

Health and Social Services Committee

HSS(2)- 09-06(p1)

Meeting date: Wednesday 24th May 2006

Venue: Committee Room 2, Senedd, National Assembly for Wales

Title: Annual Report of the Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (2004-05)

Purpose

1. To present the Annual Report of the Healthcare Inspectorate Wales for 2004-05 to the Committee.
2. To provide an opportunity to discuss the work taken forward by the Inspectorate in 2005-06.

Summary and Recommendations

3. To note and comment on the Annual Report of Healthcare Inspectorate Wales 2004-05.

Background

4. The report was published in November 2005 and widely circulated with copies placed on the Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW) web-site. As this is the first Annual Report for HIW an emphasis is placed on the setting up of the Inspectorate as well as a look forward to 2005-06
5. HIW's purpose is to promote continuous improvement in the quality and safety of patient care within NHS Wales. In taking this forward, it undertakes inspections of and investigations into the provisions of healthcare commissioned and provided by Welsh NHS bodies. The HIW inspection framework includes:
 - Inspecting NHS bodies and service providers against national standards, agreements and clinical governance guidance;
 - Assessing the management arrangements in place to deliver clinical and NHS services;
 - Assessing the quality of NHS services across agencies/sectors.
6. As part of the above framework HIW takes into consideration and forms a view on the availability of healthcare services, the quality and effectiveness of the service and the economy and effectiveness of its provision.
7. HIW is a division within the Department for Public Services and Performance and enjoys a certain level of independence and organisational safeguards to ensure no undue interference in its business and

decision making. HIW's independence is maintained through:

- its Chief Executive having editorial control of reports and the duty to publish these reports;
- generation of its own work programme;
- its Chief Executive's right of independent access to the Minister for Health & Social Care.

The 2004-05 Inspection Programme

8. In line with the 2004-05 published inspection programme inspections of the following organisations were commenced during the year:

- Ceredigion and Mid Wales NHS Trust
- Torfaen Local Health Board;
- Powys Local Health Board;
- Conwy and Denbighshire NHS Trust's Mental Health Services;
- Cancer Networks in Wales.

9. The inspection methodology adopted was based in particular upon the clinical governance requirements as set out in the Welsh Health Circular (WHC) (2003) 69: Annual Clinical Governance Reports 1 April 2002 to 31 March 2003, and Future Requirements, with versions tailored specifically to NHS trusts, local health boards and service networks.

10. In line with statutory requirements individual reports were published for each organisation highlighting key findings and making where appropriate recommendations for change. Each organisation is required to submit an action plan demonstrating how they will take forward the recommendations made by HIW and Regional Offices monitor their implementation. A number of themes emerged from these reviews and they have been key to the development of HIW's 2006-07 Review Programme.

11. HIW are together with policy and performance management colleagues looking at mechanisms for addressing these issues.

12. With the introduction of the Healthcare Standards for Wales in 2005, the approach from 2007 to assess NHS organisations and services against these Standards, with more emphasis on self assessment and HIW will develop an annual review and assurance process for all NHS organisations. There will be a stronger focus on patients', service users' and the public's view about NHS Services. In addition, HIW plans to carry out more thematic reviews in collaboration with other inspectorates to focus on patient pathways and patients' experience.

Investigations and Special Reviews

13. During the year a number of issues were referred to HIW for consideration. However, none of these

led to a full investigation as they were deemed, following screening, to have been appropriately dealt with by the relevant organisation.

14. A review of medium secure adult psychiatric units in Wales was started in December 2004 in response to a request from Ann Lloyd, Director of the Welsh Assembly Government's Health & Social Care Department. The request for the review followed on from the publication in November 2004 of the independent external review into the homicide committed in March 2003 by Paul Khan, a mental health service user. The review was undertaken jointly with Health Commission Wales to consider the adequacy of discharge planning arrangements for patients with mental health problems from the four mental health medium secure units in Wales, as well as reviewing the quality of services and patient care within these units. The report was published in October 2005 to coincide with World Mental Health Day.

Recruitment of Peer and Lay Reviewers

15. In November 2004, HIW advertised in healthcare journals and the general press for peer and lay inspectors. The response to the adverts was overwhelming, with over 400 applications received. In order to ensure that the recruitment process was as equitable, fair and open as possible, it was conducted in line with the principles of the Commissioner of Public Appointment's Code of Practice.

New Responsibilities and Work Streams

16. Discussions were on going throughout 2004-05 in relation to HIW taking on more responsibilities commensurate with its role and statutory powers. These included:

- The provision of the health expertise into routine inspections of Youth Offending Teams in Wales;
- The provision of the health expertise into routine inspections of publicly managed prisons in Wales;
- Compliance reviews against the Ionising Radiation (Medical Exposure) Regulations (2001);
- The provision of the health expertise into Prison and Probation Ombudsman investigations into deaths in prison;
- The regulation and inspection of independent healthcare organisations.

17. The latter area of work will have by far the biggest impact on HIW in terms of workload and responsibilities.

Compliance

18. The Annual Report fulfils the duty of the Assembly, delegated to the Chief Executive of HIW under the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003 to publish a report on its functions under Chapter 4 of the Act.

Conclusion

19. Members of the Health and Social Services Committee are invited to provide comments on the report.

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Minister for Health and Social Services

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