

Making Changes

Based on the equality issues you identified in 2.2 and 2.3, what changes did you make or do you intend to make in relation to the policy or decision in order to promote equality of opportunity?

<i>In developing the policy or decision what did you do or change to address the equality issues you identified?</i>	<i>What do you intend to do in future to address the equality issues you identified?</i>
<p>Gender:</p> <p>A Maternity Exemption Certificate will be provided for pregnant women. If a patient provides details of the child, this must be confirmed on NHAIS. If it can be established that the patient would have been entitled to a Maternity Exemption certificate at the time of treatment then the case should be Discontinued. Each case should be assessed on its individual merits. The patient's maternity certificate will be used as evidence of eligibility, if requested the patient just needs to provide this.</p> <p>Dependents:</p> <p>People with caring responsibilities may have to provide information on a patient's behalf – ensure that the process supports such situations. Staff will work closely with carers to ensure that the patient/carer is fully aware of the position with regard to their case, including the criteria for eligibility and the checks carried out to date. Additional time for responses may be allowed where appropriate.</p>	

Disability:

Where a disability may cause difficulty in meeting a deadline allow additional time for this.

However, a telephone helpline has been set up for patients who have difficulty understanding letters issued as part of the debt recovery service.

Patients who have sensory impairment insert the wording below into outgoing letters:

“If you need help, or more time to respond to this letter, have a query regarding this matter, require this information in an alternative language or format (e.g. larger font) or have any special requirements, please contact the Patient Exemptions Officer, by phone on 028 9536 XXXX, or by e-mailing, xxxxxxxx@hscni.net”

Ethnicity:

Patients who have difficulty understanding English, the following will be included in outgoing letters:

“If you need help, or more time to respond to this letter, have a query regarding this matter, require this information in an alternative language or format (e.g. larger font) or have any special requirements, please contact the Patient Exemptions Officer, by phone on 028 9536 XXXX, or by e-mailing, xxxxxxxx@hscni.net”

Ethnicity

If the project is mainstreamed into normal service provision, the team will consider translating the following paragraph into the top 10 most popularly requested languages, for inclusion on any public facing materials:

“If you require this information in an alternative language or format (e.g. larger font) or have any special requirements, please contact the Patient Exemptions Officer, by phone

In the circumstances when Mail has been returned and we have advised FPS, the case goes into "Medical Audit". If after 12 months we do not have any further information on NHAIS and the patient is still a Deducted Patient, then the case will normally be Discontinued. Each case will be assessed on its individual merits.

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