



Chief Executives, HSS Trusts, for cascade to:

- Medical Directors
- Nursing Directors
- AHP leads

Chief Executive designate, HSC Authority
Regional Director, Public Health

Chief Executives, HSS Boards for cascade to

- Directors of Nursing
- Directors of AHP Services;
- Directors of Public Health

Chief Executives, Special Agencies

Chief Executive, RQIA, for cascade to:

- the independent sector
- relevant regulated establishments

Chief Officers, HSC Councils

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Your Ref:

Our Ref: HSC (SQSD) 32/2007

Date: 16th July 2007

Dear Colleagues

Re: National Patient Safety Agency: Safer Practice Notice 16: Early identification of failure to act on radiological imaging reports

Status: Best practice guidance

On 5 February, the NPSA launched Safer Practice Notice 16: Early identification of failure to act on radiological imaging reports.

This safer practice notice advises that patient safety incidents are being caused by a failure to acknowledge and act on radiological imaging reports. NPSA is recommending that all healthcare organisations providing or commissioning radiological imaging services should:

1. ensure that the radiological imaging reports of all patients are communicated to, and received by, the appropriate registered health professional and, where necessary, action is taken in a manner appropriate to their clinical urgency;
2. ensure registered health professionals design “safety net” procedures for their speciality;
3. make it clear to patients how and when they should expect to receive the results of a diagnostic test;
4. review relevant policies and procedures in line with the recommendations outlined in Safer Practice Notice 16.

The NPSA Safer Patient Notice is available on:

http://www.npsa.nhs.uk/site/media/documents/2294_0472_x-ray_SPN.pdf

Further material to support the implementation of the recommendation in this safer practice notice is available:

- patient briefing http://www.npsa.nhs.uk/site/media/documents/2294_0472_x-ray_SPN.pdf
- patient flyer http://www.npsa.nhs.uk/site/media/documents/2295_0475_X-rays_flyer_09_eng.pdf

It is recognised that now is an opportune time with the formation of new Trusts to promote best practice where possible. Therefore HSC organisations should work towards compliance with this safer practice notice (in recognition of PACS not yet being in place).

You will wish to bring the contents of this document to the attention of staff, particularly those involved in governance and risk management within your organisation. Organisations need to be aware of this safer practice notice in order to assist in complying with the *Quality Standard for Health & Social Care* -

- criterion 5.3.2 (communicating and learning from adverse incidents)
- criterion 5.3.3(f) (implementation of evidence-based practice, for example, guidance from the NPSA)
- criterion 6.3.2(b) (ensuring service users have appropriate information to make informed decisions)
- criterion 8.3(e) & (f) (clear communication and information for staff and service users).

Yours sincerely



Maura Briscoe
Director, Safety, Quality and Standards

cc. CSCG leads
Risk managers