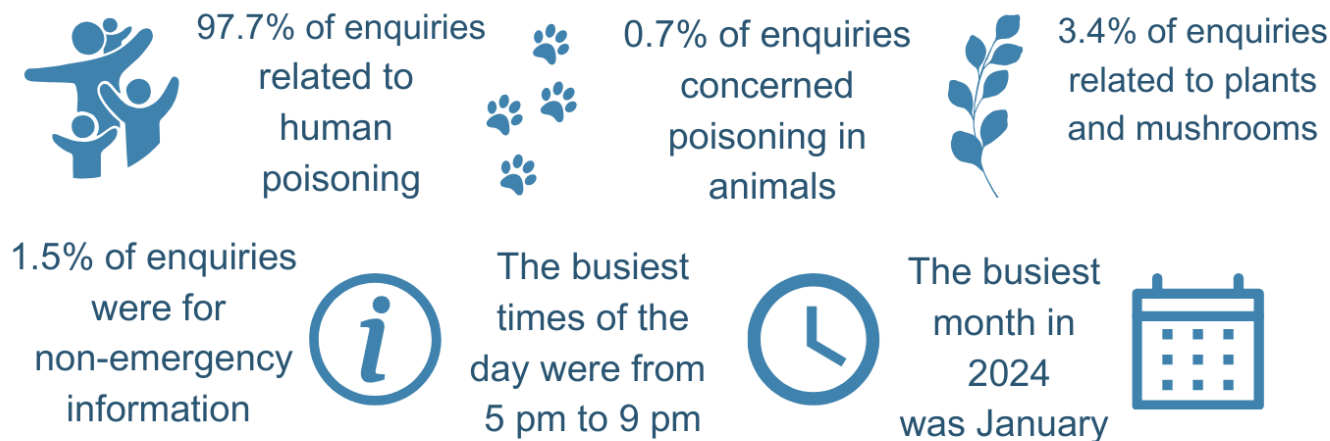
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A snapshot of NPIC activity

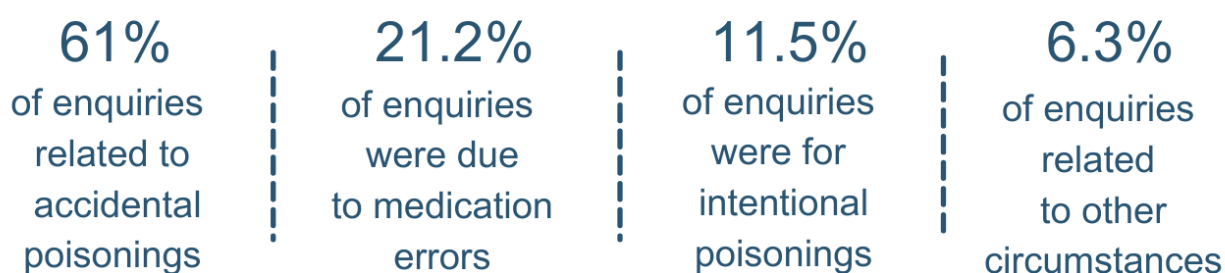
In 2024, NPIC received a total of 11,009 enquiries.



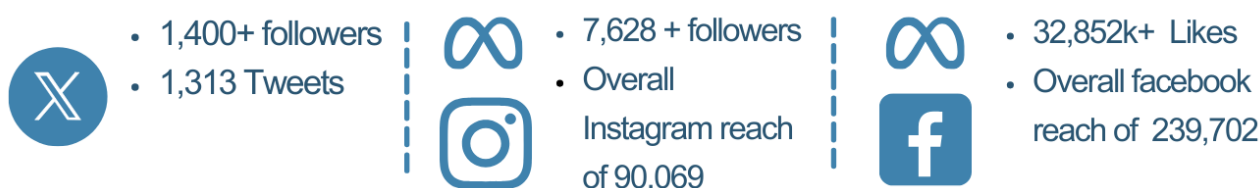
Source of enquiries to the NPIC



Poisoning circumstances



Social Media



Foreword

Welcome to the 2024 Annual Report for the National Poisons Information Centre (NPIC) of Ireland.

The Annual Report is based on data collected on enquiries to the NPIC from members of the public, healthcare professionals and others. Overall, there were 11,009 enquiries to the NPIC in 2024, representing a small increase on 2023. The data from the poisoning enquiries is presented over the following pages, along with details of other important service activities and staff accomplishments in 2024.



Some notable highlights for the NPIC in 2024 included welcoming four Paediatric Fellows to the NPIC; Dr Fatimah Binabdi, Dr Mohammad Husain Ahmad, Dr Batool Ebrahi, and Dr Husain El Shehabi. Our visitors spent some time with the staff of the Poisons Centre and joined in departmental educational activities as part of their Paediatric Fellowship Rotation with the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland. Thanks to Dr Raza Sawaya, Consultant in Emergency Medicine, Children's Hospital Ireland Temple Street, for facilitating the collaborative venture.

We also welcomed Professor Summon Chomchai, Specialist in Internal Medicine and Medical Toxicology, and Professor Chulathida Chomchai, Paediatrician and Consultant Toxicologist at the Siriraj Poison Control Center, Thailand to the NPIC in June 2024. We had valuable conversations about the universal and unique experiences of our respective poison centres, and discussed opportunities for future collaborations.

Research activities in 2024 included poster presentations at the 44th EAPCCT Congress and at the Annual Quality and Patient Safety Meeting, Beaumont Hospital, completing a series of clinical audits looking at (1) medication errors reported to the NPIC, (2) the time from patient presentation at the hospital emergency department to NPIC telephone contact, (3) a review of the Poisoning Severity Score assigned to poisoning cases, and (4) battery ingestions in children. The NPIC also commenced a 2-year study on paediatric exposures to liquid-detergent capsules. We are collecting data about the circumstances of the exposure and the type of product packaging for specific brands.

The NPIC workload associated with Beaumont Hospital's role as the Appointed Body under Article 45 of the CLP Regulation remained high. In 2024, the NPIC managed an increase of 13% in the number of queries from industry about the poison centre registration procedure. In addition, NPIC staff checked the quality of 3,009 product notifications.

Throughout the year, we continued to liaise closely with colleagues in the HSE to promote safety advice particularly in relation to paracetamol poisoning, accidental paediatric poisoning, and poisoning prevention messages. We are grateful to the HSE MyChild.ie team for their collaborative support and help to raise awareness of the NPIC.

Several outreach activities and lecture opportunities took place in 2024 enabling staff to raise awareness of the Poisons Centre's role. I am very grateful to the NPIC team for their hard work, dedication and commitment to the NPIC; they have gone above and beyond to deliver an exceptional service with limited resources.

Finally, thank you to everyone who uses our service and supports the work of the NPIC.

Dr Edel Duggan

Clinical Director

National Poisons Information Centre

The NPIC team

The NPIC staff comprises of a Clinical Director, six Specialists in Poisons Information (SPIs) and an Administrative Officer. The NPIC's phone lines are answered by the SPIs, who are scientists with additional training and postgraduate qualifications in medical toxicology.

The NPIC staff consults with the NPIC Clinical Director for advice and medical information on the management of severe and complex poisoning cases as required.



Clinical Director

Dr Edel Duggan MB, BCh, BAO, MD, FFARCSI, Dip Med Tox, ERT

Manager

Patricia Casey BSc, Dip Med Tox, FEAPCCT

Specialists in Poisons Information

Nicola Cassidy BSc, M Med Sc, Dip Med Tox

Niamh English MSc, Dip Med Tox

John Herbert BSc, Dip Med Tox

Conor Hurley BSc, MSc, MSc Med Tox, ERT

Feargal O'Connor BSc, Cert Med Tox

Administrative Officer

Sinead Doyle BSc

The role of the NPIC

The National Poisons Information Centre (NPIC) was established in 1966 to provide telephone advice to healthcare professionals treating poisoned patients. Today, the NPIC operates 365 days a year and provides a specialist telephone information service to assist healthcare professionals in the treatment of acute poisoning.

The NPIC Healthcare Professional Line is available 24 hours every day of the year for medical staff and other healthcare professionals.

The NPIC telephone numbers are;

- 01 809 2566 / 01 809 2568
- 01 837 9964 / 01 837 9966

The NPIC also has a dedicated number for members of the public that operates between 8 am and 10 pm every day. The telephone number for the Public Poisons Information Line is 01 809 2166. NPIC staff provide advice to members of the public on whether they need to seek medical attention following an accidental poisoning incident or if they can be safely monitored at home. It is our policy to refer all cases of intentional poisoning for medical assessment.

The secondary role of the NPIC is to collect and interpret epidemiological data on acute poisoning. This information is used to monitor poisoning trends and establish and update appropriate treatment protocols as required.

NPIC staff members answer enquiries between 8 am and 10 pm every day. The UK National Poisons Information Service (NPIS) is contracted to answer enquiries to the NPIC outside of these core hours. Telephone calls are automatically diverted to the UK NPIS between 10 pm and 8 am every day, and the extra call charges are paid by Beaumont Hospital.

Quality and training

All enquiry records are peer-reviewed and stored as hardcopy and electronically on a Poisons Information Database named UKPID. All incoming and outgoing telephone enquiries to the NPIC are audio-recorded for clinical governance and to assist with staff training. The Clinical Director conducts periodic audits to ensure the quality of the service and advice provided.

The NPIC maintains close links with the UK National Poisons Information Service and regularly contributes to and organises Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities with our colleagues. NPIC staff members regularly submit research studies to the annual congress of the European Association of Poisons Centres and Clinical Toxicologists (EAPCCT).

Key statistics for 2024

Time and date of enquiry

The National Poisons Information Centre received a total of 11,009 enquiries in 2024. 8,968 enquires were answered between 8 am and 10 pm, while 2,041 enquiries were received between 10 pm and 8 am and were answered by the UK National Poisons Information Service. The busiest hours of the day were from 4 pm to 9 pm (Figure 1). January was the busiest month. The average number of enquiries per month was 917 (Figure 2).

