



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

7 February 1996

Dear Colleague

**SKILL-MIX IN COMMUNITY NURSING**

**Summary**

1. This letter seeks to remind health providers to continue to follow good management and industrial relations practice when undertaking exercises relating to skill mix in community nursing.

**Background**

2. As you will be aware the Secretary of State met with the nursing unions as part of his consultation exercise on taking up office. One of the issues raised with the Secretary of State was skill-mix in community nursing and I was asked to look into the matter and report to him.

3. It was emphasised by both SHVA and DNA that they were not opposed to a revised skill-mix profile in principle but that in many cases exercises and their outcomes were carried out without consultation with the professions involved and that in some instances this had led to what they claimed to be an inappropriate skill-mix. While I have looked at skill-mix in these disciplines from a national standpoint I am not in a position to comment, nor would I want to at this juncture, on particular local cases. These matters are for local management to determine.

**Action**

4. Employers are asked to consult with the appropriate professions and unions prior to and during exercises regarding skill-mix. This is particularly appropriate where the unions concerned have, as with the SHVA and DNA, stated that they are not opposed to a revised skill-mix profile.

Yours sincerely

*M R SIBBALD*

**M R SIBBALD**  
Director of Human Resources

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