



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL

HEALTH TECHNOLOGY UNIT

C/o Wentworth Hospital, Boston Road off Quality Street
P.O. Box 21518, Bluff, 4036
Tel.: 031-4614531, Fax.: 031-4689594 / 4614535
Email: johan.havinga@kznhealth.gov.za

Reference : Mercury Thermometers
Enquiries : Mr. M.J. Havinga
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To All the:

Hospital Managers
Medical Managers
Equipment Officers
Heads of the Stores

RE: THE PHASING OUT OF PRODUCTS THAT CONTAIN MERCURY IN HEALTHCARE INSTITUTIONS.

OBJECT:

To inform all the persons concerned of the latest developments in the use of Mercury Fever Thermometers in Healthcare Facilities.

FACT:

Due to growing Health and Environmental concerns, the use of Mercury related products in Healthcare are now facing a widespread ban. It is now illegal in some Countries to manufacture or to sell Mercury Fever Thermometers.

For more information the following publications and Web Pages can be consulted:

- E.C.R.I. – Emergency Care Research Institute.
- Health Care without Harm.
- American Academy of Paediatrics.
- American Nurses Association.
- E U Commission proposed ban on Mercury exports 1/2/2005.
- Problems with Mercury Thermometers – Source – Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center.
- The Isipingo Declaration – The phasing out of the use of Mercury Products in Healthcare Institutions by the Year 2006.

RECOMMENDATION:

In order to comply with the acceptable norms and standards and to contribute towards a Mercury free environment, only proven Digital Thermometers must be purchased in the future.

Specifications for suitable Thermometers can be requested from the Health Technology Unit.



CONCLUSION:

Health Technology Unit has already supplied several Institutions with Digital Thermometers.

Health Technology Unit has now purchased additional Digital Thermometers to assist the Institutions further.

- A total of six Thermometers will be available to each Hospital.
- Your Mercury Thermometers will be exchanged for Digital Thermometers on a One for One basis.
- The Digital Thermometers must be requested on an official requisition form the Hospital.

The exchange offer will stand for three months (March, April and May), after that the surplus Thermometers will be distributed between the Hospitals that participated in the exchange scheme.



MR. M.J. HAVINGA
HEAD OF THE UNIT