THE SCOTTISH OFFICE

000786 NHS
MEL (1993)110

National Health Service in Scotland
Management Executive

St. Andrew's House
Edinburgh EH1 3DG

Dear Colleague

PREPARATION AND REVISION OF INFORMATION STRATEGIES

Summary

1. This letter seeks from all addressees copies of their local information strategies which reflect their current plans.

Action

2. Boards, existing NHS Trusts and those Directly Managed Units (DMUs) which hope to become Trusts from 1st April 1994 are asked to submit copies of their strategies to the Directorate by 30th September 1993. In each case 3 copies are required and they should be sent to Allan Wilson, Assistant Director (Strategy), Directorate of Information Services, HSD, Keith House, South Gyle, EDINBURGH, EH12 9DQ.

3. This letter should be copied to Unit General Managers.

Background

4. All Boards and most NHS Trusts submitted their Strategies to the Directorate last year and these have been discussed with them at some length. In the case of some of the more recently created Trusts their local strategies are still awaited and these should be prepared in line with the guidance provided last year - the Framework for the Development of Information Strategies (NHS MEL(1992)61).

5. All local strategies, regardless of which NHS organisation has prepared them, are expected to be in line with the Information Strategy for the NHS in Scotland which was issued under cover of NHS Circular GEN(1992)18.

26 August 1993

Addressees

For action:
General Managers,
Health Boards

General Manager,
Common Services Agency

General Manager, State Hospital

Chief Executive and
Chief Executives Designates
NHS Trusts

For information

General Manager, Board
Health Education
for Scotland

To be copied to Unit
General Managers

Enquiries to:

Mr M Fowle
Strategy
Development
Officer
HSD
Keith House
2 Redheughs Rigg
South Gyle
Edinburgh
EH12 9DQ
Tel 031-317-7577
Fax 031-317-7467

Recycled

Preparation of Local Strategies

6. A subset of the general guidance on the preparation of information strategies is provided at Annex 1 to assist in ensuring that they are suitably comprehensive.

7. In the case of any Boards which are still likely to be responsible for DMUs from 1st April 1994 the strategies should comprise a number of elements ie, the Board's over-riding HQ strategy, its purchaser strategy and unit-based strategies. For those Boards which will only retain their purchaser role together with any other non-DMU related responsibilities, a more general approach can be taken.

8. In any cases where the revised strategy does not change radically from the earlier version it will be sufficient for the Directorate to be notified of the main changes of emphasis or thrust. However this should be supported with a clear statement of local priorities for implementing systems and/or hardware etc.

9. On receipt of the revised documents etc, the Directorate will arrange, as appropriate, meetings with individual Boards and NHS Trusts to discuss them.

Yours sincerely

for **C B KNOX**
Director of Information Services

ep/general/awmel

PREPARATION OF LOCAL INFORMATION STRATEGIES

1. An Information Strategy should be based on the agreed strategy, objectives and business plans of the organisation and should reflect the associated information and information systems requirements. It must be in line with the Information Strategy for the NHS in Scotland as approved and issued by the Management Executive (see enclosure to NHS circular GEN(1992)18).

2. For the purposes of the Information Strategy the Board or Trust objectives should be stated in broad areas such as general objectives and objective related to the purchase or delivery of health care. The plans which follow the objectives should be set out in more detail and be listed as appropriate (eg hospital services, community services etc).

Information and System Requirements

3. A rigourous approach to determining information requirements and the information systems needed to underpin the business plan may be unlikely during the preparation of the initial strategy document. However, an analytical methodology must be applied to determining the information needs and information flows.

4. Some of the information needs and flows may be provided by an existing information system and the Strategy should refer to that system. For the remainder, analysis will identify system requirements which may be satisfied by manual systems or by software/hardware systems. Some of these may be adequate, some may require enhancement and some may be new systems.

Information Technology (IT) Strategy

5. Based on the system requirement, the IT strategy should then be set out. The strategy should relate back through the information system to the information requirement of a particular plan resulting from the Board or Trust's objectives. At this stage, the Information Strategy document should set out the details of the approach to existing systems and new systems. It should also acknowledge the organisation's acceptance of any nationally set technical standards.

6. The application systems should be listed by function rather than by the earlier analysis and would include, as appropriate, the following:

   6.1 <u>Operational Systems</u> (including PAS, laboratories, nursing, theatre management, pharmacy, clinical, medical audit, community nursing, CHI and related modules, contracting and MIS etc).

6.2 Administration Systems (eg Finance, payroll, personnel, supplies, estates management, electronic mail and office systems etc)

6.3 Information Systems (eg Viewdata systems such as VADIS and TOXBASE)

7. In addition consideration must be given to the overall strategy relating to the development, operation, management and use of IT systems. Short sections should be included to cover the following heads:-

- IT Support (Source of support for advice to users, identification of new and changed requirements, systems software maintenance, hardware maintenance)
- Software Procurement (Use of national framework agreements, NHS national developments, local development or other commercial systems, how procurement support resource is obtained)
- Hardware Procurement (Use of national/local contracts, standardisation of supplier and operating system, how procurement support resource is obtained)
- Communications (LAN, structured cabling, WAN and national network)
- Training (Awareness, users, managers of users, computer staff, Organisational and Management Development, use of central training resources)
- Technical (Technical standards for systems and communications, development methodologies and tools)
- Data (Adoption of ISD national data standards, local data management, data access arrangements and date ownership.)
- Audit and Review (How the effectiveness of IS/IT systems is monitored)
- Management of IS/IT (Advisory support for management, individual managerial responsibilities for aspects of IS/IT including expenditure authorisation, control of standards, confidentiality, procurement and data management)
- Confidentiality/Security (Data Protection, disaster planning, systems access, unathorised software etc).

COMMON SERVICES AGENCY
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30 AUG 1993
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ACTION TAKEN

General

8. The strategy should cover a 3-5 year timeframe but major longer term objectives should also be identified.

9. The strategy should provide a clear statement of priorities and should be the basis for the preparation of the organisation's 3 year rolling IS/IT expenditure plans.