

**FROM THE ACTING CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER
DR ELIZABETH MITCHELL**



Department of

**Health, Social Services
and Public Safety**

www.dhsspsni.gov.uk

AN ROINN

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

MÁNNYSTRÍE O

**Poustie, Resydènter Heisin
an Fowk Siccar**

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To:

Chief Executive HSC Board - for distribution to:

- Primary Care Directors
- GP Medical Advisors

Chief Executive Public Health Agency

Chief Executives of HSC Trusts - for distribution to:

- Occupational Health Departments
- HR Directorates
- Risk Managers
- Governance Leads

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Chief Executive of RQIA

Director of Public Health - Public Health Agency

Director of Nursing – Public Health Agency

Chief Executives of Independent Hospitals

Dear Colleagues

MENTAL HEALTH AND ILL HEALTH IN DOCTORS DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH 2008:

I wish to bring to your attention the contents and recommendations of the above Department of Health publication which describes the specific mental health needs of doctors and which makes recommendations on access to appropriate services and the promotion of the mental health and wellbeing of doctors.

Medical practitioners are among the occupational groups that have the highest levels of work-related mental ill health. The publication highlights that up to 7% of doctors will have a substance abuse problem during their lifetime and refers to the increased risk of suicide particularly amongst female doctors, GPs, psychiatrists and anaesthetists. Doctors may also carry on working when they are ill and may seek help late.

