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Issued monthly, NPAG News provides information on recent NPAG activity and forthcoming events. Please forward NPAG News to all of your colleagues who may have an interest in any of our activities.

THIS MONTH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Improving Hospital Cleanliness
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	EPDN workshops
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Clinical Professional Development for Occupational Health Nurses
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Snippets
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Walter Linkhorn Retires
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NPAG Activity Programme
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Murphy's Law

Improving Hospital Cleanliness

The Prime Minister and Secretary of State recently announced a series of measures aimed at improving hospital cleanliness, including increasing the number of Matrons and giving more powers to nurses.

Health Secretary Alan Johnson has announced detailed regional funding for deep cleaning and confirmed the date by which all NHS hospitals in England will have carried out a deep clean. In a statement to the House of Commons, the Health Secretary told MPs that all Trusts will have to submit detailed deep clean plans, including costs, to their Primary Care Trusts and Strategic Health Authorities (SHAs). Deep cleaning is one element of a wider range of measures introduced by the Government, which all Trusts need to take to tackle healthcare associated infections and ensure patient safety.

Foundation Trusts will also be invited to agree plans and funding for additional deep cleaning with local commissioners, together with local arrangements for checking the agreed work has been carried out. SHAs will, in turn, be expected to report progress across their regions to the Department of Health.

All ten regions have allocated dedicated funding to support the deep clean. Infection control is a complex problem that needs a range of solutions. There is no single remedy.

Progress on the deep clean programme and new details on reporting were unveiled as the results of the latest Patient Environment and Action Team (PEAT) inspection were published by the National Patient Safety Agency. The inspections measure patient satisfaction with a range of areas including food and aspects of privacy and dignity, as well as cleanliness and the patient environment.

The figures published also show that in 2007, 98 per cent of hospitals were rated excellent, good or acceptable: up from 95 per cent in 2006. This is against a more rigorous process in 2007 than for 2006.

Healthcare-associated infections cost the NHS in Wales £50m per year and affect 6 per cent of hospital patients, says a report by the auditor general for Wales. This is fewer than in England and Scotland but more than Northern Ireland.

EPDN Workshops

Following the success of the NPAG 'Hospital Evacuation - Building Capacity' workshop in Leicester on 22nd May 2007, we initiated a further four workshops under the EPDN series name – Emergency Preparedness Development Network. The first of the four workshops planned in the EPDN series – **EPDN 1** - was held in London on 15th November entitled, 'Warning, Informing and Advising the Public – responding to a contamination alert'. Speakers came from The Health Protection Agency, University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust; Nottingham University Hospital NHS Trust, Essex County Council and the BBC. Plans are now being finalised for the next workshop in the series - **EPDN 2** – scheduled for the Midlands in March 2008. The workshop is entitled, 'Building Community Resilience and Reassurance' and speakers have been invited from Hertfordshire Constabulary, London Prepared, Essex County Council and the voluntary sector. For further information, please contact John King: john.king@npag.org.uk

Clinical Professional Development for Occupational Health Nurses

Since 2005, the NPAG has organised five national clinical professional development, training programmes for occupational health nurses. Dates have now been agreed for two further training programmes to commence in April 2008. The courses consist of a series of six practical training modules over 6 months.

For further information, please contact Gemma Bergamini: gemma@npag.org.uk

SNIPPETS

CBI Condemns Government Retreat On Health Centres

The CBI has expressed disappointment over the government's scaling back of a second independent sector treatment centre (ISTC) programme, which was announced last week. The CBI believes that ISTCs should continue to be supported by the government as they are a key part of the reform programme, reducing waiting lists, providing high quality care, improving productivity and facilitating patients' right to choose a preferred healthcare provider. Policy contact: <mailto:melanie.greenall@cbi.org.uk>

NHS Productivity Debated

CBI members and public sector officials met with the Minister of State for Health Services, Ben Bradshaw MP, recently to discuss key priorities for healthcare reform in the run up to the next general election, including shifting the focus to illness prevention in the primary care sector, increasing NHS productivity and improving the quality of health services. The Minister also endorsed the recently published CBI report which recommends ways to make GP services more patient responsive. Policy contact: <mailto:melanie.greenall@cbi.org.uk>

Life is Not Risk Free

Judith Hackitt, Chair of the Health and Safety Commission (HSC) has sent out a clear message to those who hide behind so called health and safety rules to stop children from enjoying a normal childhood. The new HSC Chair said, "Life is not risk free, we know that. Our children encounter risks every day and learning to manage risks is an essential part of growing up. Through educational activities and play we want children to enjoy themselves whilst staying safe."

