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Chief Executives, HSS Boards  
Chief Executives, HSS Trusts  
Chief Executive, CSA  
Chief Executives, HSS Special Agencies  
Chief Officers, HSS Councils (for information)

## **GOVERNANCE IN THE HPSS: REPORTING ON COMPLIANCE WITH CONTROLS ASSURANCE STANDARDS FOR 2003/04**

1. The Department has completed its examination of the HPSS's level of compliance with 2003-04 controls assurance standards. The purpose of this circular is to advise you of how we shall be disseminating those findings to the Service.

### **Openness and Transparency**

2. HPSS organisations conduct business with each other in the commissioning and delivery of health and personal social services. It is important that there is awareness of, and confidence in, the steps being taken to identify and manage risks to the achievement of common HPSS objectives. The Department will therefore make available within the HPSS a composite report on compliance. Structured according to the format at Annex A, this will record the compliance level achieved (as measured on the scale 'negligible' to 'full' compliance), by each organisation under each of the six standards. Following analysis by the Department, the composite report showing compliance levels across the HPSS will be issued to Accountable Officers in early July.
3. At this relatively early stage in the development of controls assurance we do not intend making public the composite report. Nevertheless we do expect individual organisations to demonstrate their responsibility for openness on this point. In the interests of transparency, therefore, and in keeping with the fundamental principles of good governance, the Department would expect organisations' annual accounts/reports to detail their levels of compliance with the six controls assurance standards. This material would be published in support of the Statement on Internal Control. Annex A contains also a template of the Annual Report 'Table of Compliance'.

## **New Controls Assurance Standards for 2004/05**

4. A further eight controls assurance standards have now been issued for 2004/05. You are reminded that, when a controls assurance standard is issued formally to the HPSS, each organisation is required to conduct an initial self-assessment against the key criteria and draw up an action plan to secure compliance. Guidance on expected levels of compliance with all fourteen standards for 2004/05 is now available on the website at: [www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/hss/governance/compliance\\_standards.asp](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/hss/governance/compliance_standards.asp). Organisations will be expected to report compliance against these standards in May 2005.
5. If you have any queries about the content of this circular, please contact Elaine Lawson on 028 9052 3112

**JRB Allen**  
**Deputy Director**  
**Planning and Performance Management Directorate**

### Template A: Composite Report of Levels of Compliance with Controls Assurance Standards across the HPSS

	Financial Management	Governance	Human Resources	Medical Devices & Equipment	Medicines Management	Risk Management
<b>Organisation</b>						
AHT						
A&DT						
BCHT						
CAHGT						
C&BT						
DLT						
EHSSB						
Etc.						

**NB. The fields will be shaded according to the level of compliance achieved and a key provided of the descriptors.**

### Template B: Annual Report – Individual Organisations’ Levels of Compliance with Controls Assurance Standards

Controls Assurance Standard Issued For 2003/04	Expected Levels of Compliance with Standard	Levels of Compliance with Standards Achieved by Organisation
Financial Management	Substantive	
Governance	Substantive	
Human Resources	Moderate	
Medical Devices and Equipment	Moderate	
Medicines Management	Moderate	
Risk Management	Substantive	

**NB. The fields should be shaded according to the level of compliance achieved and a key provided of the descriptors.**