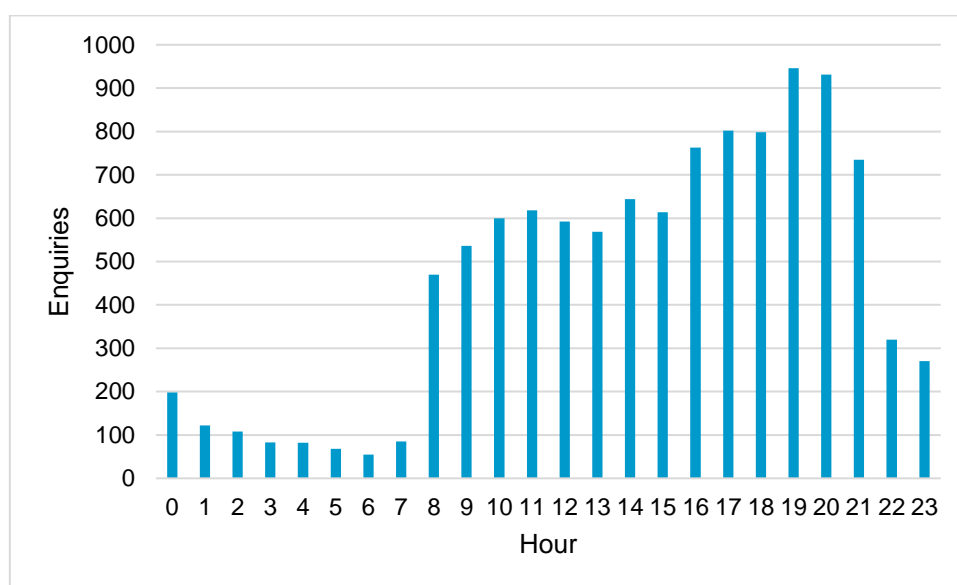


Figure 1: Time of enquiry to NPIC

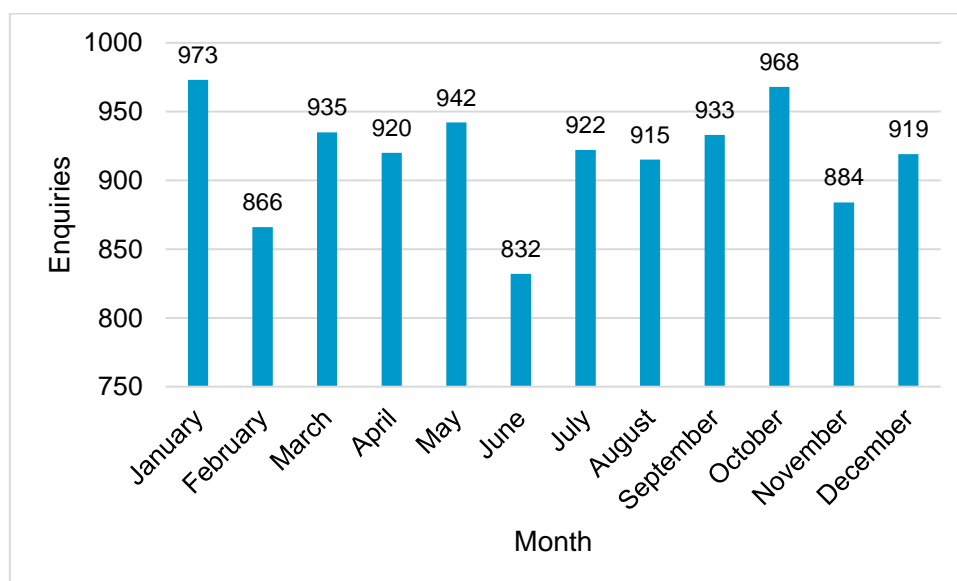


Figure 2: Monthly enquiries to NPIC

Type of caller

The NPIC is contacted by different types of healthcare professionals, as well as members of the public and support services. In 2024, calls from members of the public accounted for the majority of enquiries (55.1%) to the NPIC.

Enquirer	n	%
Member of the public	6,067	55.1%
Hospital	2,405	21.9%
GP/Primary care	1,910	17.4%
Nursing home	159	1.4%
Community pharmacy	145	1.3%
Ambulance service	111	1.0%
School/childcare	58	0.5%
Veterinary practice	31	0.3%
Support services	30	0.3%
Other or Unknown	93	0.8%

Table 1: Type of caller

Geographic location of callers

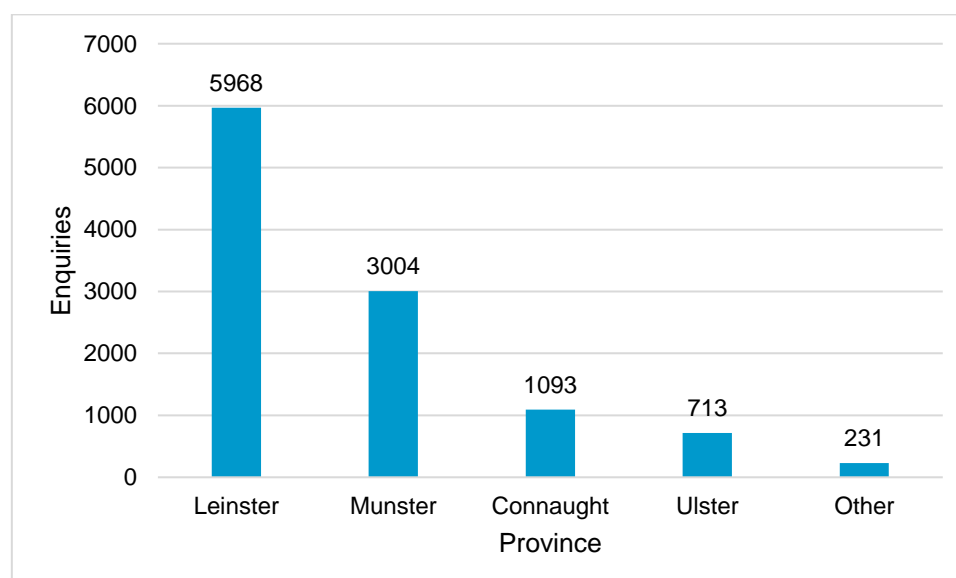


Figure 3: Numbers of poisoning queries according to caller's geographic location

Enquiries from healthcare professionals

Approximately 41.7% of enquiries were received from healthcare professionals working in hospitals (n=2,405), general practice (n=1,910), nursing homes (n=159) and the ambulance service (n=111). GP out-of-hours services that operate between 6 pm-8 am (weekdays) and 24 hr (weekends) accounted for most of the enquiries from general practice.

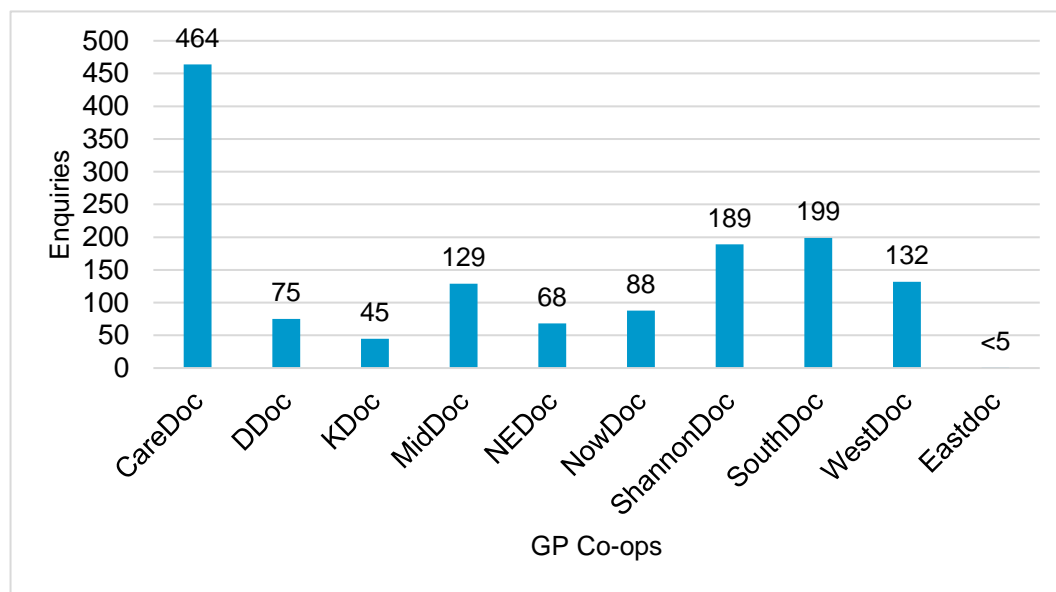


Figure 4: Enquiries from GP co-ops

Enquiries from members of the public

The NPIC operates a public access telephone line every day from 8 am to 10 pm to give advice to members of the public. The NPIC relies on search engine search results, social media, referrals from healthcare professionals and word of mouth to help raise awareness and direct callers to the service.

In 2024, the NPIC received 6,067 enquiries from members of the public, representing 55.1% of total enquiries. 4,510 (74.3%) of enquiries from members of the public involved children aged 15 years or under. The majority of enquiries related to accidental exposures (75.9%), while 19.2% concerned medication errors.

In 4,660 (76.8%) enquiries from members of the public, the patient was asymptomatic when the NPIC was contacted. 1,180 (19.4%) cases had minor signs and symptoms. 87 (1.4%) cases had moderate signs and symptoms, including repeated vomiting, CNS depression, and cardiac features, and a small number of cases had severe features. The signs and symptoms were unknown for 57 (0.9%) cases and were not applicable (i.e. unrelated to poisoning) for 83 (1.4%) cases.

1,140 (18.8%) of these patients did not require medical treatment, 1,046 (17.2%) were referred to a hospital emergency department, 270 (4.5%) patients were referred to their GP for medical assessment, and 1,474 (24.3%) patients were advised to seek medical advice if symptoms developed. Treatment advice such as supportive care, oral fluids, irrigation of the affected area and investigations was recommended in 2,136 enquiries (35.2%), and more than one treatment was recommended for a number of enquiries.

Demographics

10,756 enquiries related to human poisoning cases. The majority of poisoning enquiries related to children less than 15 years old 60.8% (n=6,534). The peak age was 1-4 years old (41.1%). 3,577 poisoning enquiries (33.3%) involved individuals aged 15 years or older.

