



Assisted reproductive technology serious adverse event notification

Guidelines for clinics

Date: 30 June 2025

Classification: Official

Purposes for these guidelines

The assisted reproductive technology serious adverse events notification guidelines (the guidelines) have been developed to advise clinics on the process and requirements to submit a notification for a serious adverse event (SAE) in assisted reproductive technology (ART). ART SAE notification forms (notification forms) can now be submitted to the Department of Health using a REDCap form, which is explained in the “**How to Report**” section on page 4 of these guidelines.

Recent changes to Directions and regulations

The [Human Reproductive Technology Directions 2021](#) (Directions) Section 2.14 introduced new serious adverse event notification requirements for licensed fertility providers. In 2024, the Fertility Society of Australia and New Zealand (FSA), Reproductive Technology Accreditation Committee (RTAC) [Code of Practice for Assisted Reproductive Technology](#) (ART) Units (the RTAC Code of Practice) was revised, including section 4.2.4 in relation to adverse events that do not meet the definition of a serious adverse event.

When to submit a notification

Clinics must submit a Part 1 of the notification form for a serious adverse event

- within 7 days of the event occurrence OR
- within 7 days of becoming aware of the event occurrence
- The link is [REDCap Serious Adverse Event Notification](#)

AND

Clinics must submit Part 2 of the notification form within 6 weeks of the occurrence of the event with information on investigations and corrective actions undertaken.

The link for Part 2 of the notification form is automatically sent in an email when Part 1 is submitted.

It is important that clinic licensees have procedures in place to ensure that adverse events are identified as quickly as possible, however sometimes it may not be immediately apparent that an adverse event has occurred. For example, patients may not report incidents until their next follow up visit, some medical or surgical incidents may take some time to present, or regulatory breaches may only be identified through annual reporting or auditing. In this instance, licensees should ensure that a notification is submitted within 7 days of becoming aware of the event occurrence.

Notification obligations established under the Directions are in addition to other adverse event reporting requirements, where applicable, including:

- RTAC (as described below)
- Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) adverse event
- Communicable Disease Notification.

The [RTAC Code of Practice](#) Section 4.2.1 requires a serious adverse event to be reported:

- a) As soon as practical, but no later than 6 weeks after the provider becomes aware of the incident. If the investigation has not been completed within this timeframe, the notification must still be submitted. A follow-up report can then be provided once the investigation has been finalised.
- b) Within two weeks for a potential or actual breach of legislation; or
- c) Within 48 hours for a sentinel event such as death.

Submitting an adverse event notification to RTAC does not negate the need to submit the required notification forms to the Licensing and Accreditation Regulatory Unit (LARU).

What is a serious adverse event?

The definition of a serious adverse event under the Directions aligns with the definition in the RTAC Code of Practice Section 4.2:

4.2.2 A serious adverse event includes any event which:

- a) Causes a significant medical or surgical condition that occurs as a result of the ART treatment as defined in section 4.2.3 below.
- b) Results in the hospitalisation of the patient due to a complication of ART treatment as defined in section 4.2.3 below.
- c) Results or may result in the transmission of a communicable disease.
- d) Results in a breach or potential breach of legislation.
- e) Arises from a gamete or embryo identification mix up.
- f) Causes a loss of viability of gametes or embryos or suspected deterioration (beyond accepted laboratory standards) that renders them unsuitable for use.
- g) Arises from a systematic failure in the validation/verification of a diagnostic test and/or technology that has resulted in misdiagnosis and/or significant potential harm or loss to patients.

4.2.3 Specific medical or surgical conditions that define a serious adverse event.

4.2.3.1 Ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome (OHSS) is determined as:

- a) Any one of the Severe or Critical OHSS features as defined by Royal College of Obstetricians guidelines (see table included below) and/or
- b) Where hospitalisation occurred for >24 hours and/or
- c) Where paracentesis or chest drain occurred (either inpatient or outpatient) and/or
- d) Where thrombosis occurred.

4.2.3.2 Confirmed pelvic infection that occurred as a direct result of ART treatment (oocyte retrieval, embryo transfer or intrauterine insemination) which resulted in admission to hospital, treatment with intravenous (IV) antibiotics and/or surgical intervention. The initial patient presentation was within the first 4 weeks of the procedure.

