

From the Chief Medical Officer
Dr Michael McBride

Mr William McKee
Chief Executive
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Your Ref:
Our Ref:
Date: April 2008

Dear William

**RE: AUDIT OF NPSA PATIENT SAFETY ALERT 22: REDUCING THE RISK OF
HYPONATRAEMIA WHEN ADMINISTERING INTRAVENOUS FLUIDS TO CHILDREN**

Dr Briscoe wrote to you on 27 April 2007 (HSC(SQS) 20/2007) to advise you of the above NPSA Alert, and asking you to ensure an action plan was completed and an audit proforma was returned to the DHSSPS.

Thank you for returning the audit template. It is clear that all HSC Trusts have undertaken significant work to reduce the risks of hyponatraemia when administering intravenous fluids to children. The audit proformas indicate that there is some variation across Trusts in:

- reporting of adverse incidents and near misses;
- audit programmes;
- ensuring that actions are implemented in all areas where children under 16 are treated, including "Adult" services where older children are treated; and
- signature of the proforma by appropriate person.

Your Medical Director has agreed to provide details of Trust audit undertaken/to be undertaken on the prescribing fluids in children. This will be discussed at my next meeting with medical directors on 19 May 2008.

Could you please confirm that the following actions are now complete, or give a date for completion:

- Sodium Chloride 0.18% with glucose 4% has been removed from all general areas that treat children;
- Regional Guidelines distributed to all areas that treat children under the age of 16 years;
- The new regional paediatric fluid wall chart is displayed in appropriate areas, and has replaced the previous wall chart issued in 2002;
- Fluid prescription forms have been reviewed and improved;
- Training for relevant staff undertaken; and
- Incident reporting system established; please give details of the "triggers" for incident reporting in prescribing fluids for children.

I would be grateful for a reply by 2 May 2008. The reply should be sent to

Yours sincerely

DR MICHAEL McBRIDE
Chief Medical Officer

cc: Medical Director of Trust
Chief Executive, RQIA
Roisin Perkins
Dr Heather Neagle