"All too often 'health and safety' is blamed for imposing unjustifiable bureaucracy on teachers. I do not want to see bureaucratic actions taken in the name of health and safety. As the regulator, the HSC wants to see risks managed sensibly and responsibly, not eliminated. Most education authorities are extremely sensible on issues like this, but it is important every authority continues to adopt a sensible approach."

Threats to Corporate Networks

A global survey questioned 208 organisations and found that nearly half of companies believe office-based employees pose a greater threat to the corporate network than remote workers. The survey, conducted by Sophos, reveals that 44 per cent of businesses believe that, out of all users, their desktop-based employees are their biggest concern, despite these workers using similar devices and continually connecting to the network. Irresponsible behaviour, using peer-to-peer applications, instant messaging software, USB sticks and incorrectly configured computers can all contribute to network risks, according to Sophos.

"It's concerning how many companies are unaware of non-compliant machines being used on their network, even though they may be permanently connected," said Graham Cluley, senior technology consultant at Sophos, in a statement. Remote workers were another big concern for company bosses, with 31 per cent of respondents feeling they are the biggest threat, compared to a quarter that considers external contractors or guest workers the greatest security risk. "Mobile workers and guests can be a real bugbear for IT administrators trying to safeguard corporate networks, particularly when they're using different devices, security software and operating systems. They can inadvertently expose the network to a myriad of security threats," Cluley added.

PDF Spam Increases by 20%

PDF spam is an increasing problem and now accounts for around 20% of spam. The damage that spam can cause any business should never be underestimated. Efficiency, productivity and profitability can all take a serious hit if electronic junk email gains access to inboxes, with valuable time and effort eaten up in identifying and deleting unwanted messages. MessageLabs stops PDF spam using several different broad techniques. For more information about MessageLabs Anti-Spam service or a free trial, visit www.messagelabs.com

New Kite Mark from Direct Marketing association

The Direct Marketing Association plans to launch a new kite marked scheme to recognise best practice in paper-based direct marketing. The standard will require participating organisations to use recyclable materials and to ensure the upkeep of their data to avoid unnecessary or unwanted mailings. The kite mark, which is being developed with DMA members and the British Standards Institution, will be the first environmental performance standard in direct marketing.

Walter Linkhorn Retires

Many of you will have met Walter Linkhorn, as the facilitator of an NPAG best value group, at an NPAG event or in his former life as Chief Executive of Pennine Consultancy. Walter officially retired on 30th September 2007 and has been presented with a crystal decanter, wine glasses and a bottle of wine by his colleagues in appreciation of all his work for the NPAG over many years. We all wish Walter well in his retirement.

NPAG ACTIVITY PROGRAMME

TRAINING WORKSHOPS Programme of forthcoming NPAG training workshops (CPD Approved): -

- **BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANS**

Tuesday 22nd January 2008 in London

For further information, please contact Gemma Bergamini: gemma@npag.org.uk

- **MAJAX – The Hospital Major Incident Teamwork Experience**

Friday 7th December 2007 in South West England

Friday 18th January 2008 in Yorkshire and Humber Region

Monday 11th February 2008 in Leicester

Friday 14th March 2008 in South East Coast, England

For further information, please contact Marie Baldwin: marie@npag.org.uk

- **Clinical Professional Development for Occupational Health Nurses**

A series of six practical training modules over 6 months, commences April 2008: -

- Spirometry
- Sickness Absence Management Referrals
- Health and safety
- Management of Physical Hazards
- Pre Employment Clearance
- Audiometry

For further information, please contact Gemma Bergamini: gemma@npag.org.uk

NATIONAL EVENTS Programme of forthcoming NPAG events (CPD Approved): -

- **The Productive Ward Workshop**

Winter 2008

- **LEAN – Workshop**

Winter 2008

- **Waste Management – Meet the Contractors Workshop**

Winter 2008

- **4th NPAG National EBME Workshop**

Winter 2008, London (Postponed from 13th December 2007)

