



Acute Rheumatic Fever (ARF) and Rheumatic Heart Disease (RHD)

Mandatory reporting requirements

What has changed?

From 19 June 2015 new laws now require mandatory reporting of all known cases of Acute Rheumatic Fever (ARF) and Rheumatic Heart Disease (RHD) to the **Rheumatic Heart Disease Register of Western Australia**. See timeframes for reporting requirements in this document [Health Rheumatic Heart Disease Register of Western Australia Regulations 2015](#).

Medical and nurse practitioners now have a legal duty to provide particular information on a patient when they become aware that the patient has, or is being treated for, ARF and/or RHD.

Why is the register required?

The measure will strengthen the healthcare approach to ARF and RHD, conditions that are wholly preventable. The data gathered on the register will help improve patient management and contribute to the understanding of these diseases and the burden they place on the health and welfare of people in Western Australia, and Australia as a whole.

Who will the new regulations affect?

The regulations will apply to:

- The Chief Executive Officer of a hospital or medical centre at which a patient with ARF and/or RHD presents
- A medical or nurse practitioner who diagnoses or is responsible for the treatment of a person with ARF and/or RHD
- An obstetrician responsible for the treatment of a pregnant woman who is, or becomes, aware of ARF or RHD in a patient.

If you fall into one of these categories, you have a legal obligation to give notice to the Chief Health Officer (CHO).

When do you need to give notice?

You have a duty to give notice **when you become aware** that a patient has, and is currently being treated for, ARF or RHD. This includes knowledge of previous diagnoses or treatments; even if made in another State or Territory. This also includes notification of recurrence of an ARF episode that has already been notified to the WA RHD register program.

How is notice given?

Notification is given to the WA RHD Register and Control Program, under delegated duties of the CHO.

Department of Health health service providers can submit notifications by [secure file transfer email \(external link\)](#) to RHDRRegister@health.wa.gov.au

External providers can submit notifications by fax to (08) 6553 0899 or by [secure file transfer email \(external link\)](#) to RHDRRegister@health.wa.gov.au

Phone: 1300 622 745

Information, tests and reports need only be provided once. If you reasonably believe that the CHO already has the relevant information, test or report, you need not take action.

The laws are not retroactive. The requirements only apply to information about a diagnosis or treatment, diagnostic test or medical report prepared after 19 June 2015.

The **CHO may, at any time, in writing, request further information** about a person on the register. A person who receives a request under this regulation must comply with the request within 14 days after receiving it.

What do you need to provide?

For Acute Rheumatic Fever (ARF):

- Name and contact details of person giving notice.
- **Complete a CHO approved form [ARF/RHD notification form](#)** detailing the diagnosis laboratory results and treatment of the patient with ARF.
- **Provide a copy of each diagnostic test** (including an echocardiogram) carried out on the patient during their diagnosis or treatment of ARF.
- **Provide a copy of each medical specialist's report** related to the patient's diagnosis and treatment of ARF or date of referral.
- **Please ensure the following personal information on the patient is provided:**
 1. Unique Medical Record Number (UMRN), if patient seen at a Health Department WA (HDWA) site.
 2. Full name, address and contact details.
 3. Sex and date of birth.
 4. Ethnicity, if known, including Aboriginal, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, or Torres Strait Islander descent.
 5. If the patient is under 18 years of age, the full name, address and contact details of a parent or guardian.

The WA RHD Register and Control Program may contact you to request further information.

For Rheumatic Heart Disease

- Name and contact details of person giving the notice
- **Complete a CHO approved form [ARF/RHD notification form](#)** detailing the diagnosis and treatment of the patient with ARF.
- **Provide a copy of each diagnostic test** (including an echocardiogram) carried out on the patient during their diagnosis or treatment of RHD.
- **Provide a copy of each medical specialist's report** related to the patient's diagnosis and treatment of RHD or date of referral.

- **Please ensure that the following personal information on the patient is provided:**
 1. Unique Medical Record Number (UMRN), if patient seen at a Health Department WA (HDWA) site.
 2. Full name, address and contact details.
 3. Sex and date of birth.
 4. Ethnicity, if known, including Aboriginal, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, or Torres Strait Islander descent.
 5. If the patient is under 18 years of age, the full name, address and contact details of a parent or guardian.

The WA RHD Register and Control Program **may** contact you to request further information.

What is the timeframe for reporting ARF and RHD cases?

There are different requirements for ARF/RHD (see copy of the [2015 regulations](#)):

ARF

- **Complete a CHO approved form [ARF/RHD notification form](#).**
- **Provide a copy of each diagnostic test** (including an echocardiogram).
- *Acute Phase* of ARF within 14 days of receiving the results of a medical test.
- **Provide a copy of each medical specialist's report.**
- *Acute Phase* of ARF within 14 days after the medical specialist finalises the report.

Acute phase: in relation to a patient with acute rheumatic fever, means the period:

- (a) beginning when the patient is diagnosed with acute rheumatic fever; and
- (b) ending 3 months later.

RHD

- **Complete a CHO approved form [ARF/RHD notification form](#).**
- **Provide a copy of each diagnostic test** (including an echocardiogram) – within 30 days of receiving test results.
- **Provide a copy of each medical specialist's report** – within 30 days after the medical specialist finalises the report.

Limited disclosure:

Health professionals need to inform patients that it is a statutory requirement to send information to the WA RHD Register. A patient may request in writing limited disclosure of identifying information available to health sites and health professionals.