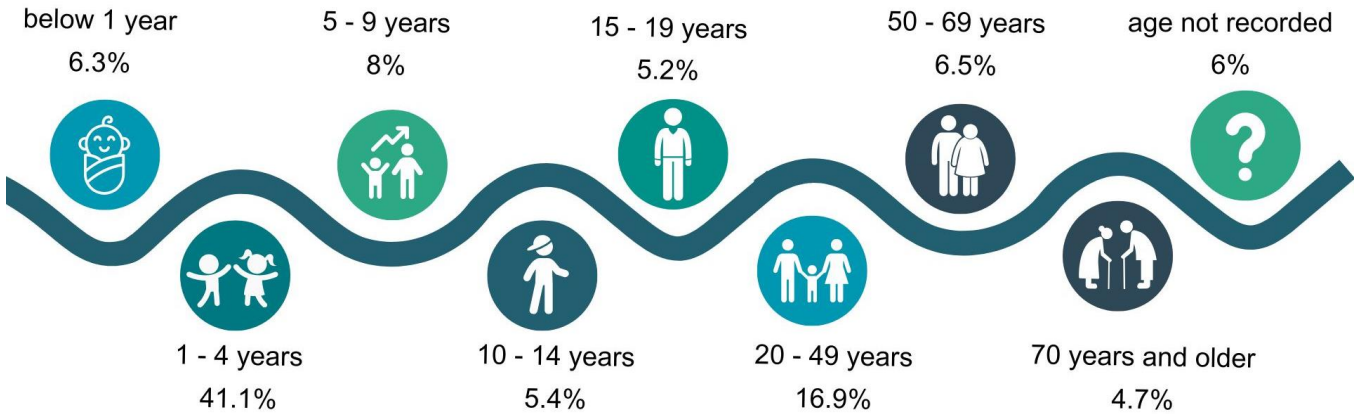


Figure 5: Demographics

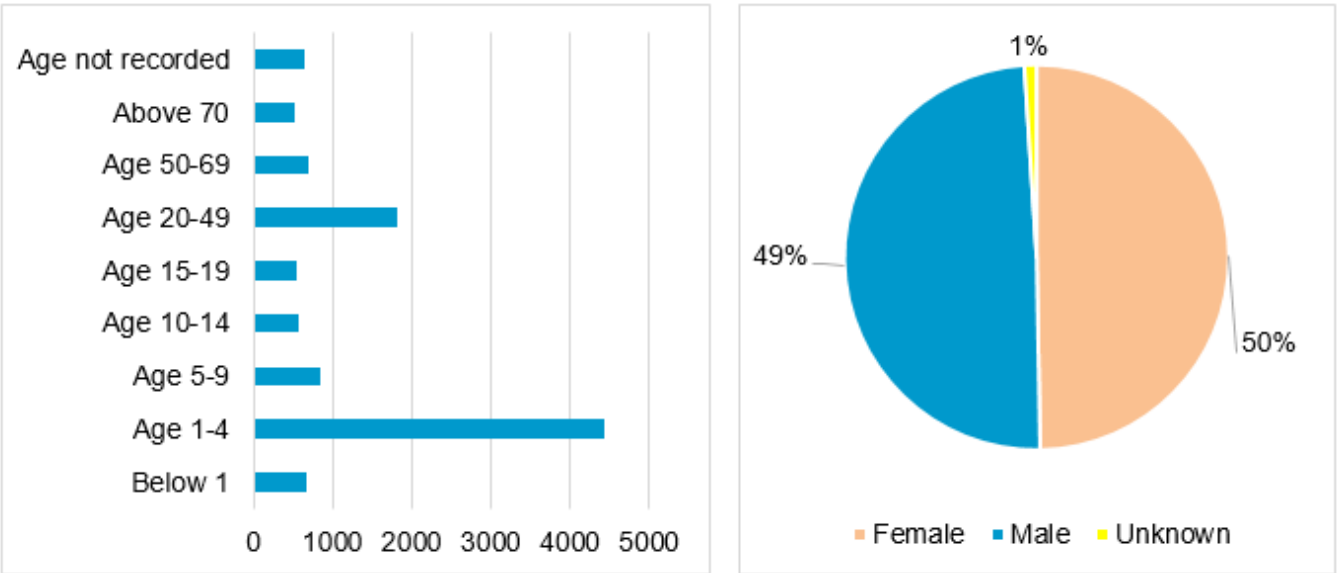


Figure 6: Age groups for poisoning cases and Gender distribution of poisoning cases

Incident location

Most human poisonings occurred in the home or a domestic setting (91.4%, n=9,829). A small number of poisonings occurred in nursing home/care home/residential care facilities (n=237), an occupational setting (n=172), a public place (n=111), hospital (n=80), school/crèche (n=109), agricultural workplace (n=55), and other locations (n=162).

Incident location	n	%
Home/Domestic	9,829	91.4
Nursing/Care Home	237	2.2
Work	172	1.6
Other	163	1.5
Public Area	111	1
School	109	1
Hospital	80	0.7
Agricultural Workplace	55	0.5

Table 2: Incident location

Poisoning circumstances

The majority of enquiries about poisoning in humans involved accidental/unintentional poisonings (n= 6,516). 2,351 enquiries related to therapeutic errors with medications, 1,236 enquiries were intentional overdoses, and 250 enquiries related to recreational abuse. The remaining cases were either adverse reactions, or cases of unknown circumstances or intent.

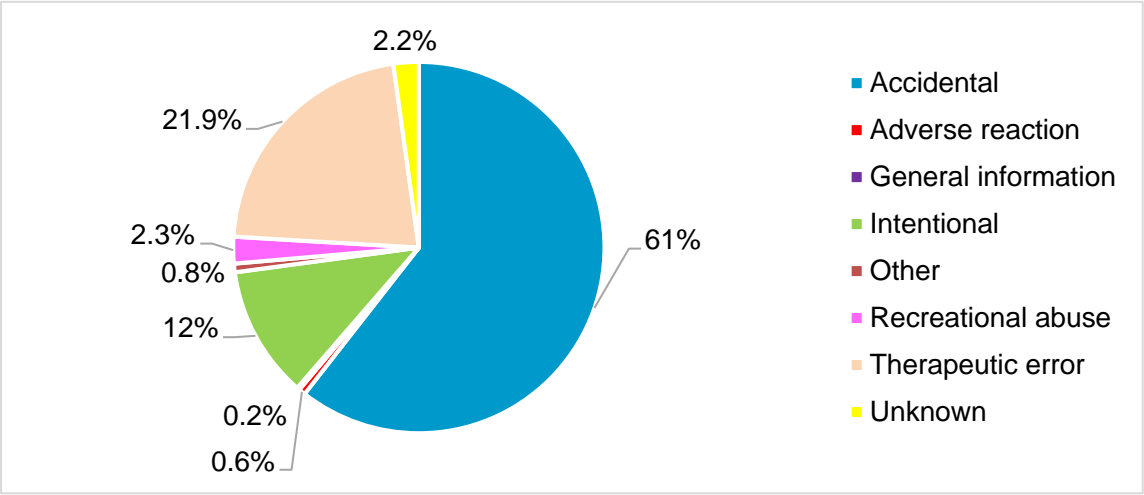


Figure 7: Poisoning circumstances

Agents involved in human poisoning

17,717 agents were involved in the cases of human poisoning. Over 56% of all agents were drugs (including medications and drugs of abuse), 17% were household products such as fabric detergent products and multipurpose cleaners, and 14.5% were chemicals, including alcohols, corrosive substances, essential oils, and hydrocarbons.

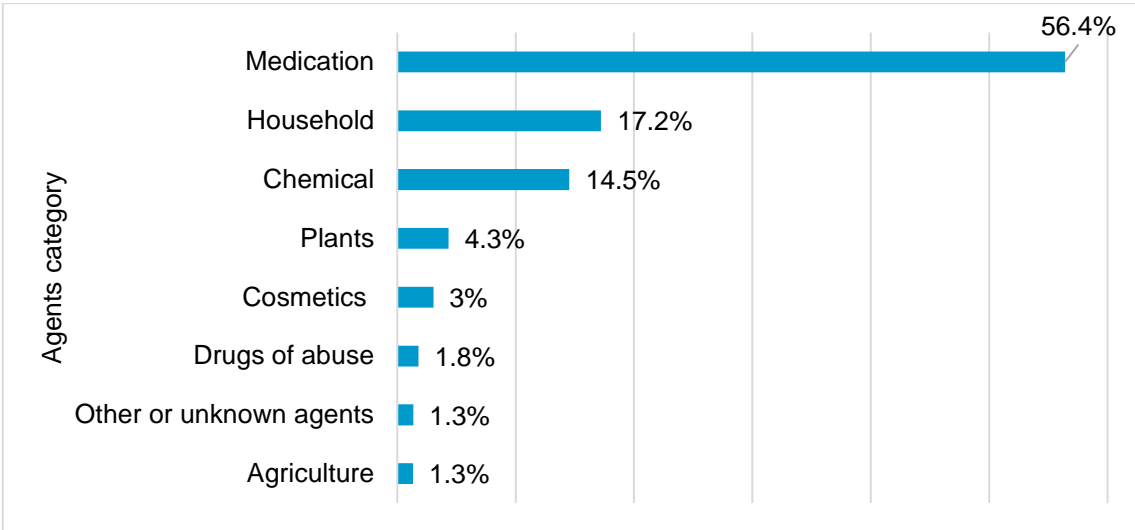


Figure 8: Agents involved in human poisoning

Top 10 Agents

In 2024, paracetamol, ibuprofen, and ethanol were the top three agents implicated in poisoning enquiries, similar to the previous years. The top 10 agents involved in poisoning cases are presented in Figure 9.

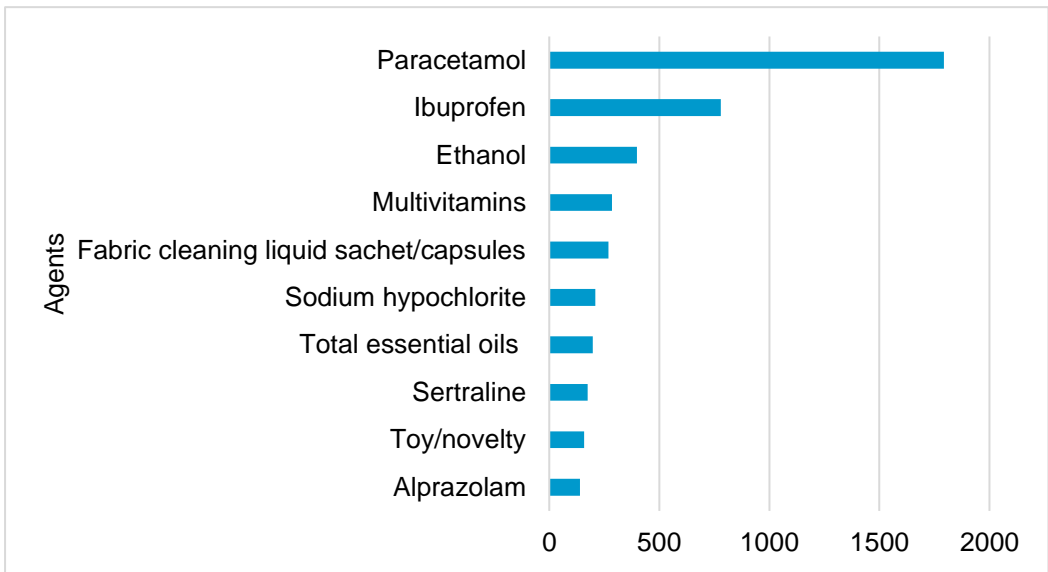


Figure 9: Top 10 agents involved in human poisoning

Top 10 Medications

The top 10 medications are listed in Figure 10. Paracetamol was the most common medication involved in poisoning. Codeine and caffeine appear in the top medications because these ingredients are present in a number of analgesic products, however, the doses involved are usually small. These ingredients are excluded from Figure 10.

