



Department of Health

NHS Management Executive
St. Andrew's House
Edinburgh EH1 3DG
25 January 1996

Dear Colleague

IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW NHS COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES: TRAINING FOR LOCAL RESOLUTION

Summary

Interim Guidance on the new NHS complaints procedures, issued under cover of MEL(1995)76, described work being undertaken nationally to develop training materials to assist training. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with a training pack which is intended to assist with local training for the local resolution of complaints.

Action

Board General Managers and NHS Trust Chief Executives are asked immediately to distribute copies of the training pack to those in their organisations who are best placed to deliver training. Five copies of the pack are enclosed for this purpose. Please feel free to copy it as required. Board General Managers are also asked to ensure that the training pack is brought to the attention of their local consultative committees representing primary care practitioners.

Other Information

Further information on the training pack is contained in Annex A to this letter. Annex B lists those other bodies who have also received a copy of the pack.

Yours sincerely

KEVIN J WOODS
Director of Purchasing

COMMON SERVICES AGENCY	
RECEIVED	
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REFERRED TO	ACTION TAKEN

Addressees

For action:

General Managers, Health Boards

Chief Executives, NHS Trusts

General Manager, Common Services Agency

General Manager, State Hospitals Board for Scotland

Chief Officers/Secretaries, Local Health Councils

For information:

General Manager, Health Education Board for Scotland

Executive Director, SCPMDE

Health Service Commissioner for Scotland

Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland

Scottish Association of Health Councils

Scottish Association of GPFH Practices

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LOCAL RESOLUTION TRAINING PACK

1. The NHS has to ensure that staff who are likely to receive complaints are trained in the local procedures which they will be developing in line with central guidance. To assist with this local training, the NHS Training Division (NHSTD) in England was commissioned to develop a training resource pack. NHSTD have had access to advice and assistance from a training steering group drawn from the NHS and input from complaints managers, patient representatives and trainers. In Scotland, it was agreed by the Implementation Advisory Group set up to oversee implementation that we should buy into the production of this package. In a number of instances the terminology used reflects the position in England, but subject to the points listed below this does not detract significantly from the usefulness of the pack as a whole.

Section 1

- The reference to 'Acting on Complaints' applies only to England. Ministers responded separately in Scotland.
- The Interim Guidance in Scotland issued in November 1995.

General

References to 'Health Authority' should read 'Health Board'.

References to 'Chief Executives' include 'General Managers' of Health Boards as well as 'Chief Executives' of NHS Trusts.

References to 'CHCs' should read 'LHCs'.

2. The training pack is designed primarily for the staff who have responsibility for taking forward training in Health Boards and NHS Trusts. Clearly the key element in local training will be the procedures and processes local bodies have developed in line with central guidance for handling complaints. However the pack contains resource materials; some exemplar training sessions; case studies and models for devising further case studies. As far as the case studies are concerned, your attention is drawn to those taken from the Health Service Commissioner's reports. These are regularly circulated to General Managers and Chief Executives and provide a constant source of learning materials. As further copies of the Commissioner's reports are received, you will wish to make sure that they reach the appropriate person in your organisation. The Chief Executive has made clear the expectation that Boards and Trusts in Scotland should examine carefully the findings of the Commissioner in order that valuable lessons are learned.

3. The pack does contain some material on issues that go wider than training for complaints handling, eg setting up procedures and monitoring systems, but it does not

supersede or replace the central guidance; anyone using the pack should refer to the latest guidance from the Management Executive on the new complaints arrangements. Although the pack tends to refer to Trusts - who employ the largest concentration of staff to be trained - the material is appropriate to all NHS bodies.

Planning Local Training

4. In considering local plans, you will want to consider where this training fits into your organisation's overall training and development strategy. It should be noted that training in complaints handling could count as evidence towards a national vocational qualification for any staff member and can be included in nurses' re-registration portfolios.

5. You will also want to consider the options for training delivery. Not all NHS bodies have their own training departments and some may wish to form local consortia to facilitate the sharing of resources. There are benefits to be gained for all concerned in pooling knowledge and resources. **We would ask that in developing local training initiatives Health Boards, in particular, should consider the needs of those practising in primary care practices and their staff and Local Health Council staff.**

Training for Independent Review

6. The NHS Executive Training Division is currently working on a training pack for the independent review procedures which is expected to be available in February. The NHS in Scotland Management Executive and MDG are formulating plans for delivering the training for this element of the new procedure and further details will issue in due course.

7. We expect to issue the final version of the guidance on the new complaints arrangements along with the Directions and Regulations at the beginning of March.

Feedback

8. The NHS Executive in England are considering an evaluation study towards the middle of 1996 and we hope that you will feel able to provide us with feedback about the pack which we can pass on to them.

British Medical Association

British Dental Association

Scottish Joint Consultants Committee

Deans of the Medical Schools

Conference of Royal Colleges and Faculties in Scotland

Medical and Dental Defence Union of Scotland

Scottish General Dental Services Committee

Scottish General Medical Services Committee

National Board for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting for Scotland

Scottish Health Visitors' Association

Royal College of Nursing

Royal College of Midwives

Royal College of Surgeons

Royal College of Physicians

Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow

Royal College of General Practitioners

Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists

Royal College of Psychiatrists

Royal College of Pathologists

Royal College of Radiologists

Royal College of Anaesthetists

College of Ophthalmologists

Faculty of Public Health Medicines

Joint Paediatric Committee of Scottish Royal Colleges

Dental Council of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh

Dental Council of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow

Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain (Scottish Department)

Scottish Committee of Optometrists

Scottish Pharmaceutical General Council

Scottish National Blood Transfusion Service
Members of the Implementation Advisory Group
Management Development Group