4.2.3.3 Complication at oocyte retrieval where injury to a pelvic structure occurred requiring admission to hospital and/or IV antibiotics (not prophylactic) and/or blood transfusion.

- 4.2.3.4 Ovarian torsion which occurred during stimulation or within 4 weeks of oocyte retrieval and required hospital admission for > 24 hours.
- 4.2.3.5 Complication of a sperm retrieval procedure requiring hospital admission.
- 4.2.3.6 Other - a serious medical or surgical condition that resulted directly from the ART treatment and required hospitalisation that is not covered by the above 5 events. May involve admission to hospital for > 48 hours for pain, bloating, nausea where OHSS, torsion, infection has been excluded.
- 4.2.3.7 Severe mental health event requiring hospitalisation in which ART was a major contributing factor and which occurred during or within 2 weeks of the completion of the treatment cycle.
- 4.2.3.8 Death
- a) Direct Death: a death that is directly caused by ART treatment.
 - b) Indirect Death: a death for which the direct cause of death was not due to ART treatment, but the ART treatment had a contributing effect.
 - c) Coincidental Death: Deaths from unrelated causes that happen during an IVF treatment cycle.
 - d) Maternal death in an IVF patient is not included as this will be captured in obstetric reporting.
- 4.2.4 Adverse events that do not meet the definition of a serious adverse event:
- a) Ectopic pregnancy
 - b) Complications arising from a miscarriage
 - c) Pain, bloating, nausea or other symptoms where the reportable serious events defined above for OHSS, infection, torsion etc. have been excluded and hospital admission was < 48 hours

Categorisation of OHSS as defined in [RTAC Code of Practice](#) is defined as a woman with a symptom in a category must be recorded in that category.

Severe

- Clinical ascites (\pm hydrothorax)
- Oliguria (< 300 ml/day or < 30 ml/hour)
- Haematocrit > 0.45
- Hyponatraemia (sodium < 135 mmol/l)
- Hypo-osmolality (osmolality < 282 mOsm/kg)
- Hyperkalaemia (potassium > 5 mmol/l)
- Hypoproteinaemia (serum albumin < 35 g/l)

Critical

- Tense ascites/large hydrothorax
- Haematocrit > 0.55
- White cell count > 25 000/ml
- Oliguria/anuria
- Thromboembolism
- Acute respiratory distress syndrome

How to report

Reports can be made via: <https://redcap.lini/ARTseriousadverseeventsnotification>. Reports are in two parts:

- **Part 1:** Serious adverse event details - must be submitted within **7 days**.
- **Part 2:** Investigation outcomes: recommendations and corrective actions - must be submitted within **6 weeks** (unless required earlier by RTAC).

When Part 2 of the notification form is submitted, licensees will receive an email with a link for the SAE Final report. It is the clinic responsibility to send the SAE Final report to RTAC to meet adverse event reporting requirements under the RTAC Code of Practice.

Part 1

The ART clinic identifiers include the clinic name and RTAC licence number in a dropdown menu:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| • Adora Fertility Perth | RTAC licence number 609 |
| • Concept Fertility Centre | RTAC licence number 602 |
| • Fertility North – 604 | |
| • Fertility Specialists WA Claremont | RTAC licence number 606 |
| • Fertility Specialists WA Applecross | RTAC licence number 607 |
| • Genea Hollywood Fertility | RTAC licence number 603 |
| • Monash IVF | RTAC licence number 601 |
| • Oasis Fertility Centre | RTAC licence number 610 |

Identifiers

ART clinic name and site*

RTAC Licence number*

Clinic incident reference number*

(Enter a unique incident reference for this report. Do not include identifying information such as patient names. This reference will be used if we need to contact you about this report.)

