

Dr Jim Livingstone
Director of Safety, Quality and Standards



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

www.dhsspsni.gov.uk

AN ROINN
**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

MÁNNYSTRIE O
**Poustie, Resydènter Heisin
an Fowk Siccar**

SAFETY ALERT CIRCULAR

Subject:

Reducing harm caused by the misplacement of nasogastric feeding tubes

For action by:

Chief Executives, HSC Boards, for cascade to:

- *Directors of Public Health*
- *Directors of Nursing*
- *CSCG leads*

Chief Executives, HSC Trusts, for cascade to:

- *Medical Directors*
- *Directors of Nursing*
- *Speech and Language Therapists*
- *Dieticians*
- *Physiotherapists*
- *CSCG Leads*

Chief Executive RQIA for cascade to:

- *Independent Sector*
- *Relevant Regulated Establishments*

Department of Education – for cascade to relevant School Principals,
School Doctors and Nurses

For Information to:

- Director, Safety Forum
- Chair, GAIN
- Chief Executive, NIPEC
- Professor Patrick Johnston, Head of School of Medicines, Dentistry and Biomedical Sciences, QUB
- Professor Linda Johnston, Head of Nursing & Midwifery, QUB
- Professor Hugh McKenna, Head of Life and Health Sciences, UU
- Dr Owen Barr, Head of School of Nursing, UU
- Dr Terry McMurray, Postgraduate Dean, NIMDTA

Summary of Contents:

The purpose of this Circular is to highlight current best practice on management of nasogastric feeding tubes

Enquiries:

Any enquiries about the content of this Circular should be addressed to:

Safety & Quality Unit
DHSSPS
Room D2.4
Castle Buildings
Stormont
BELFAST
BT4 3SQ

Tel: 028 9052 2239

elaine.lawson@dhsspsni.gov.uk

Circular Reference: S&Q Learning Communication 02/09

Date of Issue: 3 February 2009

Related documents

NPSA Patient Safety Alert 05: reducing the harm caused by misplaced nasogastric tubes

GM 150-05: NPSA Guidance

CREST guidelines: management of enteral tube feeding in adults

Superseded documents

N/A

Status of Contents:

Best Practice

Implementation:

Ongoing

Dear colleagues

Working for a Healthier People

Chief Medical Officer Group



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

SAFETY ALERT CIRCULAR (SQS – LC 02/09): REDUCING HARM CAUSED BY THE MISPLACEMENT OF NASOGASTRIC FEEDING TUBES

Following a recent incident involving aspiration of nasogastric feed into patients' lungs, I wish to draw your attention to the current best practice on this issue.

The content of the attached SAFETY ALERT CIRCULAR at Annex A, has been reviewed by relevant professional colleagues in the Department and approved for regional dissemination.

I would ask you to bring this to the attention of relevant practitioners and key health and social care staff within your organisation. They should consider the best practice for their setting and take appropriate steps to minimise the risk to their patients, clients or pupils of a similar incident.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jim Livingstone', written in a cursive style.

Dr J F Livingstone
Director, Safety, Quality & Standards

SAFETY ALERT CIRCULAR (SQS – LC 02/09): REDUCING HARM CAUSED BY THE MISPLACEMENT OF NASOGASTRIC FEEDING TUBES

Your attention is drawn to the following best practice:

- (1) NPSA guidance on reducing harm caused by the misplacement of nasogastric feeding tubes (issued February 2005 and updated February 2007). This was brought to the attention of HSC organisations on 5 July 2005 (GM 105-05), The supporting material from the NPSA outlines when and how often the tube position should be checked; and

[\(www.npsa.nhs.uk/alerts-and-directives/alerts/nasogastric-feeding-tubes/\)](http://www.npsa.nhs.uk/alerts-and-directives/alerts/nasogastric-feeding-tubes/)

- (2) CREST guidelines on the management of enteral tube feeding in adults.

[\(www.gain-ni.org/Guidelines/tube-feeding-guidelines.pdf\)](http://www.gain-ni.org/Guidelines/tube-feeding-guidelines.pdf)