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**AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT: THE MANAGEMENT AND DELIVERY OF  
HOSPITAL CLEANING SERVICES IN WALES**

Thank you for your letter of 28 January 2004 regarding the response from the Welsh Assembly Government to the Audit Committee's report on the management and delivery of hospital cleaning services in Wales. You sought the Auditor General's advice on the contents of the response and on any follow-up action which the Committee might take.

In its report, the Committee made twelve recommendations, eight to NHS trusts, three to the NHS Wales Department and one to the Trust Facilities Forum for Wales. The Welsh Assembly Government has responded positively to the Committee's report, agreeing with all twelve recommendations.

The key development has been the introduction of a set of National Cleaning Standards, issued to all health bodies in July 2003, and the planned introduction of an operational Cleaning Manual which will supplement the standards. The introduction of these standards underpin the successful implementation of recommendations i), iii), iv), v), vii), viii), ix) and x). Furthermore, as the response to recommendation xii) reports, the standards will apply not only to the 130 hospitals within the NHS in Wales but also to all other trust-managed facilities where healthcare activity is undertaken. The Committee may also be encouraged to learn from the responses to recommendations ii) and xii) that the framework for monitoring cleaning is being improved, with hospital cleaning data being captured in the Estates and Facilities Performance Management System and introduction of a more rigorous monitoring system involving the trusts, Local Health Boards, the NHS Wales Department and Assembly regional offices.

This progress is very welcome; the onus is now on trusts and the NHS Wales Department to ensure that they make the most of the systems that have been put in place to ensure that cleaning within Welsh hospitals is properly managed.

Against this background there is no need for the Committee to take any further action at this point. The Auditor General will continue to monitor this area and will bring any matters of concern to the Committee as appropriate.

I do hope that you find this response helpful.

Yours sincerely,

**HELEN KIRKBY**

**Private Secretary to the Auditor General for Wales**