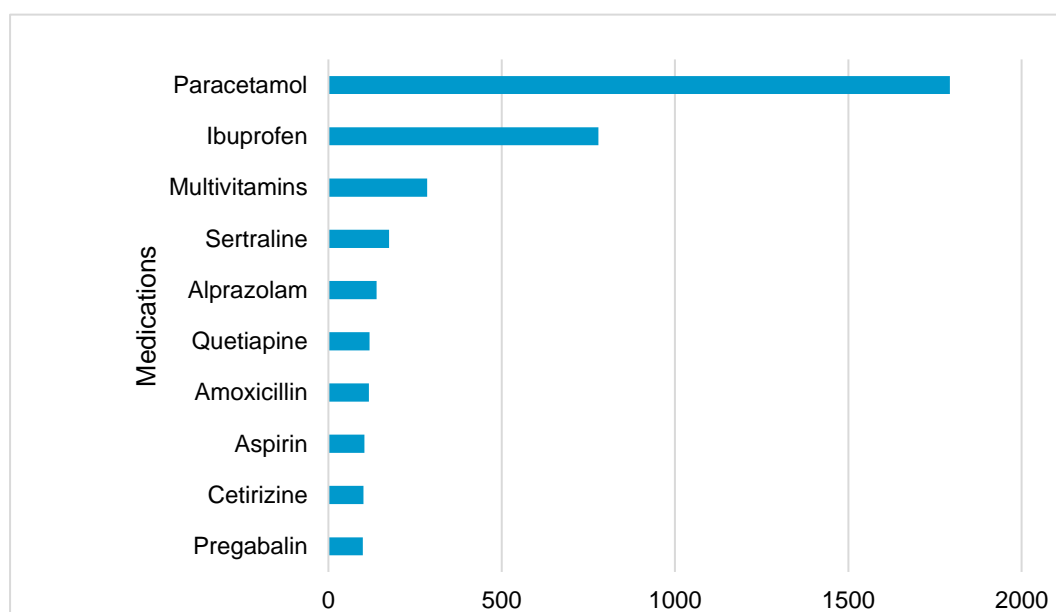


Figure 10: Top 10 medications involved in poisoning

Household Products

3,050 enquiries to the NPIC in 2024 involved household products. The most common products were fabric cleaning liquid detergent capsules, disinfectants/antiseptics/sanitisers, dishwasher tablets, hand sanitiser, bleach, and reed diffusers. Foreign bodies and toys including coins, magnets, and water beads are common household items that may cause an obstruction if ingested.

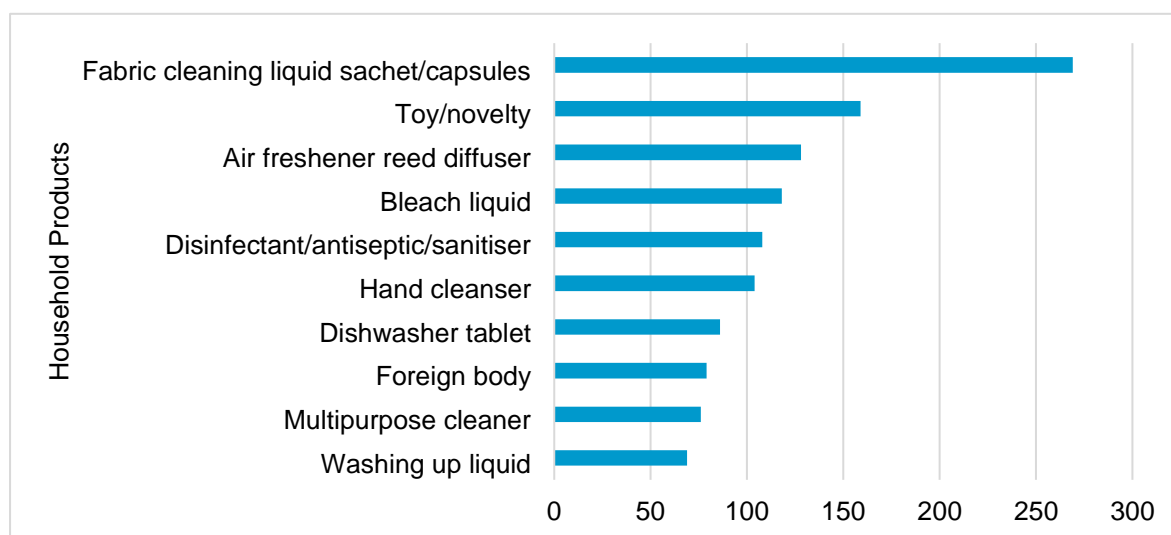


Figure 11: The top household products involved in poisoning.

Pesticides

Agricultural agents, including professional products and products for sale to members of the public accounted for 233 (1.3%) poisoning enquiries. Enquiries about exposure to herbicides predominated (38% of enquiries about agricultural products) 17.2% of these were weed-killer products containing glyphosate. 26.6% of enquiries involved exposure to rodenticides. Other categories of agricultural products are shown in Figure 12.

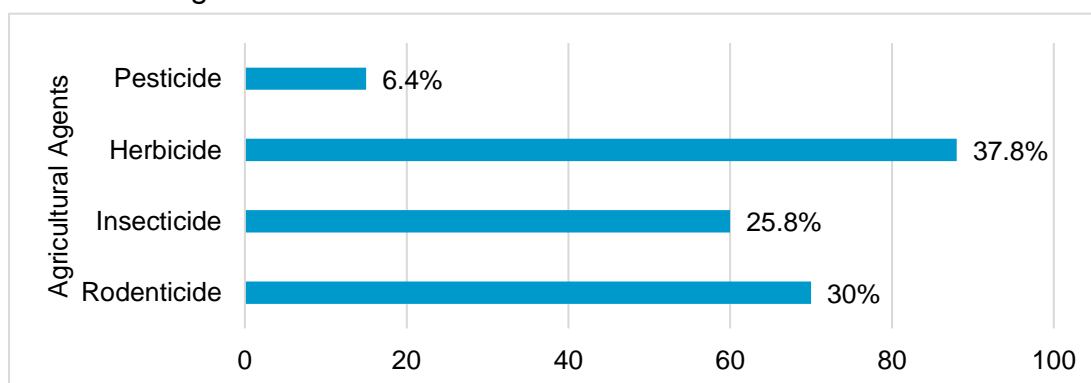


Figure 12: Pesticides

Drugs of abuse

There were 324 enquiries relating to 11 categories of drugs of abuse. The main drugs of abuse included cocaine and cannabis/cannabinoids. Many cases involved more than one drug of abuse.

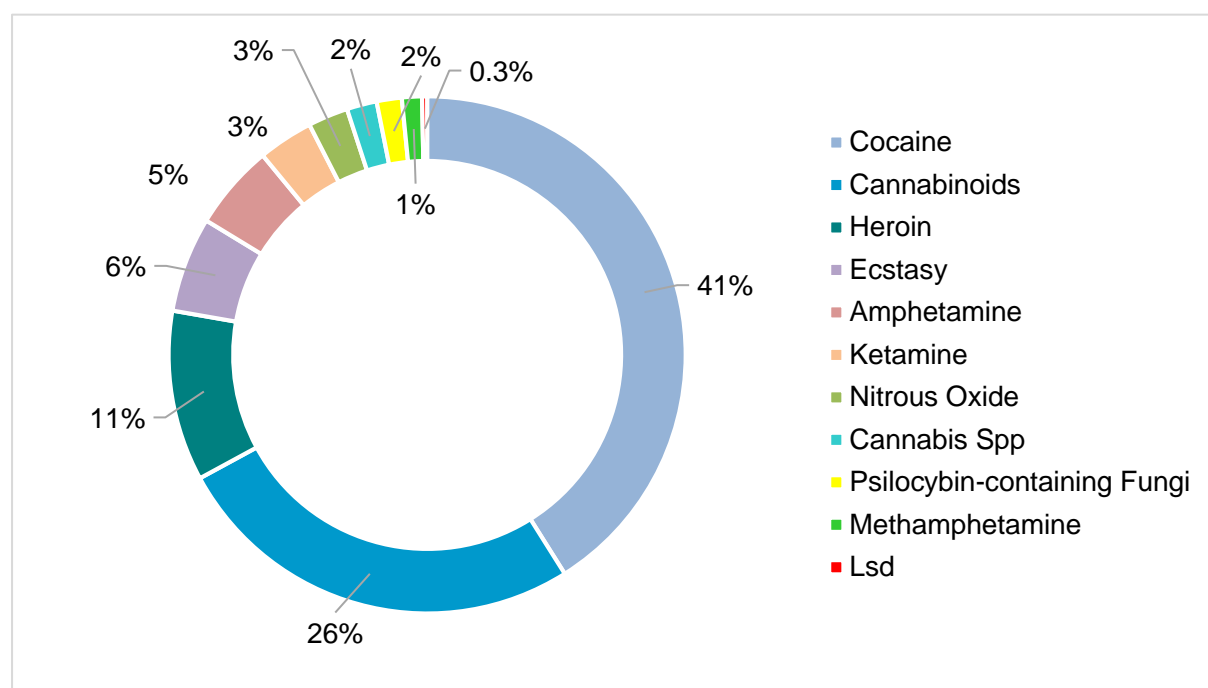


Figure 13: Drugs of abuse

Paediatric poisoning enquiries

In 2024, 6,534 enquiries involved children under 15 years of age. The majority of these enquiries related to children aged under 5 years (5,099, 78%). 80% of children were asymptomatic when the NPIC was contacted. 19% had minor or moderate symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, drowsiness, or a mild local skin reaction. The symptoms were unknown or unrelated in 0.6% of cases, 0.2% of children had severe symptoms. There were no fatalities.

Exposure route	n	%
Ingestion	5755	88.1
More than one exposure route	307	4.7
Eye contact	115	1.8
Other	103	1.6
Inhalation	93	1.4
Skin contact	85	1.3
Unknown	60	0.9
Injection	16	0.2

Table 3: Exposure route involved in paediatric poisoning in 2024

97% (n=6,329) of paediatric poisoning enquiries occurred in the home or a domestic setting. 77% (n=5,035) of enquiries were accidental /unintentional poisonings and 19% were therapeutic medication errors. 88% (n= 5,755) of poisoning enquiries concerned ingestion. Some enquiries related to children who were exposed to poisoning by more than one exposure route, for example, dermal exposure and ingestion.

8,809 agents were involved in cases of poisoning in children. Medication was the most common type of agent involved in paediatric poisoning. The top medication enquiries concerned paracetamol, ibuprofen, and multivitamin products, as in previous years. The categories of agents involved in paediatric poisoning are shown in Figure 14.

