

Chief Executives of HSS Boards and Trusts for cascade to:

- Risk Managers
- Clinical and Social Care Governance Leads

Directors of Pharmaceutical Services in HSS Boards and Trusts for cascade to:

- HSS Trusts Drugs and Therapeutic Committees

Directors of Public Health in HSS Boards

Medical Directors of HSS Trusts

Chairs/Area Drug and Therapeutics Committees/Prescribing Fora

Directors of Nursing HSS Boards

Directors of Nursing HSS Trusts

Northern Ireland Medicines Governance Team

Chair – Regional Group on Specialist Medicines

Regional Governance Advisor

Chair - CREST

Chair - RMAG

Regional Pharmaceutical Laboratory Services

Regional Supplies Service

Medicines Information Service

NICPPET

Professor Jean Orr, Head of the School of Nursing and Midwifery, QUB

Mrs Carol Curran, Head of the School of Nursing, UU

Professor J McElnay, Dean, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Head of School of Medicine

Professor S Gorman, School of Pharmacy

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22 December 2005

Dear Colleague

## **RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE THE SAFE USE OF INSULIN IN SECONDARY CARE**

The use of insulin is associated with a relatively high incidence of adverse events, including fatalities, and is largely attributable to a number of systems failures.

Allied to these systems failures the Northern Ireland Medicines Governance Team has developed a series of recommendations and associated actions designed to improve safety in the use of insulin, a copy of which is enclosed.

The actions apply to the Department and the HPSS but given the potential for serious insulin-related adverse incidents the advice is being cascaded now to inform models of good practice.

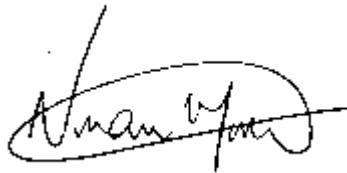
Further supplementary work is underway through CREST which has already produced guidance in the emergency management of hyperkalaemia in adults, including the safe use of insulin. In addition, the development of a template for a regional Kardex is well advanced which is the subject of recommendation 35.

The document can also be accessed at:

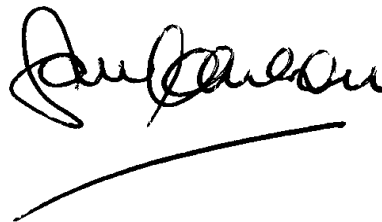
<http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/pgroups/pharmaceutical/NIMedicalGovernance/bestpractice.asp>

Further advice/information will follow in due course.

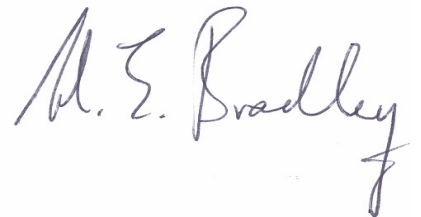
Yours sincerely



**NORMAN C MORROW**  
Chief Pharmaceutical  
Officer



**DR IAN CARSON**  
Deputy Chief Medical  
Officer



**MARTIN BRADLEY**  
Chief Nursing  
Officer

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