

**Edwina Hart AM MBE**

Minister for Health and Social Services  
Y Gweinidog dros Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol

Our ref: SF/EH/0618/08  
EH/ML/020/08

Your ref:



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government

Chairs of NHS Trusts & Local Health Boards

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3<sup>rd</sup> February 2009

Dear Chair,

**PRE-OPERATIVE ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY**

This letter formally communicates to the service the recording and reporting requirements of pre-operative assessment activity.

Following the formal approval by the Welsh Information Governance and Standards Board (WIGSB) in October 2008 contained in Appendix 1, the recording and reporting of pre-operative assessment will commence from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009. The Data Set Change Notice DSCN(2008) 10 (W) gives notification of the relevant definitions and technical information for the required submission to the National Outpatient Database for Wales.

The Welsh Assembly Government Resources Directorate commissioned a review of Acute Activity currencies used for contracting and costing purposes, as it was believed there were inconsistencies across NHS Wales leading to an inability to compare value for money in a transparent and accountable way. A Task & Finish Group was established, reporting to the Financial Information Strategy (FIS) Reference Cost Group, to review the current position, to develop proposals for consistent currencies, and to seek feedback from the service and stakeholders.

The review of the current currencies revealed a significant disparity across Wales. The recommendations from the Task & Finish Group were subsequently approved

by the Financial Flows (FFR) Board on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2007. This recommended that outpatient activity will be identified and costed on New, Follow-up and Pre-operative assessments, by Specialty.

Research has noted that pre-operative assessments are regarded as good clinical practice as they have the ability to reduce the possibility of patients not attending for procedures, reduce infections, and may reduce the elective length of stays. The lack of a clear standard to record such assessments in the clinic environment means that adherence to this practice can not be assured.

In light of this there is a requirement to ensure uniformity across Trusts in terms of recording and reporting of pre-operative assessments.

### **Actions Required**

Each NHS Trust and Powys LHB is required to;

- Submit monthly via the Outpatient National Database and via the quarterly Bed Statistics (QS1) only those pre-operative assessments relating to activity carried out in outpatient clinics prior to the day of admission.

### **Monitoring Arrangements**

Compliance with these recommendations will be monitored via standard reports, and data quality reports.

Any queries should be directed to:

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Corporate Health Information Programme  
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I will be kept apprised of progress and compliance by my officials



## OUTCOME OF WIGSB REVIEW

<b>TITLE OF STANDARD:</b>	Acute activity currencies for costing – recording and reporting of pre-operative assessments
<b>REF. NO.</b>	IGRN 2008 / 006
<b>STAGE OF STANDARD:</b>	Final Proposal
<b>SUBMITTER OF STANDARD</b>	Anthony Tracey, Project Manager, Corporate Health Information Programme, Programme Management Unit, WAG
<b>SPONSOR OF STANDARD:</b>	Director of Resources, Department of Health and Social Services
<b>APPROVAL HISTORY:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 17<sup>th</sup> January 2008 – Requirement Notification</li> <li>2. 21<sup>st</sup> February 2008 – Development Proposal</li> <li>3. 19<sup>th</sup> June 2008 – Draft Final Proposal</li> </ol>
<b>DATE CONSIDERED BY WIGSB:</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> October 2008
<b>WIGSB COMMENTS:</b>	<p>Members recognised that pre-operative assessments could take place in many different places but the important criterion for this submission was whether it took place in an outpatient clinic held prior to the day of admission.</p> <p>Members highlighted that this piece of work started due to the need to differentiate pre-operative assessments from other outpatient activity so not to disadvantage trusts in their New: Follow-up ratio. For that reason reference to clinic should remain and be clear in the submission. (Para. 5.14)</p> <p>In discussions around long term work, the board highlighted that the outpatient comparative project would look at other activity non traditional activity. That would be carried out as a separate piece of work and should be explained in the scope section of the</p>

	<p>submission. (Para. 5.15)</p> <p>Members highlighted that the ministerial letter and the submission used the term 'Clinic Environment' and the DSCN refers to 'Outpatient Clinic'. It was agreed to remove the term environment to ensure consistent use of terminology.</p> <p>The board agreed that the proposal was fit for purpose and confirmed that the Data Set Change Notice should reflect the first comment above. WIGSB agreed to attempt to fast track the Outcome for inclusion in the ministerial letter submission. (Para 5.30)</p> <p>WIGSB agreed that the submitter could remove track changes on his submission prior to publication on the Information Governance Process Webpage. (Para 5.31)</p>
<p><b>ACTION(S) TO BE TAKEN BY SUBMITTER</b></p>	<p>Include a statement in the scope section of the submission to make it clear that the collection relates to activity carried out in outpatient clinics prior to the day of admission.</p> <p>Include reference to the Outpatient Comparative Project in the submission explaining that it will include work relating to activity not traditionally reported.</p> <p>Remove the term 'environment' in the ministerial letter and the submission as per the DSCN because environment infers physical location as opposed to an administrative arrangement.</p> <p>Liaise with Data Standards regarding the release of the approved Data Set Change Notice and progress submission of Ministerial Letter to the Minister.</p> <p>Forward updated Final Proposal Submission to WIGSB Secretariat for publication on the Information Governance Process Webpage.</p>
<p><b>WIGSB DECISION:</b></p>	<p>Approved subject to agreed actions</p>
<p><b>REVIEW PERIOD:</b></p>	<p>October 2009</p>



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government

To: Chief Executives  
NHS Trusts,  
Health Commission Wales  
Local Health Boards in Wales  
Director, Delivery and Support Unit  
Regional Directors

**Mr Paul Williams**  
**Head, Department for Health & Social Services**  
**Chief Executive, NHS Wales**  
**Pennaeth, Adran Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol**  
**Prif Weithredwraig, GIG Cymru**

Eich cyf/ Your ref:  
Ein cyf / Our ref: SF/EH/0618/08 - EH/ML/020/08

16th February 2009

Dear Colleagues

### PRE-OPERATIVE ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

Please find attached the Minister's letter to NHS Chairs formally announcing the introduction of the requirements for recording and reporting of pre-operative assessment activity.

Each Welsh NHS Trust and Powys LHB is required to take appropriate action set out in the Ministerial letter.

Yours sincerely

**Mr Paul Williams**  
**Head, Department for Health & Social Services**  
**Chief Executive, NHS Wales**  
**Pennaeth, Adran Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol**  
**Prif Weithredwraig, GIG Cymru**



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