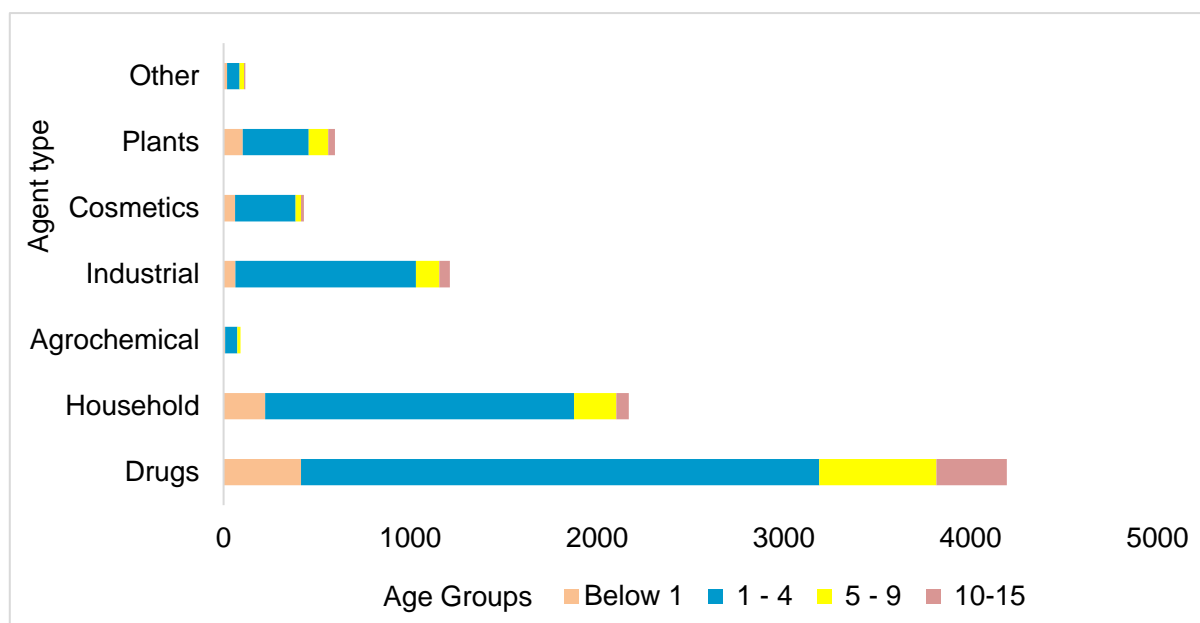


Figure 14: Agents involved in paediatric poisoning

Signs and symptoms at the time of enquiry to NPIC

A Poison Severity Score is assigned to each human case based on the clinical features at the time the NPIC was contacted (n=10,756). Signs and symptoms are classified as minor, moderate, severe, none, not applicable, or unknown using the EAPCCT/IPCS Poisoning Severity Score. It is possible that some patients became symptomatic or their condition deteriorated after the initial contact with the NPIC.

- 66.8% (n=7,190) of patients were asymptomatic when the NPIC was contacted
- 24.9% (n=2,673) of patients had minor signs and symptoms, for example, mild gastrointestinal upset, drowsiness, and mild local irritation of skin, eyes, or mucous membranes
- 4.9% (n=523) of patients had moderate signs and symptoms including repeated vomiting, CNS depression, and some cardiac features
- 1.8% (n=196) of patients had severe signs and symptoms including coma, liver function abnormalities, severe hypotension, and metabolic changes
- The signs and symptoms were unknown for 130 cases (1.2%) and were not applicable i.e. unrelated to poisoning for 44 cases (0.4%)

Clinical outcome of serious / unusual poisoning cases

193 cases were followed-up due to the severity, potential severity, or unusual nature of their symptoms when the NPIC was contacted. NPIC staff subsequently telephoned the hospital and spoke with members of the clinical team to determine the health outcome for the patient. NPIC staff consulted with the NPIC Clinical Director for advice and medical information on the management of 242 severe and complex poisoning cases in 2024.

- 101 patients who were followed up recovered completely
- 58 patients developed short-term sequelae such as aspiration pneumonia, renal impairment and caustic injury.
- A small number of patients (n=<5) had permanent sequelae or had outcomes that were classified as 'not applicable' (for example, poisoning was eventually excluded as a cause for the patient's clinical condition)
- 10 patients died
- The outcome could not be determined for 19 patients

We are grateful to the nursing and medical staff for their help in providing follow-up information to NPIC staff.

Surveillance and research

The NPIC is in a unique position to conduct real-time surveillance by monitoring trends in poisoning. For the 2024 Annual Report, we decided to highlight poisoning incidents with paracetamol.

Paracetamol Poisoning

In 2024, paracetamol accounted for 13.6% (n=1,461) of poisoning cases discussed with the NPIC. 63.9% (n=934) of paracetamol exposures occurred in children aged 15 years and under.

42.2% (n=616) of enquiries were from members of the public, 38.3% were received from healthcare professionals working in hospitals (n=559), 16.9% enquiries were from general practice, and 2.7% were from other sources of enquiries.

69.9% of paracetamol enquiries involved patients who were asymptomatic when the NPIC was contacted. 20.5% of cases had minor signs and symptoms, and 7.7% of cases had moderate or severe features, including repeated vomiting, diarrhoea, nausea, abdominal pain, and fever. The symptoms were unknown for 1.9% of enquiries.

The majority of paracetamol poisoning exposures involved ingestion. The treatments recommended included seeking medical advice in the emergency department, investigations, monitoring vital signs, an antidote (if levels indicate), supportive care, and clinician referral for advice on management. 2.7% of paracetamol enquiries required follow-up by NPIC staff.

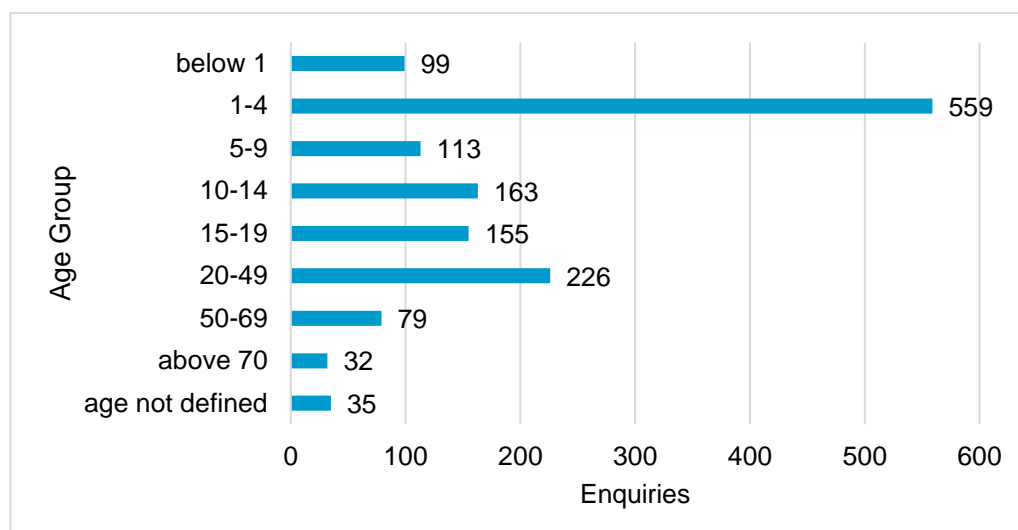


Figure 15: Age groups for paracetamol poisoning

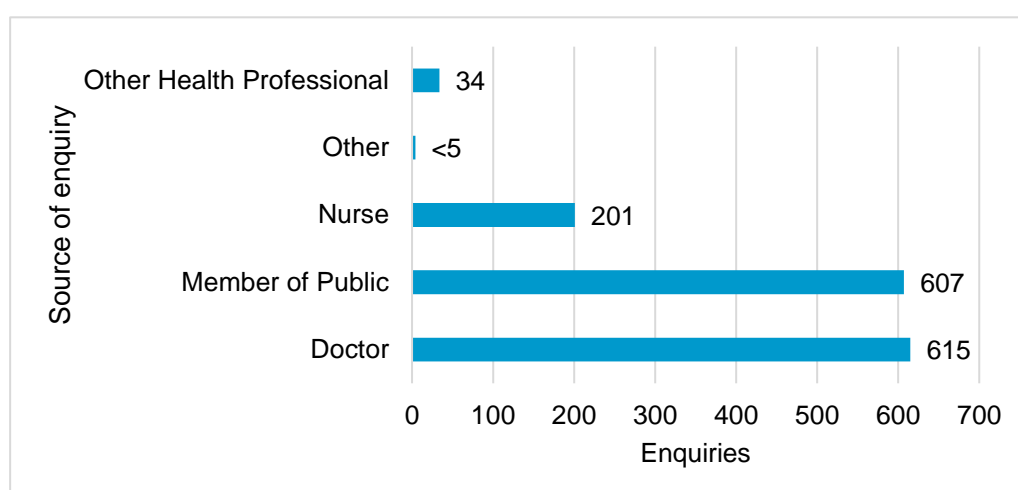


Figure 16: Source of enquiry for paracetamol poisoning

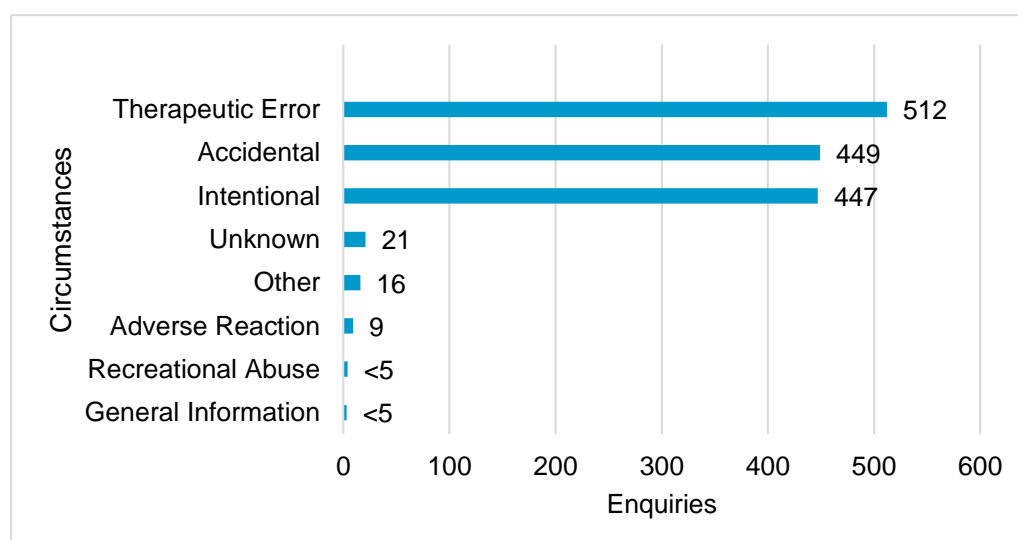


Figure 17: Circumstances involved in paracetamol poisoning

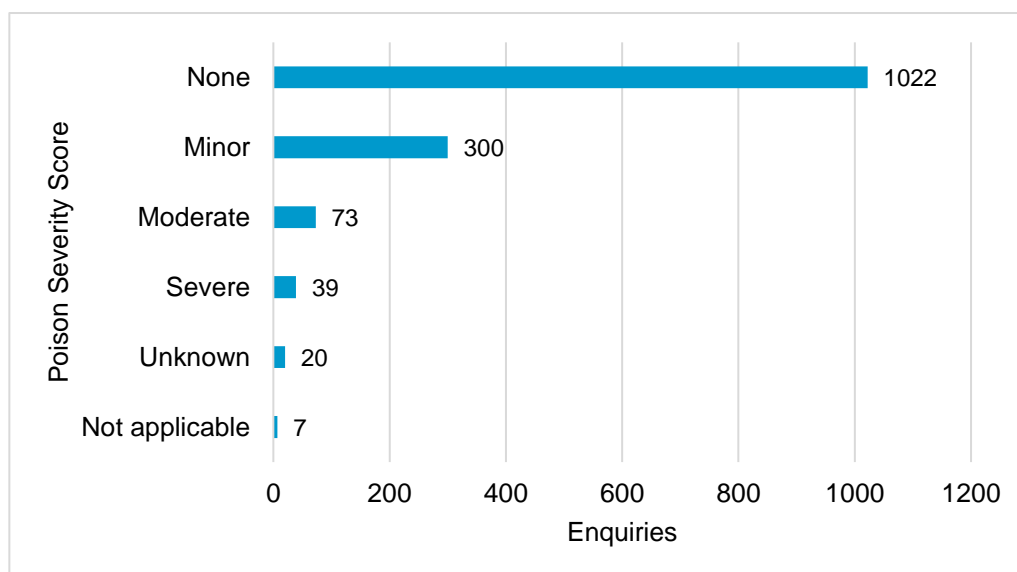


Figure 18: Poison Severity Score for paracetamol poisoning

TOXBASE® enquiries

TOXBASE® is the online clinical toxicology database of the UK National Poisons Information Service. It is the primary toxicology database used by the NPIC to provide information on the clinical features and management of acute poisoning. TOXBASE® is used by Emergency Departments and Intensive Care Units in Ireland. This is co-ordinated by the NPIC and facilitated by Beaumont Hospital.

