

## 1. Definition

Non-Medical Exposures are those examinations performed for insurance or legal purposes of any kind without a medical indication, for example:

- Occupational - to meet Occupational Health and Safety requirements
- Assessment of accidental injury - compensation
- Assessment of non-accidental injury
- Immigration - to meet requirements of entry
- Sports – related to employment and fitness to practice (e.g. boxers)

Requests for non-medical examinations must be clearly identified on the request form and must be justified by an entitled practitioner.

## 2. Justification

For Non-Medical exposures justification is not necessarily on the basis of supplying net benefit to the exposed person but may be on the basis of sufficient net benefit to society. Of course, the practitioner must still take account of the efficacy, benefits and risk of available alternative techniques having the same objective but involving no or less exposure to ionising radiation.

## 3. Optimisation

All the measures used to optimise the radiation exposure as part of a patient's medical diagnosis or treatment, e.g. the system of justification, authorisation, recording and monitoring of radiation doses, etc., apply equally to those exposures conducted for non-medical reasons.

Where practicable and prior to an exposure taking place the individual to be exposed or representative is provided with adequate information relating to the benefits and risks associated with the radiation dose from exposure

As the DRLs for routine diagnostic purposes have already been optimised, these should also apply in non-medical cases.

## 4. Children

Exposures which are appropriate to consider in relation to children are those which may contribute to the prevention of harm to the child or to other children. It would, for example be appropriate to consider a request from the courts in cases where physical abuse is suspected and the results of the exposure may contribute to the prevention of future abuse. Exposures of children relating to financial gain are not generally considered to be appropriate.

## 5. Advice

If the practitioner is in any doubt as to the value of a non-medical exposure requested of them, they can seek the advice of the Head of Clinical Governance and the MPE if appropriate.

## 6. Forensic Exposures

Under the [Drugs Act 2005](#) police (at the rank of superintendent or above) have the right to request X-rays for detection of ingested drugs. This will be done in consultation with a radiologist.

However, there is no reason why the same principles cannot be used for forensic exposures. The initial request for radiation exposure must be raised by a senior police officer of at least superintendent grade with the duty Consultant Radiologist. The Radiologist must assess the evidence provided by the police officer and judge whether to accept the request. If the request is accepted, the Radiologist becomes the referrer and then the practitioner in providing the justification to carry out the procedure. In obtaining any images, the rules of evidence must be applied rigorously, otherwise the justification for the exposures “vanishes as quickly as the admissibility of the evidence”. Consent must be obtained in writing from the detained person.

Author	Owner	Revision	Active Date	Review date	Page
GG	AL	6	25/05/21	25/05/24	1 of 1
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