

GUNSHOT WOUNDS

Must a gunshot wound be reported?

Yes. Nonfatal gunshot wounds are notifiable conditions which must be reported monthly to the state Department of Health by health care facilities.¹ See **NOTIFIABLE CONDITIONS**; and **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**.

What must be included in a report to the Department of Health regarding bullet wounds, gunshot wounds or stab wounds?

The report required must include the following information, if known:²

- The patient's name, address including zip code, telephone number, date of birth, and sex.
- Diagnosis or suspected diagnosis of disease or condition.
- Pertinent laboratory data (if available).
- Name of the principal health care provider.
- Telephone number of the principal health care provider
- Address of the principal health care provider.
- Name and telephone number of the person providing the report.
- Any other information the Department of Health may require on forms generated by the department.

Are there mandatory reporting requirements for hospitals regarding gunshot wounds?

Yes. Hospitals are required to report to law enforcement authorities when the hospital provides treatment for a gunshot or stab wound. This should be done as soon as possible, taking into consideration the patient's emergency care needs.³ The report required must include the following information, if known:⁴

- The name, residence, sex, and age of the patient.

¹ RCW 70.02.050(2)(c); WAC 246-101-301.

² WAC 246-101-315.

³ RCW 70.41.440(1).

⁴ RCW 70.41.440(2).

- Whether the patient has received a bullet wound, gunshot wound, or stab wound.
- The name of the health care provider providing treatment for the bullet wound, gunshot wound, or stab wound.

Are there any specific requirements if the patient states that her/his injury is the result of domestic violence?

Yes. A law enacted in the 2013 legislative session imposes a new requirement on hospitals if a patient states that her/his injury is the result of domestic violence.⁵ In that situation hospital must follow its established processes to inform the patient of resources which may be helpful to assure the safety of the patient and her/his family.

⁵ RCW 70.41.440(8).