In 2024, there were 45,409 TOXBASE user sessions by 50 registered users in Ireland.

NPIC website

The website <https://poisons.ie/> has details on

- how to contact the NPIC for members of the public and healthcare professionals
- practical poison prevention advice
- educational resources
- information on seasonal hazards
- information for healthcare professionals
- and regulatory information for industry



The website highlights the telephone number for the Public Poisons Line so that members of the public can find it easily in an emergency. The Industry page provides advice for companies that have to register products under EU Chemical, Labelling and Packaging (CLP) Regulations.

In 2024, the NPIC website had

- 81,090 page views
- There were 35,771 visitors to the website
- 79.8% of users performed an organic search using a search engine to arrive at poisons.ie while 15.5% of users searched for poisons.ie directly. 4.6% of users were referred to poisons.ie via another website and 0.7% of users arrived at the website via social media channels.

The most visited pages on the website were

- Public poisons page: 11,584 (14.3%)
- Home page: 11,085 (13.7%)
- Contact us: 6,568 (8.1%)
- What we do: 3,910 (4.8%)
- Kitchen safety 3,905 (4.8%)
- Safety data sheets 3,460 (4.3%)

Accessibility audit

The NPIC worked with Vially to undertake a digital accessibility audit of our website. (www.poisons.ie). Vially assisted with auditing, training, guidance and technical assistance to NPIC staff. The results of the audit were available in 2024, and accessibility issues were rectified. A re-audit took place in November 2024, and a certificate of compliance was awarded and added to the website.

Telephone Data Analysis

The NPIC uses OpenScape Contact Centre to deliver telephone enquiries and to monitor call duration, wait times and the abandon rate. Calls answered by the UK NPIS are not captured by the system. Telephone enquiry data for the period 1st January -31st December 2024 were collected retrospectively and analysed using Microsoft Excel. These data include administrative calls as well as emergency enquiries.

10,735 calls were logged in 2024, and 9,932 (90.9%) were answered. The average call duration was 4 minutes 22 seconds. The average monthly wait time for calls presented to a Poisons queue and answered was 47 seconds and for abandoned calls was 2 minutes 30 seconds. The maximum wait time for answered calls was 10 minutes 23 seconds.

The average monthly service level was 88.6%. 21.8% of calls were answered within 10 seconds, 52.0% in 11-20 seconds, 19.0% in 21- 30 seconds, 1.4% in 31-40 seconds and 5.9% in more than 40 seconds.

The overall abandon rate was 7.5%. The Irish queue, where the welcome message is in Irish, had a higher abandon rate than the English queue (43.6% vs 6.9%), suggesting that some callers abandoned the call when they realized they had selected the option to hear the message as Gaeilge.

For the English queue, the highest abandon rates were between 09:00-09:59 and 19:00-20:59 (Figure 19). An average of 44.9% of abandoned calls were abandoned within 10 seconds, 7.9% in 11-20 seconds, 18.1% in 21-30 seconds, 5.6% in 31-40 seconds and 23.5% in more than 40 seconds.

The higher abandon rate in the morning may be due to staff checking that the phone lines were functioning properly. The evening peak corresponds to the busiest time of day, when only one staff member is on duty.

These data demonstrate that the NPIC provides a robust service: 90.9% of calls were answered. The monthly average wait time for all calls was 1:02 minutes and the majority were answered within 40 seconds of the phone ringing.

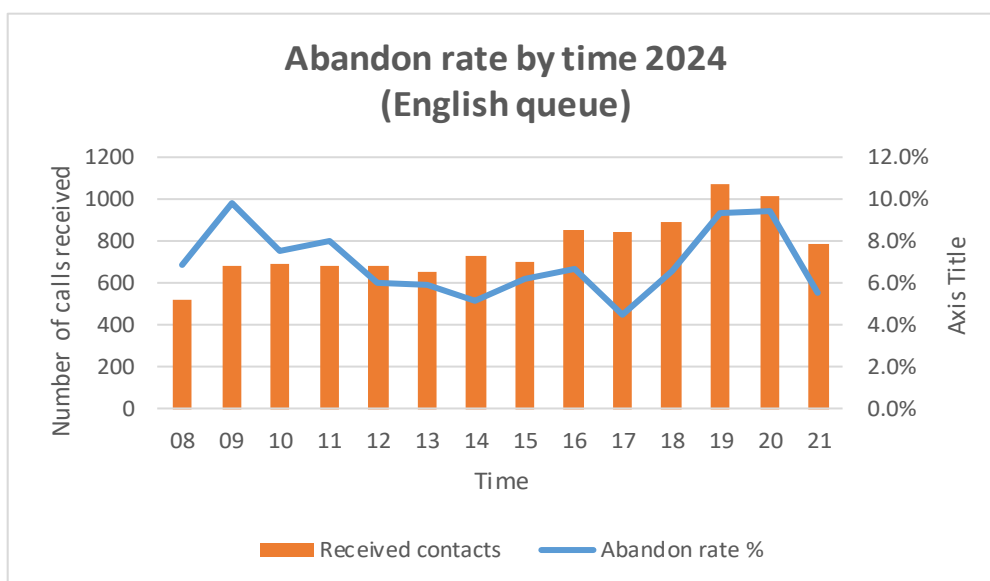


Figure 19: Abandon rate by time in 2024

NPIC on social media

The National Poisons Information Centre maintains an active social media presence to increase awareness about our service and to promote poison prevention practices and safety in the home. The NPIC social media platforms should not be used in case of emergency for poisoning advice.



Our Facebook and Instagram (@npicireland) pages are primarily aimed at members of the public to deliver information and poisoning prevention messages.

The NPIC Facebook page had over 32,348 followers, 785 posts, 317 stories, and an overall reach of 1,000,478 in 2024. The NPIC Instagram page had over 7,000 followers, 755 posts, 447 stories, and an overall reach of 64,060 in 2024.

The NPIC X account (@IrelandNpic) is primarily aimed at healthcare professionals to promote the NPIC service. We highlight information on poisoning trends and poison prevention messages and share advice on the management of poisoning, and important articles from the medical literature. At the end of 2024, the NPIC had over 1,400 followers and had posted 1,313 times.

Our LinkedIn page is used to raise awareness of the NPIC, highlight the Centre's services, share important updates, and promote educational and outreach initiatives. The page was relaunched in 2024 to strengthen public and professional engagement, enhance visibility, and foster collaboration with healthcare professionals, regulatory agencies, and other stakeholders.

Outreach activities and raising awareness

The NPIC staff engaged in different activities during the year to help raise awareness of the Poisons Centre and to share poison prevention tips and advice to protect children and adults from accidental poisoning. The NPIC is grateful to the organisations who extended an invitation to attend their events and highlight the role and work of the Poisons Centre.

1) Pregnancy and Baby Fair in the RDS

Conor Hurley, Patricia Casey and Sinead Doyle attended the Pregnancy and Baby Fair at the RDS, Dublin, on the 5th and 6th of October, 2024. Over 11,500 visitors attended the event, and NPIC staff engaged with the public and handed out promotional material to raise awareness of our service and communicate important poison prevention messages.



2) HSE Parent and Baby Group Visits

Nicola Cassidy attended a HSE Parent and Baby Group in Dublin City Centre in on 15th October 2024 to discuss poison prevention.

Niamh English delivered Poison Prevention leaflets, magnets and pens for a 'Mother and Baby' event held in Killarney in September 2024 with Public Health Nurse Catriona Shanahan.

Print interviews

Nicola Cassidy was interviewed by Helen O'Callaghan of the Irish Examiner on seasonal plant poisoning risks. The article entitled "Six experts on how to keep kids safe in farms, in the water, and more this summer" was published in the Parenting Magazine of the Irish Examiner on 2nd July 2024.

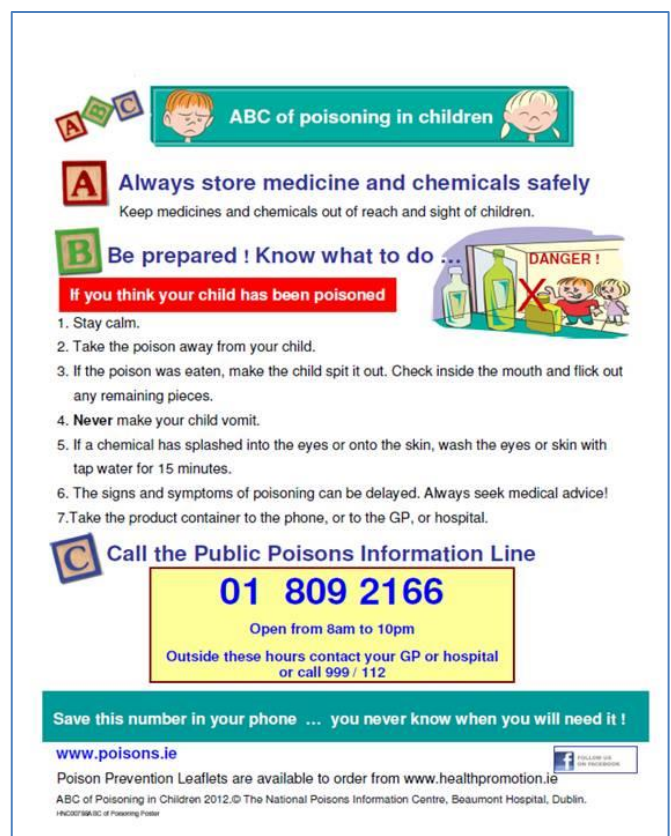
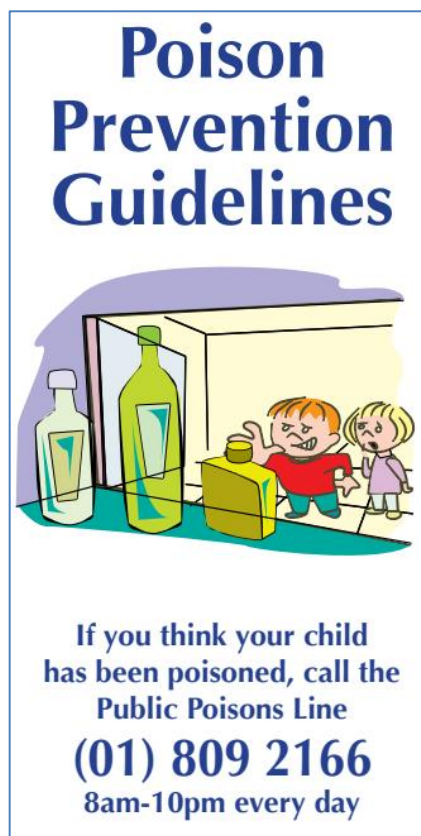
<https://www.irishexaminer.com/lifestyle/parenting/arid-41427418.html>

Poison prevention materials

The NPIC poison prevention materials are available free of charge and can be ordered online by healthcare professionals and members of the public from the website www.healthpromotion.ie

In 2024, the following quantities of materials were dispatched;

- 8,518 poison prevention leaflets
- 711 ABC of Poisoning posters
- 5,982 key fobs



Regulatory activities



Working in partnership with the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA)

The Poison Centre's workload associated with the hospital's role as the appointed body under Article 45 of the CLP Regulation remained high. The NPIC continued to advise industry on the notification procedure for chemical mixtures placed on the Irish market that are classified as hazardous on the basis of their health or physical effects. NPIC contacted 500 companies regarding the Notification procedure for hazardous chemical mixtures which came into force 1 January 2025 and handled 1,113 queries from industry about the poison centre registration procedure. Staff contacted 51 companies for product information to assist with treatment advice and checked the quality of 3,009 Poison Centre Notifications (PCN), this marked a 296% increase on PCNs checked in 2023 (n=759).

