

Wisconsin Poison Center at Children's Wisconsin provides statewide services to improve outcomes

The Wisconsin Poison Center (WPC), housed at Children's Wisconsin, is the state's only accredited poison emergency hotline with nationally-certified specialists available 24/7/365. The WPC receives calls from community residents with questions regarding exposures to medications, household chemicals, fumes, drugs, animal bites or stings, plants and more. WPC staff and toxicologists collaborate with hospitals across Wisconsin who are caring for patients with poison exposures to ensure the best treatment.

In 2023, WPC cared for Wisconsinites in every county, helping manage nearly 37,000 cases, including 42 percent of whom were over 20-years-old. They perform regular follow-up calls each day with exposed individuals and care teams to ensure safety and high quality care.

The WPC plays an important role in educating the future health care workforce as an elective rotation for students, residents and fellows. The WPC is the training ground for the medical toxicology fellowship, which was established in 2022 and supports the state's only Medical Toxicology Clinic at Children's Wisconsin, which cares for both pediatric and adult patients.

An 18-year-old was seen at an emergency room in Neenah. He reported a self-harm attempt days earlier when he ingested a variety of medications combined with alcohol. He had been feeling well until he suddenly began feeling dizzy, had a headache, low heart rate and low blood pressure. The hospital providers consulted the WPC, whose staff and toxicologist reviewed the medications and his lab and test results. Noting the patient's elevated liver enzymes, WPC recommended observation and treatment. The patient improved, ultimately resulting with him being discharged the following day.

The WPC's services help to reduce length of stay, limit inappropriate use of medical resources and contribute to cost savings. The WPC receives hospital membership fees and federal and state funding, however, Children's invests significant funds to support the WPC's operations.

-Children's Wisconsin-Fox Valley