

<p><u>NORTH EAST AMBULANCE SERVICE NHS TRUST</u> <u>HEALTHCARE COMMISSION ANNUAL HEALTH CHECK</u> <u>PROGRESS REPORTS ON CORE/DEVELOPMENTAL STANDARDS 2008/09</u> <u>TRUST AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING – 10TH MARCH 2009</u> <u>BY THE BUSINESS PLANNING MANAGER</u></p>
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INTRODUCTION

Monthly audits are carried out by the writer on Core Standards, also recorded as a KPI for the Executive Team. Periodic progress reports are updated by the relevant Leads for reporting to the Assurance Committee/Trust Board.

A progress report on Developmental Standards has also been updated (*Appendix 2*) and timetable (*Appendix 3*), which sets out the important dates leading to the declaration of compliance with Core Standards and subsequent publication of 2008/09 ratings.

Changes to Core Standards elements

Changes to the elements of Core Standards was mentioned at the last Assurance Committee meeting, not previously assessed, but will be in 2008/09:– C3 'Compliance with NICE', C4e 'WEEE regulations', C9 'NHS Number' and C22b 'Director of Public Health Annual Report recommendations' (*C22b will NOT now be assessed by the HCC – guidance 3 March 2009) confirmed at the Assurance Committee meeting held 6 March 2009.*

I have now met with all Leads on an individual basis and can confirm that the necessary statements and evidence is recorded in the reporting template and available for scrutiny (*Appendix 1*).

HEALTHCARE COMMISSION ANNUAL HEALTH CHECK

Core Standards 2008/09

Monthly audits undertaken in January and February 2009 are attached (*Appendix 1*) – Leads have progressed well with the gathering of evidence in support of the proposed statements of compliance with Core Standards and consequently we are in a strong position to declare full compliance all of the relevant Core Standards.

Third Party comments on the Trust's performance

An invitation to third parties to comment on the Trust's healthcare declaration will be sent out to all 12 Local Involvement Networks and Health Overview & Scrutiny Committees in the service area.

Guidance issued by the Healthcare Commission in December 2008 states: "We recognise that not all LINKs will be able to contribute to the annual health check to the same extent that third parties have done in previous years..... If you (LINKs) are invited to comment and say no, neither you nor the Trust will be penalised."

Internal Audit

During the period from November 08 – February 09, the Internal Audit Team (*Sunderland Internal Audit Services*) carried out an in depth audit on the process leading to the Trust's declaration of compliance with Core Standards, and inspected a sample number of elements (*C4c,d,e, C5c, C7e, C11a,b, C13a,b, C20a, C21and C24*) – statements and supporting evidence, in detail.

A positive *draft* report – "Significant Assurance" has now been received which recognised the Trust's compliance with core standards and progress towards developmental standards, which will form part of the Trust's declaration of compliance. (*Appendix 4*).

Developmental Standards

Progress report on Developmental Standards is attached (*Appendix 2*) although we do not envisage that these will be subject to scrutiny in the process for 2008/09, it is important that progress is made, which is demonstrable.

Timetable for 2008/09

A timetable (*Appendix 3*) outlines the calendar for 2008/09; which is updated and presented at each Assurance Committee meeting.

Advanced notification

It is worth noting that an assessment on Standards for Better Health will be undertaken by the CQC mid year (in November 2009), instead of previous full years; a further declaration of compliance with Core Standards based on statements supported by the necessary evidence for the period April – September 2009.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Audit Committee members are recommended to note the progress made by the relevant Leads in the provision of statements of compliance with Core and Developmental Standards, supported by the relevant evidence, for 2008/09; confirmed by the positive report provided by Sunderland Internal Audit Services.
2. Members are asked to note the reports and the proposed submission *to be approved at the Assurance Committee meeting held 6th March 2009*, 'declaration of compliance with Core Standards 2008/09' recommending approval at the next meeting of the Trust Board – 26th March 2009.

J B Hehir
Business Planning Manager
25 February 2009