The NPIC received 308 new product registrations for industrial products directly in 2024. These product notifications were uploaded onto the Document Management System (DMS) to ensure that the product information was available to NPIC staff when answering emergency enquiries.

By the end of 2024, there were over 1,000,000 PCNs for hazardous chemical mixtures placed on the market in Ireland made through the ECHA PCN portal.

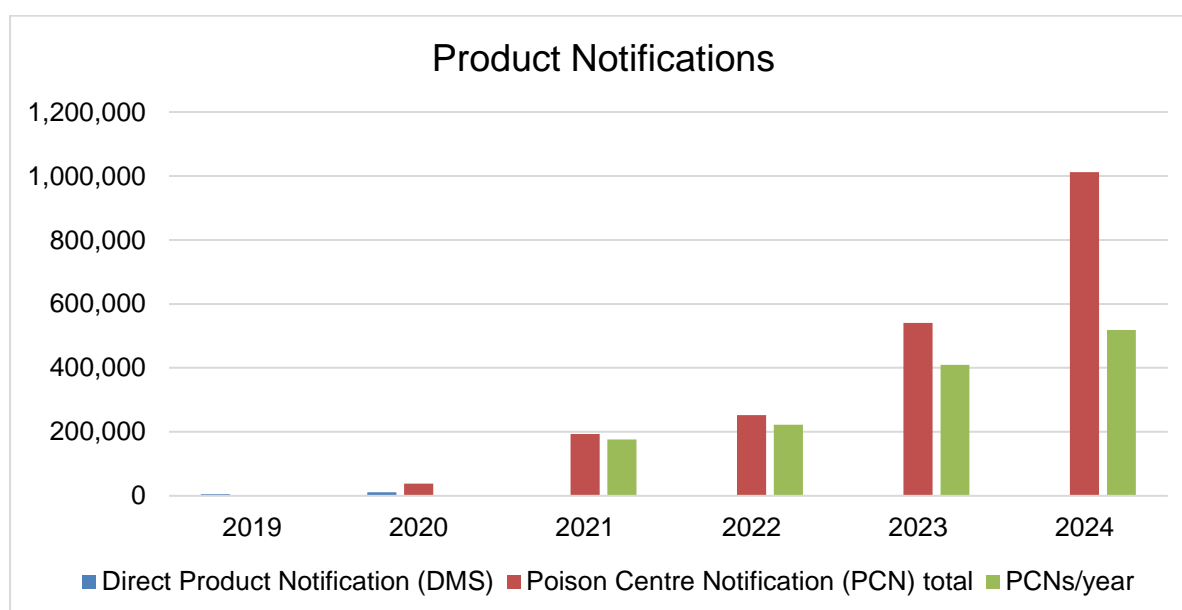


Figure 20 : Total number of product notifications received by NPIC

Collaborations

Committee membership

- Dr Edel Duggan is a member of the NPIS Clinical Standards Group with Directors from the UK National Poisons Information Service.
- Dr Edel Duggan and John Herbert are members of the Early Warning Early Trends Sub-Committee of the National Advisory Committee on Drugs.
- Patricia Casey is a member of the EAPCCT working group on poisons centre activities.
- John Herbert is a member of the UK TOXBASE editing group.

HSE Collaborations

- The NPIC collaborated with the HSE Medication Safety Team on Paracetamol weight-based guidelines for adults and children.
- The HSE Medication Safety Team consulted the NPIC for advice about the information for excess paracetamol doses that features on the online HSE Medicine A-Z page.
- Dr Edel Duggan, Patricia Casey, and Nicola Cassidy met with HSE representatives from the First 5 Strategy, to develop a webpage on MyChild.ie on plant safety/toxicity on 26th April, 2024. An article on Summer Poisons was prepared with information on garden plants, shrubs, and trees, wild plants, gardening products (weed killer, fertilisers and chemicals for getting rid of insects and pests), chemicals in the garden shed (barbeque lighter fluid, paraffin, paint and white spirits).
- The NPIC was consulted on a “Back to School” press release issued by the HSE MyChild.ie team in August 2024 that featured information on the use of paracetamol and ibuprofen in children.
- The NPIC worked with the HSE Communications Manager (Mychild.ie) on a Christmas press release that highlighted the NPIC telephone number.
- The HSE Social Media Digital Team reposted some NPIC social media posts over Christmas from the “Christmas Countdown” and “The 12-days of Christmas” series.

Meetings

- John Herbert attended four meetings of the Early Warning Early Trends group in February, May, July and November 2024.
- John Herbert attended four TOXBASE editing meetings in March, June, September and November 2024.
- John Herbert represented the NPIC at three online meetings (March, April, and September) and one in-person meeting (November 2024) of the HSE National Red Alert Groups to respond to clusters of drug overdoses around Ireland.
- Dr Edel Duggan, Patricia Casey, John Herbert, and Sinead Doyle attended an online meeting with the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine on 1st August 2024.

Data requests

The NPIC provided the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) with data on capsaicin and chilli enquiries from 2006 to 2023.

Academic activities

Research and clinical audits

Feargal O'Connor commenced a 2-year research study on paediatric liquid laundry detergent capsule exposures on 13th May 2024. Ethics approval was granted for this study looking at the circumstances of accidental poisoning exposures in children aged 3 years or under.

Nicola Cassidy, Sinead Doyle, and Dr Edel Duggan completed a clinical audit entitled "Acute poisoning and an analysis of timelines" in 2024.

Nicola Cassidy, Sinead Doyle, and Dr Edel Duggan completed a clinical audit entitled "Medication errors reported to the National Poisons Information Centre Beaumont Hospital" in 2024.

Dr Wafa Almalki, Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics Senior House Officer, completed a clinical audit entitled "Accuracy and Consistency of PSS Application at Poison Information Centre, Beaumont Hospital, Dublin" in 2024.

European Association of Poisons Centres and Clinical Toxicologists Congress 2024

John Herbert and Nicola Cassidy attended the 44th International Congress of the European Association of Poisons Centres and Clinical Toxicologists (EAPCCT) Congress in Munich, Germany, from 29th-31st May 2024.

The NPIC presented three posters entitled;

1. A five-year (2018–2022) retrospective analysis of vitamin enquiries to the National Poisons Information Centre in Ireland.
2. Bloom 2023 – a novel poisons centre public outreach and awareness-raising campaign.
3. Consultations for gamma-hydroxybutyrate (GHB) poisoning recorded at the National Poisons Information Centre of Ireland from 2013 to 2022.

Publications

- 1) Paraquat poisoning following the introduction of the European Union ban. Cassidy N, McCauley P, Tracey JA, Duggan E. *Irish Medical Journal* 2024;117(7):993.
- 2) Abstracts that were presented at the 44th European Association of Poisons Centres and Clinical Toxicologists (EAPCCT), 28–31 May 2024, Munich, Germany were published in *Clinical Toxicology*, Issue 62 sup1, (2024). <https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/ictx20/62/sup1>
 - I. A five year (2018–2022) retrospective analysis of vitamin enquiries to the National Poisons Information Centre in Ireland. John X. Herbert and Edel Duggan (Abstract 206).
 - II. Bloom 2023 – a novel poisons centre public outreach and awareness-raising campaign. Nicola Cassidy, Sinead Doyle, Patricia Casey, Edel Duggan (Abstract 222).
 - III. Consultations for gamma-hydroxybutyrate (GHB) poisoning recorded at the National Poisons Information Centre of Ireland from 2013 to 2022. Antonio F. Caballero-Bermejo, John X. Herbert, Álvaro Pineda-Torcuato, Aránzazu Sancho-López, Belén Rodríguez-Miranda, Belén Ruiz-Antorán, David Williams and Edel Duggan (Abstract 257).

Lectures and presentations

- Conor Hurley gave a presentation entitled “Exploring Career Pathways and Opportunities to Work” to Students from the MSc in Regulatory Affairs and Toxicology, University College Dublin, on 15th February 2024.
- Nicola Cassidy gave an online presentation on “Safety in the Home” for staff at Bord na Mona on 8th March 2024.
- Dr Duggan presented “Aluminium poisoning: collaboration to solve a mystery” at the Birmingham CPD toxicology meeting on 25th April 2024.
- Dr Duggan was a member of the faculty that taught on the Advanced Hazmat Life Support course in Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Drogheda, on 22nd - 24th May, 2024.
- John Herbert and Nicola Cassidy had poster presentations at the 44th European Association of Poison Centres and Clinical Toxicologists Congress in Munich, May 2024.
- Nicola Cassidy gave a presentation on “Safety in the Home” for staff at Guerbet on 18th September 2024 as part of European Health Safety Week.
- Conor Hurley gave a presentation on “Poisons and the NPIC” to BSc Pharmaceutical Healthcare and Medicinal Chemistry and Pharmaceutical Sciences final year students at Technological University Dublin on 11th October 2024.
- Dr Duggan gave a presentation on “Toxicology in an intensive care environment” at the Medical Toxicology conference in Cardiff on 4th October 2024.
- Dr Duggan gave a talk on the role of the National Poisons Information Centre and Paracetamol Poisoning to Beaumont Hospital Anaesthetics Department in October 2024.
- Nicola Cassidy had a poster presentation entitled “Medication errors reported to the National Poisons Information Centre” at the 12th Annual Quality and Patient Safety Beaumont Hospital meeting on 13th November 2024.
- Conor Hurley gave a presentation on "Poison Prevention and the Poisons Information Centre" to staff at Abbvie, Clonshaugh, Dublin on 20th November 2024.

