

*From the Chief Medical Officer*  
Dr Henrietta Campbell CB

To:

All General Practitioners in Northern Ireland  
Chief Executives of Trusts  
Chief Executives of Boards  
Directors of Public Health

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Your Ref:  
Our Ref: HSS(MD) 18/04  
Date: 1 June 2004

Dear Colleague

#### **INCIDENT INVOLVING A GASTROSCOPE AT LAGAN VALLEY HOSPITAL**

Down Lisburn Trust has become aware that one particular gastroscopie used between April 2001 and April 2004 in the Day Procedure Unit of Lagan Valley Hospital, may not have been completely disinfected. As you will be aware, blood borne viruses such as Hepatitis B and C or HIV can be spread from one patient to another by equipment that has not been completely disinfected. Expert advice is that the risk of getting these infections in this situation is likely to be very small.

All 449 patients who had their procedure performed with this particular gastroscopie have been identified and written to by the Trust, offering them advice and testing and giving them a specific patient reference number. A dedicated helpline number for these identified patients has been established by the Trust. **Patients will require the unique patient reference number contained in their notification letter when contacting the helpline.** To allow the best service to be provided to the patients identified as having had procedures with this gastroscopie, the dedicated helpline number is not being issued to any other patients.

Patients who have had gastroscopies using other equipment in Lagan Valley Hospital or elsewhere can be reassured. This particular model of gastroscopie is in use in two other Trusts in Northern Ireland but there are no problems with disinfection of these instruments. Patients not associated with this particular gastroscopie, including patients who had a gastroscopie in Lagan Valley Hospital but have not received a letter from the Trust, needing further reassurance or general information should be given the number for the **Northern Ireland Gastroscopie Helpline 0800 9120099.**

Yours sincerely

**DR HENRIETTA CAMPBELL**