From the Deputy Chief Medical Officer
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Department of Health
An Roinn Sláinte
Männystrie O Poustie
www.health-ni.gov.uk

Reference: HSC (SQSD) 6/17 **Date of Issue: 8th March 2017**

WATER SYSTEMS: HEALTH TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM 04-01: SAFE WATER IN HEALTHCARE PREMISES

For Action:

Chief Executives HSC Trusts
Chief Executive HSCB/PHA
Chief Executive RQIA
Chief Executive, NIMDTA

For Information:
Distribution as listed at the end of this Circular.

Related documents:

Health Technical Memorandum (HTM) 04-01: Safe Water in Healthcare Premises.
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hot-and-cold-water-supply-storage-and-distribution-systems-for-healthcare-premises

Superseded documents:
HSS (MD) 5/2014

Implementation: Immediate

DoH Safety and Quality Circulars including Patient Safety Alerts can be accessed on:
https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/safety-and-quality-standards/safety-and-quality-standards-circulars

Summary

The purpose of this letter is to alert HSC organisations to publication of Health Technical Memorandum (HTM) 04-01: Safe Water in Healthcare Premises. This advice supersedes the technical guidance in HSS (MD) 5/2014, issued on 10th February 2014. This letter is available on the Publications area of the DoH website - https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications.

Action

Chief Executives of HSC Trusts should:

- Disseminate this circular to all relevant staff including: Infection Prevention and Control Leads, Staff in Augmented Care Units, Consultant Microbiologists, Estates and Facilities Managers and those with responsibility for the safe operation of water distribution systems within the Trust and all other relevant staff

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

Chief Executive, HSCB and PHA should:

- Disseminate this letter to all relevant HSCB/PHA staff
- Consider it through the normal HSCB/PHA processes for assuring implementation of safety and quality alerts.

Chief Executive, RQIA should:

- Disseminate this circular to all appropriate Independent Sector providers.

Chief Executive, NIMDTA should:

- Disseminate this letter to doctors in training in all relevant specialities.

Background

Health Technical Memoranda (HTMs) give comprehensive advice and guidance on the design, installation and operation of specialised building and engineering technology used in the delivery of health and social care.

The revised HTM 04-01 Safe Water in Healthcare Premises is published in four parts:-

- Part A: Design Installation and Commissioning
- Part B: Operational Management
- Part C: *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* – advice for augmented care units
- Supplement: Performance specification D 08. Thermostatic mixing valves (healthcare premises)

The suite of guidance documents is available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hot-and-cold-water-supply-storage-and-distribution-systems-for-healthcare-premises

The revised HTM 04-01 draws together and updates the previous guidance and includes recommendations for the safe management of water systems, via the integration of the principle of Water Safety Groups and Water Safety Plans (first introduced in the HTM 04-01 *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* addendum published in February 2014) and how to manage and minimise the health risks from various aspects, ranging from clinical risks, microbial and chemical contamination, changes to the water system, resilience of the water supply etc. It also introduces a stronger emphasis on staff competencies and the implantation of water hygiene awareness training.

This HTM has been reviewed by DoH (NI) for its application by HSC providers, taking into consideration the specific technical guidance developed for use in Northern Ireland as set out in HSS(MD)5/2014, 10th February 2014, which included

specific amendments to reflect local action taken to implement a number of recommendations in the RQIA interim and final reports of the *Independent Review of Incidents of Pseudomonas aeruginosa Infection in Neonatal Units in Northern Ireland* and additional operational practice issues and accountability arrangements related to the management of water systems in HSC facilities which differ from those outlined in HTM 04-01.

The review has concluded that the principles set out in the revised HTM are broadly accepted as being directly applicable to HSC providers and HSS (MD) 5/2014 has therefore been withdrawn.

Readers should note that the HTM reflects the accountability, governance and legislative arrangements applicable to the NHS in England which do not apply to Health and Social Care organisations in Northern Ireland. Health and Social Care organisations are therefore advised to refer to the appropriate Northern Ireland legislation, accountability and governance arrangements.

The gov.uk website allows users to register to receive announcements on new publications and revisions to guidance such as Health Technical Memorandum. To subscribe to announcements, select Announcements at the bottom of the gov.uk webpage (https://www.gov.uk/government/announcements) and use the filter list to select your area of interest before selecting to receive announcements by email or by feed and complete the subscription process.

Enquiries:

Any enquiries about the content of this circular should be addressed to:

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Yours sincerely

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Distributed for Information to:

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Director of Nursing and Allied Health Professions, PHA
Director of Public Health/Medical Director, PHA

Dir of Performance Management & Service Improvement, HSCB
Safety and Quality Alerts Team, HSC Board
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