

**Jim Livingstone**  
Director of Safety, Quality and Standards



Department of  
**Health, Social Services  
and Public Safety**

[www.dhsspsni.gov.uk](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk)

AN ROINN

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta  
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

MÄNNYSTRIE O

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Circular HSC (SQSD) 52/2008

Date: 21st October 2008

Directors of Nursing HSS Boards/HSC Trusts  
Directors of Public Health in HSS Boards  
Directors of Pharmacy HSS Boards/HSC Trusts  
Medical Directors, HSC Trusts, for cascade to –

- CSCG leads;
- Other relevant staff

Medical Director NIAS  
Directors of Anaesthesiology  
NI Medicines Governance Team  
Clinical leads for Critical Care Units  
Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (for  
cascade to relevant regulated establishments and  
independent hospitals, clinics and hospices)  
Regional Medicines Information Service  
Chief Executives NIMDTA, NICPPET, NIPEC  
General Manager HSC Safety Forum

Dear Colleague,

**NICE/NPSA/2008/PSG002: Technical patient safety solutions for ventilator-associated pneumonia in adults**

**Status: For Information**

The purpose of this circular is to highlight the content of NICE/NPSA/2008/PSG002 issued in August 2008.

The guidance recommends:

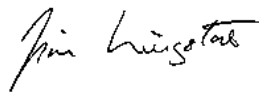
- Mechanically ventilated patients who are intubated should be positioned with their upper body elevated (in a semi-recumbent or seated position) for as much of the time as possible. For some patients this will not be appropriate (for example, those with spinal injuries).
- Oral antiseptics (i.e. chlorhexidine) should be included as part of the oral hygiene regime for all patients who are intubated and receiving mechanical ventilation.

It should be noted that children under the age of 16 are outside the scope of this guidance.

This guidance is not intended as a comprehensive overview of interventions aimed at preventing ventilator-associated pneumonia (VAP) and I am aware that improvement work aimed at preventing VAP is already ongoing across the province. The HSC Safety Forum in collaboration with the Critical Care Network NI is running a Regional Collaborative on VAP related to the relevant 2008-2009 PfA targets and may be accessed on <http://www.hscsafetyforum.com/?tabindex=1&tabid=2380>

NICE/NPSA/2008/PSG002: Technical patient safety solutions for ventilator-associated pneumonia in adults is available on <http://www.nice.org.uk/nicemedia/pdf/PSG002Guidance.pdf>

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Livingstone". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**DR JIM LIVINGSTONE**  
Director Safety, Quality and Standards