



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

An Roinn  
**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta  
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

[www.dhsspsni.gov.uk](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk)

## **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, SOCIAL SERVICES AND PUBLIC SAFETY**

### **REVIEW OF CLINICAL PATHOLOGY / LABORATORY SERVICES**

#### **Progress Report**

**February 2004**

This note provides a brief overview of key items of work undertaken to date within the Project.

#### ***Project Initiation:***

The Project Initiation Document was completed to final draft stage and has been made available to all interested parties including via the web-page at [http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/hss/clinical\\_pathology/index.html](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/hss/clinical_pathology/index.html).

#### ***Project Team:***

Nominations were obtained for the Project Team and the team held its first meeting on 23 /12/02. A full schedule of project team meetings has now been agreed for the duration of the project. To date four project team meetings have been convened and the team is now operating as a very cohesive unit. Members are extremely enthusiastic and very committed to the project.

#### ***Communication :***

- A communication plan has been drafted
- Web Page is now fully operational. To date the site has averaged around 900 hits per month. This site will continue to be developed as the project progresses.
- A letter has been issued to senior officers in all Boards and Trusts advising staff about the review and how to make contact.

#### ***Site Visits:***

Site visits have been arranged to all hospital laboratory sites. The focus of these initial visits is on orientation for the team; fact finding in respect of the current

situation; and consultation with senior personnel on the strategic issues impacting on each laboratory. To date the team have visited Greenpark, Altnagelvin, Antrim, Mid Ulster, Royal, Belfast City and Craigavon Hospitals.

These visits are providing a rich baseline of information for the review and there is a striking degree of consensus of opinion across the service. A full report of the site visits will be available for the next Project Board meeting. However, it would be appropriate to highlight key issues identified by all even at this early stage. These issues include:

- A strong desire for change which will improve and modernise this essential service
- The need for a more integrated approach to the management and operation of laboratories across the province
- The fundamental requirement for an integrated ICT system
- A wish for standardisation of methodology, procurement and operating systems
- The need for pathology to develop a greater patient / user focus
- The fundamental need for a regional approach to HR management including manpower planning

***Workshop:***

A workshop was convened on 11 February and invitations were issued to a wide cross section of stakeholders (150 sent). On the day 109 delegates attended. The workshop achieved its objectives and provided the review with a valuable insight into the expectations of key stakeholders. A full report and an executive summary has now been produced.

***“Frontiers in Laboratory Medicine” Conference:***

Independently a number of review team members attended a conference in Manchester on 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> March 2004. The conference focused on changing process and improving outcome. The speakers came from UK and North America. This turned out to be an extremely useful event, with insight into some leading edge thinking in terms of laboratory medicine, and well as, providing the team with some very valuable contacts with UK and colleagues in Republic of Ireland. These links are currently being further developed.

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