

## **A review on poisoning inquiries received after office hours by the national poison centre of Malaysia**

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**Objective:** The purpose of the current work was to report the successful utilization of the 24-hour service implemented by the National Poison Centre of Malaysia (NPC) since November 2003. **Methods:** Poisoning inquiries received between 2003 and 2005 were reviewed regarding the caller's status, type of incidence, age of the victims and agents implicated with special emphasis on cases received after office hours. Descriptive analysis was used and findings were presented as figures, frequencies and percentages.

**Results:** There were 2437 poisoning cases handled by NPC from 2003 to 2005. Out of those, 825 cases (33.9%) were received after office hours. 39 cases (10.4%) were received in 2003 (2-months period), 285 cases (33.6%) in 2004 and 501 cases (41.3%) in 2005. Most of the callers were doctors (99.5%), followed by pharmacists (0.4%) and public (0.1%). 68.7% of the cases were intentional. Adults constituted the majority of the cases (76.2%). Among the substances involved, agro-chemicals contributed the highest percentage (33.2%), followed by pharmaceutical substances (29.9%), household products (22.3%), industrial chemicals (8.1%), natural toxins (4.4%), others (1.8%) and unknown substances (0.2%).

**Conclusion:** The increasing number of inquiries received after office hours during the period of 2 years and 3 months has shown the successful utilization of the implemented service by the medical professionals throughout the country.