- **SUSTAINABILITY Workshop 2**

Winter 2008

- **Facilities Management – Experts in Supporting the Experts**

Winter 2008

- **Building Community Resilience and Reassurance (EPDN 2 Workshop)**

Winter 2008

- **Preparing for WEEE Workshop**

Winter 2008

- **Waste Management in Community Healthcare Workshop**

Spring 2008

- **Patient Safety Workshop**

Spring 2008

- **Implementing NICE Guidance Workshop**

Spring 2008

- **EPDN 3 Workshop**

Spring 2008

For further information on all NPAG events please e-mail: marie@npag.org.uk

BEST VALUE GROUPS

NPAG facilitates a series of national benchmarking clubs/best value groups within the NHS. Each programme of meetings enables peer groups of like-minded managers to have the opportunity to network; benchmark and compare services; review processes; provide networking opportunities; share experience; identify innovative and good working practice; and continuously develop and improve their services.

December 2007 to February 2008 meeting calendar: -

4 th December 2007:	Security Services final meeting (2007/08 round)
5 th December 2007:	Theatre Services meeting 2 of 4 (2007/08 round)
6 th December 2007:	EBME (South) meeting 4 of 4 (2007 round)
6 th December 2007:	District Nursing meeting 1 of 4 (2007/08 round)
6 th December 2007:	Sterile Services meeting 3 of 4 (2007/08 round)
6 th December 2007:	Porters meeting 1 of 4 (2007/08 round)
11 th December 2007:	Shared Services Development Network meeting 3 of 4 (2007/08 round)
11 th December 2007:	Telecoms meeting 3 of 4 (2007/08 round)
11 th December 2007:	Health & safety/Risk Managers meeting 1 of 4 (2007/08 round)
13 th December 2007:	Estates Services meeting 4 of 4 (2007 round)
9 th January 2008:	Occupational Health meeting 1 of 4 (2008 round)
17 th January 2008:	Bank & Agency Staff meeting 1 of 4 (2007/2008 round)
18 th January 2008:	EBME (North) meeting 4 of 4 (2007/08 round)
31 st January 2008:	Community & Mental Health Facilities meeting 1 of 4 (2008 round)
5 th February 2008:	Facilities meeting 1 of 6 (2008/09 round)
6 th February 2008:	Non Patient Hospital Transport meeting 4 of 4 (2007/08 round)
7 th February 2008:	Catering meeting 3 of 4 (2007/08 round)
7 th February 2008:	Community Hospital Services meeting 1 of 4 (2007/08 round)
7 th February 2008:	Waste Management meeting 1 of 4 (2008 round)
26 th February 2008:	Telecoms meeting 4 of 4 (2007/08 round)

For further information please e-mail: gemma@npag.org.uk or marie@npag.org.uk

BENCHMARKING

Many NPAG Best Value Groups are conducting national benchmarking surveys to identify areas for potential improvement and financial benefits. If you are interested in participating in any of the following exercises, please contact the named BVG Facilitator.

TOPIC	BVG	CONTACT
Catering Costs & Trust Profiles	Catering	fwj60@hotmail.com
Restaurant Prices	Catering	fwj60@hotmail.com
Hospitality & Functions	Catering	fwj60@hotmail.com
Sickness	Catering	fwj60@hotmail.com
Transport Costs	Non Patient Transport	fwj60@hotmail.com
Insurance Costs	Non Patient Transport	fwj60@hotmail.com
Duties & Responsibilities	Non Patient Transport	fwj60@hotmail.com
Activity Profile & Response Times	EBME (North)	fwj60@hotmail.com
Quality Control Information	Facilities (Community & MH)	fwj60@hotmail.com
Community Hospital Services	Community Hospital Services	john.king@npag.org.uk
Health & Safety/Risk Management	H&S/Risk Management	john.king@npag.org.uk

NPAG MEMBERSHIP

Full details of NPAG Membership options and fees can be obtained from gemma@npag.org.uk or marie@npag.org.uk or telephone **01245 544 600**.

Murphy's Law: Any tool dropped while repairing a car will roll underneath to the exact centre

Telephone enquiries to: 01245 544 600

Fax: 01245 544 610

The NPAG (National Performance Advisory Group) is an NHS organisation that promotes benchmarking and best value within the NHS, throughout the UK. The NPAG operates as a self-financed, trading unit within the East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust. If you would prefer not to receive future copies of NPAG News, please reply to this e-mail and write **REMOVE** in the header.
