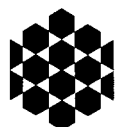


From the Chief Medical Officer
Dr Henrietta Campbell CB



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

An Roinn

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

HSS(MD)37/2005

www.dhsspsni.gov.uk

Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Belfast BT4 3SQ
Tel: 028 9052 0563
Fax: 028 9052 0574
Email: Henrietta.Campbell@dhsspsni.gov.uk

To: Chief Executives HSS Boards
Chief Executives HSS Trusts
Directors of Public Health
Medical Directors of HSS Trusts
Directors of Nursing HSS Boards
Directors of Nursing HSS Trusts
Chief Executive Regulation Quality Improvement
Authority
Chief Executive Health Promotion Agency

Your Ref:
Our Ref: HSS(MD)37/2005
Date: 19 December 2005

Dear Colleague

CONFIDENTIAL ENQUIRY INTO MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

In April 2003 the new Confidential Enquiry into Maternal and Child Health (CEMACH) was set up. CEMACH incorporated the National Enquiries previously carried out by the Confidential Enquiry into Stillbirth Deaths in Infancy (CESDI) and Confidential Enquiry into Maternal Deaths (CEMD), which have now been dissolved.

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) has a clear expectation that Trusts can, and should, participate in CEMACH along with the other National Confidential Enquiry programmes. It is clearly in the wider public interest to do so and, indeed, failure to participate in the programmes may attract adverse public criticism. This letter is to provide reassurance that information and records supplied to CEMACH will be used only for the purpose for which they were intended.

The DHSSPS will shortly be publishing 'The Quality Standards for Health and Social Care'. This will confirm that participation in the National Confidential Enquiries is an integral part of clinical and social care governance for HPSS organisations. In addition the forthcoming Safety Framework will reinforce this position highlighting that involvement in Confidential Enquiry reporting is a part of the culture and learning of an organisation.

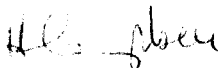
A Service Level Agreement is shortly due to be in place with the National Patients Safety Agency (NPSA), the organisation which oversees the National Confidential Enquiries and provides a quality assurance mechanism for their operation. This is part of the wider remit of the NPSA to promote prevention, detection and management of adverse incidents and near misses and, where appropriate, to develop solutions for the NHS. A Service Level Agreement will make available all NPSA's training, tools and guidance for the HPSS.

CEMACH is not funded to meet any costs incurred by HPSS providers, as participating HPSS organisations are expected to do this as part of their commitment to Clinical and Social Care Governance. The same is true for the National Confidential Enquiry into Patient Outcome and Death and the National Confidential Inquiry into Suicide and Homicide by People with Mental Illness, neither of which is able to pay Trusts for data collected for enquiry purposes.

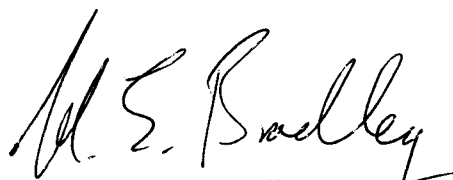


The predecessors CESDI and CEMD, had an impressive track record, which CEMACH is determined to maintain. The aim is to ensure that HPSS organisations are provided with valuable data and recommendations to help them in reducing mortality and morbidity for mothers, babies and children.

Yours sincerely



Dr Henrietta Campbell
CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER



Mr Martin Bradley
CHIEF NURSING OFFICER

cc: Mr Richard Congdon, Chief Executive, CEMACH
Dr Maureen Scott, Regional Co-ordinator for CEMACH
Dr Angela Bell, Consultant Paediatrician

This letter is available at www.dhsspsni.gov.uk and also on the DHSSPS Extranet which can be accessed directly at <http://extranet.dhsspsni.gov.uk> or by going through the HPSS Web at <http://www.n-i.nhs.uk> and clicking on DHSSPS.