Healthcare Provider Reporting of Communicable Diseases

What is a healthcare provider's responsibility in reporting communicable diseases to public health?
According to Wis. Stats. 252.05, any health care provider who "knows or has reason to believe a person treated or visited by him or her has a communicable disease" is required to report. Per Administrative Rule DHS 145.04 (1), this includes reporting of "a case or suspected case…"

Which diseases are reportable?
A list of reportable communicable diseases and time frame for reporting can be found on the web at URL https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/disease/diseasereporting.htm
Diseases listed in Category I are of urgent public health importance and shall be reported immediately by telephone to the appropriate local health department.

What should be included in a communicable disease report?
Wisconsin Administrate Rule DHS 145.04(2)(a) specifies the content of a disease report to include: disease, patient name, address, telephone number, date of birth, race, ethnicity, sex, date of onset, county of residence, and other facts (special report forms) required by public health.

How can a communicable disease be reported to public health?
Reports may be written on the individual case report form provided by the Department of Health Services (or similar form containing the same information), verbal, or by electronic transmission through WEDSS. Category I diseases require an immediate phone call to the local health department.

What is WEDSS?
WEDSS is a secure, web-based system designed to facilitate reporting, investigation, and surveillance of communicable diseases in Wisconsin. It is designed for public health staff, infection control practitioners, clinical laboratories, clinics, and other disease reporters.

Benefits of the electronic system include:
- Time savings – easier access to the most current disease-specific forms
- Automatic reporting to the correct health department based on patient address
- Improved consistency in reporting
- Improved security, information sharing and data analysis
- Reduced duplication and paperwork
- Standardization
- More timely reporting

How can I learn more?

Contact your local health department or the Division of Public Health WEDSS staff (email: DHSWEDSS@wisconsin.gov)

WEDSS documents are located on the WEDSS Sharepoint site. You must have a Wisconsin Logon Management System (WILMS) account in order to use WEDSS or access these documents. If you do not have a WILMS account, please send an email to DHSWEDSS@wisconsin.gov to request instructions.