

**North East Ambulance Service NHS Trust
(Appendix e)
Internal Audit Report E2009/11
Standards for Better Health**

Assurance rating this review	Significant Assurance
Assurance rating previous review	Significant Assurance

Distribution list

1. Roger French - Director of Finance and Performance.
2. Judith Hurrell - Head of Financial Services, Risk and Claims Management.
3. John Pescott - Audit Committee Chairman.

Sunderland Internal Audit Services
February 2009



1. Background and Scope

Background

The purpose of the audit was to review the Trust's compliance with core Standards for Better Health and continuing progress towards developmental Standards. The audit was carried out as part of the 2008/09 Tactical Internal Audit Plan.

Scope

The scope of the audit involved discussions with Trust staff, systems assessment and a review of relevant documents, minutes and reports.

The objectives of the audit were to ensure that:

- There are adequate accountability arrangements in place for ensuring that the Trust complies with Standards for Better Health.
- The assessment of compliance with the Standards is consistent and appropriate.
- Ongoing compliance with the Standards is continuously monitored and reviewed.
- The content of the annual declaration in respect of each Standard is substantiated by appropriate evidence.
- The Trust has robust processes to facilitate continuing progress towards the attainment of developmental Standards.

Evidence was reviewed in respect of Standards C4c, C4d, C4e, C5c, C7e, C11a, C11b, C13a, C13b, C14a, C20a, C21, and C24.

2. Assurance Statement

Introduction

The report summarises the findings of our audit of the Trust's process for gaining assurance on compliance with Standards for Better Health.

Good practice identified

We noted the following area of good practice:

There are robust accountability arrangements in place for ensuring that the Trust complies with the Standards for Better Health. The Assurance Committee takes an active role in monitoring the process of collating evidence to support the annual declaration.

Assurance statement

Significant assurance can be given that there is a sound system of internal control, designed to meet the organisation's objectives, and that controls are generally being applied consistently.

Acknowledgements

The cooperation and assistance of the staff during the course of the audit, in particular John Hehir, Business Planning Manager, is appreciated.