

## **The workplace exposure to dangerous drugs and the resulting health risks for healthcare personnel have been well known and documented for over four decades, since it first became a recognised safety risk in the United States in the 1970s” Sessink et al (2016).**

Extract:

This recommendation is particularly imperative in the healthcare sector. While the majority of occupational hazards have been successfully addressed by legislation at the European and national level, much remains to be done when it comes to the exposure of healthcare workers to chemical risks during activities such as the preparation and administration of cytotoxic drugs used to treat patients with cancer. These drugs represent the most dangerous chemical risk factors in healthcare<sup>2</sup> and some of the most hazardous chemicals ever developed.<sup>3</sup>

The workplace exposure to dangerous drugs and the resulting health risks for healthcare personnel have been well known and documented for over four decades, since it first became a recognised safety risk in the United States in the 1970s.<sup>4</sup> Nowadays, the challenge of protecting workers persists and is expanding, for a number of reasons. Firstly, the incident rate of cancer is steadily increasing and, in turn, the use of cytotoxic drugs used to treat cancers is growing, amplifying the exposure to healthcare professionals.

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Reference:

Sessink, P.J.M., Sewell, G. and Vandenbroucke, J. (2016) Preventing occupational exposure to cytotoxic and other hazardous drugs. Policy recommendations. European Parliament.