*Mandatory fields

The event type is categorised as follows:

- **Clinical:** a significant medical or surgical condition that occurs because of the ART treatment such as severe or critical OHSS and results in the hospitalisation of the patient due to a complication of ART treatment such as ovarian torsion, infection, injury or mental illness
- **Laboratory:** causes a loss of viability of gametes or embryos or suspected deterioration (beyond accepted laboratory standards) that renders them unsuitable for use such as equipment failure, infection control
- **Regulatory:** a breach of state legislation such as five family limit breach, expired embryos storage
- **Compliance:** such as consent forms not signed or not signed by both partners (or forged by one partner)
- **Patient:** such as a complaint
- **Other**

Serious notifiable adverse events as defined by RTAC:

- Causes a significant medical or surgical condition that occurs as a result of the ART treatment
- Results in the hospitalisation of the patient due to a complication of ART treatment
- Results or may result in the transmission of a communicable disease
- Results in a breach or potential breach of legislation
- Arises from a gamete or embryo identification mix up
- Causes a loss of viability of gametes or embryos or suspected deterioration (beyond accepted laboratory standards) that renders them unsuitable for use.
- Arises from a systematic failure in the validation/verification of a diagnostic test and/or technology that has resulted in misdiagnosis and/or significant potential harm or loss to patients, their gametes or embryos

These must be reported to RTAC within 6 weeks of the event.

Please use the drop down menu to mark the event type

* must provide value

A brief description (200 words) is required in Part 1. This will assist the LARU in establishing if immediate action is required to assist the clinic in their response to the serious adverse event. Sentinel events such as a patient death or extensive loss of viable gametes or embryos would require further escalation. Please include notifier details for LARU, if further contact is required.

Brief description of incident (up to 200 words)

* must provide value

200 words remaining

Expand


Notifier details

Name*

Position*

Email*

Notification date*

  Today D-M-Y

*Mandatory fields

After the submission of Part 1, the clinic will receive a link to Part 2 of the notification form within a few minutes. This may be completed immediately if the event is resolved or within up to 6 weeks.

A reminder email will be sent to the person who submits the notification after 21 days and again after 35 days if no Part 2 has been submitted via REDCap.

Part 1 of this notification form must be submitted within 7 days of the serious adverse event occurrence or 7 days of the Licensee becoming aware of the event occurrence, in compliance with the *WA Human Reproductive Technology Act 1991* and associated legislation.

Clicking SUBMIT will send Part 1 of the notification to the Licensing and Accreditation Regulatory Unit at the Department of Health and will take you to Part 2 of the notification form.

Part 2 of this notification form must be completed with more details about the incident including the cause, how it was identified, the severity and staff involved (not identified). Part 2 also includes information about the investigation and analysis of the incident, and then the recommendations and corrective actions identified by the incident review.

The Final Report is also to be sent to RTAC within 48 hours if a sentinel event (eg death), within two weeks if a potential or actual breach of legislation and no later than six weeks after the provider becomes aware of the serious adverse event. This is in compliance with RTAC Code of Practice (2024).

Submit

Save & Return Later

Part 2

The first section is a summary of the Part 1 information that has already been submitted and a confirmation of the event type in case it is reclassified during the investigation.

If Clinical is marked, then the medical or surgical conditions that apply need to be selected.

Please select all medical or surgical conditions that apply

* must provide value

- OHSS (see OHSS Categorisation)
- Pelvic infection
- Oocyte retrieval complication
- Ovarian torsion
- Sperm retrieval complication
- Other condition not covered above requiring hospitalisation
- Severe mental health event
- Death

Ovarian Hyperstimulation Syndrome (OHSS)

If the OHSS condition is marked, then there is a further question asking if the OHSS was severe or critical: **Y/N**.

If the OHSS condition was mild or moderate, then mark this question **N** and it is **NOT** required to be reported to LARU or RTAC. Please note this in the comments.

If the OHSS condition was severe or critical, then mark this question **Y**.

The following information is required if this incident relates to a severe or critical OHSS event as defined by RTAC Code of Practice.

Yes
 No

reset

Severe

- Clinical ascites (\pm hydrothorax)
- Oliguria (< 300 ml/day or < 30 ml/hour)
- Haematocrit > 0.45
- Hyponatraemia (sodium < 135 mmol/l)
- Hypo-osmolality (osmolality < 282 mOsm/kg)
- Hyperkalaemia (potassium > 5 mmol/l)
- Hypoproteinaemia (serum albumin < 35 g/l)

Critical

- Tense ascites/large hydrothorax
- Haematocrit > 0.55
- White cell count > 25 000/ml
- Oliguria/anuria
- Thromboembolism
- Acute respiratory distress syndrome

Does this incident notification relate to severe or critical OHSS?

