

# Legionella risk at Welsh nursing homes

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Three quarters of Welsh nursing homes inspected by the Health and Safety Executive had problems which had to be corrected. Legionella risk and the correct use of bedrails were the main recurring areas of concern.

Legionella is a type of bacteria common in natural and artificial water systems and can thrive at temperatures between 20 Degrees C and 45 Degrees C.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has released the results of a series of inspections carried out to look at the management of some specific health and safety risks at nursing homes across Wales during March and April.

Of 28 homes inspected across Wales during March and April, three quarters were issued with at least one enforcement notice, and a total of 31 enforcement notices were issued.

As a result of the findings, HSE will be contacting nursing homes in Wales to remind them of their duties to manage health and safety, and will be providing training resources to help homes improve standards.

HSE Inspector Steve Scott, who led the initiative, said: "The sample is a small percentage of the total number of nursing homes in Wales, and we must stress that not every nursing home we visited was issued with an enforcement notice.

"Those who did receive an enforcement notice were extremely keen to address shortcomings when they were raised. These homes were given a specified period of time to put matters highlighted right, and we are carrying out follow up visits to all of these premises to ensure that remedial action has been carried out.

"The inspections found that management of other risks such as slips and trips and manual handling were generally being addressed but the use of bed rails, and legionella risk, was an issue at many of the homes we visited."