- Nicola Cassidy gave a lecture on “Toxicology” to final year medical students as part of the University College Dublin Forensic and Legal Medicine module on 4th December 2024.
- Dr Duggan gave a lecture on Toxic Alcohol Poisoning to Beaumont Hospital Anaesthetics Department on 19th December 2024.

Peer reviewer activities

- Dr Edel Duggan is a peer reviewer for the European Journal of Clinical Pharmacology.
- Nicola Cassidy is a peer reviewer for Clinical Toxicology.
- Patricia Casey and Nicola Cassidy were abstract reviewers for the European Association of Poison Centres and Clinical Toxicologists 44th Annual Congress.

Education and training

- Nicola Cassidy completed the Beaumont Hospital Management and Leadership Development Programme, with merit (QQI Level 6, 15 FET credits).
- Patricia Casey completed MS Excel Intermediate and Advanced courses (6 x 1.5-hour webinars in each course).
- Conor Hurley completed a Master’s in Medical Toxicology Cardiff University for which he was awarded a distinction.

Visiting Paediatric Fellows

Staff at the NPIC were delighted to welcome Dr Fatimah Binabdi, Dr Mohammad Husain Ahmad, Dr Batool Ebrahi and Dr Husain El Shehabi to the Poisons Centre as part of their Paediatric Fellowship Rotation with the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland.

The fellows attended NPIC staff meetings, research meetings and presented at the departmental Journal Club as well as reviewing enquiries to the NPIC as part of their 4-week rotation.



Visiting Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics Senior House

Officer Dr Wafa Almalki, spent time at the Poisons Centre in November and December 2025 as part of her clinical rotation. During this time, Dr Almalki completed a clinical audit entitled “Accuracy and Consistency of Poison Severity Score Application at the Poisons Information Centre, Beaumont Hospital, Dublin.”

Visiting Academics from Thailand

Professor Summon Chomchai, Specialist in internal medicine and medical toxicology, and Professor Chulathida Chomchai, paediatrician and consultant toxicologist at the Siriraj Poison Control Center, Mahidol University, Bangkok, Thailand, visited the NPIC in June 2024. The purpose of the visit was to foster a collaboration and exchange of knowledge and experiences between our poison centres.



Visiting Pharmacy Students

Two pharmacy students attached to the Pharmacy Department at Beaumont Hospital visited the NPIC on 11th April 2024 to learn about the work of the NPIC.

Continuing professional development (CPD)

In 2024, staff attended meetings, webinars and workshops virtually and in person. Many of the online events were attended by several staff members.

- Staff attended the EAPCCT Fellows webinar "Treatment of Ethylene Glycol Poisoning: Ethanol, Fomepizole and/or Dialysis?" on the 24th January 2024.
- Patricia Casey attended Work Authorisation Training at Beaumont Hospital on 1st February 2024.
- John Herbert attended the ACMT-EAPCCT Transatlantic Toxicology webinar entitled "Utilizing Fomepizole in Acetaminophen Poisoning" on 5th February 2024.
- John Herbert attended a HSE Webinar entitled "Patient Safety (Open Disclosure and Notifiable Incidents) Act, 2023 – An overview of the key provisions" on 14th February 2024.
- Staff attended the HSE webinar entitled "Safeguarding Irish communities Against Nitazenes" on 22nd February 2024.
- John Herbert attended the HSE webinar entitled "What is Data? - Legal Insight Training Series: Session 4 on 28th February 2024.
- Patricia Casey attended the Performance Achievement Workshop at Beaumont Hospital in-person on 19th March 2024.
- Patricia Casey attended the WHO Chemical Risk Network webinar on "An introduction to public databases with useful information for chemical risk assessment" on 16th April 2024.
- Niamh English and Patricia Casey attended the National Poisons Information Service CPD Day in Birmingham on 24th and 25th April 2024.
- Staff attended the online Society of Toxicology Webinar on 8th May on "Current State of the Science: Toxicology of Cannabidiol and Other Cannabinoids."
- John Herbert and Sinead Doyle attended the Current State of the Science: Toxicology of Cannabidiol and Other Cannabinoids – US FDA Webcast on 8th May 2024.
- Staff attended the Mini-EAPCCT NPIS CPD virtual meeting on 14th May 2024.

- Dr Duggan and 2 Paediatric Fellows attended a HAZMAT course in Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital on 23rd and 24th May, 2024.
- Staff attended the “Look inside the New Zealand National Poisons Centre” APAMT webinar on 3rd June 2024.
- John Herbert attended the HSE webinar entitled “Employee Assistance Programme Supports for Staff Following Patient Safety Incidents” on 12th June 2024.
- John Herbert attended the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction’s launch of the “EU Drug Markets Novel Psychoactive Substances” online on 27th June 2024.
- John Herbert attended an MS Excel webinar on 10th July 2024 organised by Beaumont Hospital.
- John Herbert attended the HSE webinar entitled “Patient Safety (Notifiable Incidents and Open Disclosure) Act, 2023 - with a focus on Notifiable Incidents” on 17th July 2024.
- John Herbert and Sinead Doyle attended a webinar entitled “Together We Can” as part of the International Overdose Awareness Day Launch on 30th June 2024.
- John Herbert and Sinead Doyle attended the British and Irish Council webinar entitled “Synthetic Opioids” on 29th August 2024.
- John Herbert attended the Medical Toxicology in Industry webinar entitled “PFAS Diagnostic Testing in Your Patient: Considerations for PFAS Diagnostic testing” on 24th September 2024.
- Patricia Casey attended “Effective interviewer skills workshop” at Beaumont Hospital on 11th October 2024.
- Nicola Cassidy attended “Excellence in Peer Review: How to be an effective peer reviewer” online training delivered by Taylor & Francis Reviewer Network on 16th October 2024.
- Nicola Cassidy attended and had a poster presentation entitled “Medication errors reported to the National Poisons Information Centre” at the 12th Annual Quality and Patient Safety Meeting, Beaumont Hospital, on 12th November 2024.

- Patricia Casey attended the 12th Annual Quality and Patient Safety Meeting, Beaumont Hospital, on 12th November 2024.
- Conor Hurley attended the Irish Society of Toxicology Conference on 13th November 2024 at the Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine, Backweston, Kildare.
- John Herbert and Sinead Doyle attended the online ECHA Interact Portal users' event hosted by the European Chemicals Agency on 15th November 2024.
- Staff attended the EAPCCT Fellows Webinar: "Use of Registries for Evaluating Toxicity" on 27th November 2024.
- Staff attended a webinar entitled "Nicotine pouches regulation: Questions, uncertainties and ways to maximize public health benefit" on 27th November 2024.
- Staff attended the NPIS virtual Christmas Special CPD session on 9th December 2024.

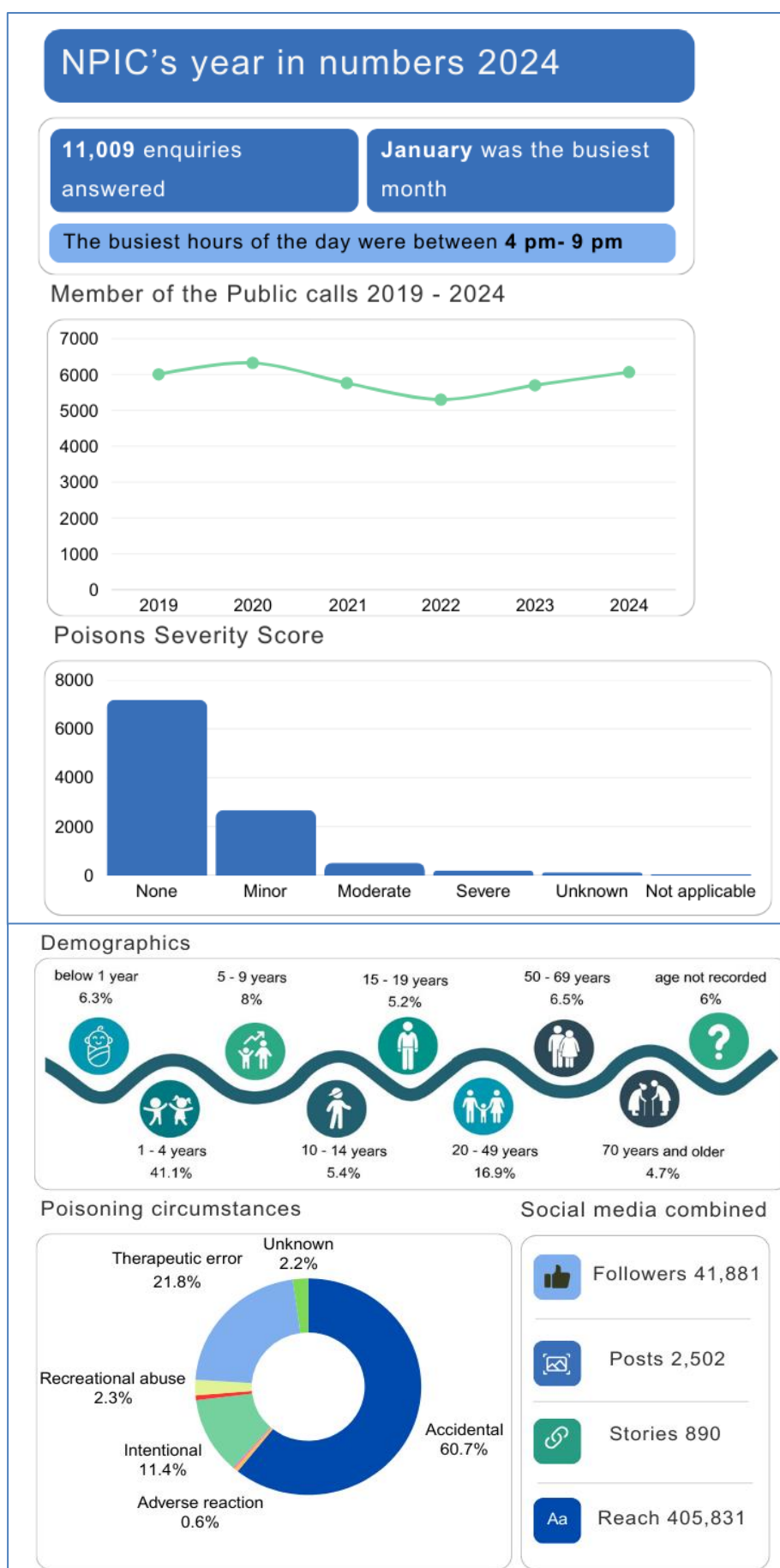




Figure 21: NPIC a year in numbers

NPIC contact details

Administration Line


 01- 809 4211


 npicdublin@beaumont.ie


 www.poisons.ie


Healthcare professional lines

Available 24 hrs

 01 - 809 2566


 01 - 809 2568

 01 - 837 9964

 01 - 837 9966

Public poison line


Available 8 am - 10 pm daily

 01- 809 2166


Social Media

For poisons information & poison prevention advice follow us on social media. The NPIC social media accounts are not monitored 24/7 and are not suitable for enquiries on poisoning.

 @NPICireland

 @Npicireland

 @IrelandNpic

 npicireland