For severe or critical OHSS the following questions are asked

OHSS Reporting only for Severe and Critical OHSS	
Type of stimulation*	<input type="text"/>
Drug and dose used to induce ovulation*	<input type="text"/>
E2 level before trigger*	<input type="text"/>
Paracentesis*	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No reset
Embryo transfer*	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No reset
Pregnancy*	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No reset
*Mandatory fields	

Cycle type

Please categorise the incident in a cycle type that best reflects the whole incident. If you are unsure, please mark “**Other**” and add details.

Procedure date: if it relates to a procedure, please insert date, if it relates to a cycle but no procedure occurred then use the ANZARD cycle start date.

If not applicable, then do not fill in a date

Please categorise the incident in a cycle type that best reflects the whole incident	<input type="text" value="v"/>
Donor - donor issue (for example with consent) not associated with an actual procedure	
FET - Frozen Embryo transfer procedure	
IUI - Insemination procedure with partner or donor sperm	
IVF - IVF procedures with oocyte collection including ICSI, PGT, IVM	
NA - Not associated with a procedure (for example a patient complaint or breach of legislation)	
OI - Ovulation induction procedure	
SSC - Surgical sperm collection	
Storage - incident associated with cryostorage of gametes or embryos	
Surrogacy - incident within a surrogacy arrangement	
UKN - procedure is unknown	
Other - other	
* must provide value	
Procedure date (if applicable)	
- date of OPU, date of ET (or FET), date of SSC or if no OPU or FET use ANZARD cycle start date.	
<input type="text"/>	D-M-Y
Event conclusion date	
<input type="text"/>	Today D-M-Y

Outcome

The outcome section is required information for RTAC reporting purposes, however it is not applicable to all serious adverse events, complete if relevant.

Outcomes	
Number of eggs collected	
Pregnancy outcome	<input type="text"/>
Patient outcome	<input type="text"/>
Hospitalisation days	<input type="text"/>
<i>(Record readmissions separately and provide a total)</i>	


Reviewing incidents

The clinic licensee or a senior staff member should be assigned to investigate and review the incident. There are three open word boxes to describe

- the incident in detail (include cause, how identified, severity, staff (not identified) and dates)
- the investigation and analysis of incident (contributory and/or causative factors should be identified)
- the recommendations of the investigation and the corrective actions (to prevent future adverse events)

Detailed incident description Please include cause, how identified, severity, staff involved (not identified) and dates <i>* must provide value</i>
<input type="text"/>
Expand
Investigation and analysis of incident <i>* must provide value</i>
<input type="text"/>
Expand
Recommendations and corrective actions <i>* must provide value</i>
<input type="text"/>
Expand

There is a place to upload any relevant documentation such as a hospital summary, treatment cycle summary or internal report. The details of the person reviewing the incident and submitting the REDCap notification form is requested if follow up is required.

Name of the person completing the review
<input type="text"/>
Review date
<input type="text"/>  Today D-M-Y
Name of the person completing this form <small>* must provide value</small>
<input type="text"/>
Position of the person completing this form <small>* must provide value</small>
<input type="text"/>
Email of the person completing this form <small>* must provide value</small>
<input type="text"/>
<input type="button" value="Submit"/>
<input type="button" value="Save & Return Later"/>

Final report

When Part 2 of the notification report is submitted, an email with a link to access the PDF copy of the SAE Final report (Attachment 1) will be automatically sent back to the person submitting the notification. The SAE Final report should be saved in the clinic's records.

It is the clinic's responsibility to send the SAE Final report to RTAC (or any other required body) in a timely manner.

FSANZ Secretariat
Waldron Smith Management
119 Buckhurst Street
South Melbourne VIC 3205
kimo@wsm.com.au

Further information

If you are unsure if an incident requires reporting, please contact the LARU to discuss.

Phone: 0455 661 857

Email: LARULicensing@health.wa.gov.au

Licensees may be contacted by the LARU for further information.

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with disability.

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