

Dear Colleague

**WASTE MANAGEMENT IN NHSSCOTLAND ACTION PLAN:
2007 - A RESPONSE TO AUDIT SCOTLAND'S MAY 2005
FOLLOW-UP REPORT 'WASTE MANAGEMENT IN
SCOTTISH HOSPITALS'**

28 January 2008

Addresses

For action

Chief Executives, NHS Boards.

Chief Executives, Special Health
Boards.

NHSScotland Strategic Facilities
Group.

NHSScotland Property Advisory
Group.

For information

Director, Health Facilities
Scotland.

Chairman, NHSScotland Waste
Management Steering Group.

Head of Waste and Pollution
Reduction, Scottish Government
Environmental Quality Directorate.

1. This letter provides colleagues with information regarding Health Facilities Scotland's Waste Management in NHSScotland Action Plan: 2007 - 'A response to Audit Scotland's May 2005 Follow-up Report *Waste management in Scottish hospitals*' which continues to address clinical and other waste management issues originally highlighted in the Audit Scotland Report 'Waste Management in Scottish Hospitals', issued to NHSScotland in January 2001 and, addresses the further issues highlighted in Audit Scotland's May 2005 follow-up report. A weblink to the Waste Management in NHSScotland Action Plan: 2007 is provided at the end of this letter.

Action

2. **Chief Executives and other recipients must ensure that this notice and the Waste Management in NHSScotland Action Plan: 2007 is brought to the attention of all appropriate staff within their area of responsibility and that the actions as timetabled within the Waste Management in NHSScotland Action Plan: 2007 are incorporated into their organisation's waste management and property strategies.**

Summary

3. The Waste Management in NHSScotland Action Plan: 2007 has been produced by the Health Facilities Scotland Waste Management Steering Group (HFSWMSG) in response to the findings of the Audit Scotland reports.

Enquires to:

Mr Ian Grieve
Property and Capital Planning
Property Branch
Basement Rear
St Andrew's House
EDINBURGH EH1 3DG

Tel: 0131-244 2777

Fax: 0131-244 2323

Email:

ian.grieve@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk>

4. The purpose of this letter is to confirm the requirement that NHSScotland Bodies must implement the recommendations of the Audit Scotland reports. By implementing the timetabled actions detailed within the Waste Management in NHSScotland Action Plan: 2007, NHSScotland Bodies will fulfil the recommendations set out in the Audit Scotland reports. They will also meet the statutory and mandatory requirements set out in the Scottish Government Health Directorates Environmental Management Policy for NHSScotland [[NHS HDL\(2006\)21](#) refers], with particular regard to the application of best practice in waste management.
5. Whilst the Audit Scotland reports focus on hospital waste, the messages contained within the Waste Management in NHSScotland Action Plan: 2007 are applicable **wherever NHSScotland provides healthcare services** and produces waste of any kind. **The Waste Management in NHSScotland Action Plan: 2007 therefore applies to all healthcare settings and includes health centres, clinics, General Medical Practitioner premises, General Dental Practitioner premises, NHS pharmacies and the provision of NHS care in the community, whether in care homes or patients' private homes.**
6. All NHSScotland Bodies have been provided with guidance and best practice recommendations by Health Facilities Scotland to allow them to categorise, segregate and operate clinical waste disposal procedures in keeping with regulatory frameworks. The Audit Scotland Follow-up Report outlines the recent regulatory changes which impact on current operational arrangements. To support NHSScotland Bodies in the implementation of the Waste Management in NHSScotland Action Plan: 2007 and thus compliance with the new regulatory frameworks, Health Facilities Scotland will revise the operational guidance available to NHSScotland, appropriately prioritised within their local delivery plan and supporting financial plan.

Background

7. The effective management of healthcare waste is essential to ensure the health and safety of patients, staff and the general public and is a complex issue that has financial, health, safety and environmental risk aspects. Of particular concern is the clearly unacceptable practice of storing waste, especially clinical waste, in unsecured conditions and in areas accessible to the public. Such instances can be eliminated by management employing sound waste management and monitoring procedures.
8. The Auditor General commissioned Audit Scotland to undertake an audit of waste management in Scottish hospitals which was conducted during 1998/99. The findings of this audit were published in a Baseline Report in 2001, entitled 'Waste management in Scottish hospitals'. In particular, the need to address security of wastes was highlighted

9. In order to meet the recommendations of the 2001 Audit Scotland report and other regulatory and best practice requirements, the Scottish Executive Health Department instructed NHSScotland Bodies to implement the recommendations of the report by means of [HDL\(2002\)43](#) and the associated NHSScotland Property and Environment Forum Waste Management Action Plan 2002.
10. During 2003-04, Audit Scotland undertook a follow-up study to review progress in the key areas identified for action in the 2001 Baseline Report. The Follow-up Report, which was published in May 2005, recognised that there was a positive response at national level to the recommendations in the 2001 Baseline Report and that progress had been made in the development of waste management policies but that there was still room for improvement. As a result, the Follow-up Report made recommendations that require implementation in a co-ordinated manner by the Scottish Government, Health Facilities Scotland and NHSScotland. The Audit Scotland Follow-up Report can be found at:
<http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/media/article.php?id=53> .

Monitoring

11. The Waste Management in NHSScotland Action Plan: 2007 contains monitoring commitments allocated to each of the timetabled actions within the 2007 Action Plan to ensure that the recommendations contained within the Audit Scotland 2005 report are being met. ***Your attention is drawn to these monitoring commitments as Chief Executives have been identified as having such responsibilities for some of the recommended actions.***
12. It is envisaged that Audit Scotland may undertake further follow-up studies to establish what action has been taken and what improvements have been made.

Weblink

13. The Waste Management in NHSScotland Action Plan: 2007 - 'A response to Audit Scotland's May 2005 Follow-up Report *Waste management in Scottish hospitals*' is available for download from the Health Facilities Scotland website under the menu item "Waste/Waste General": <http://www.hfs.scot.nhs.uk/quest> .

Yours sincerely



Alex Smith