

AUDIT COMMITTEE AC 04-02(p5)

Date: 16 May 2002

Time: 2.00pm

Venue: Committee Room 2, National Assembly Building

Title: Note on the main improvements needed against the IT strategy - requested at the Audit Committee evidence session into the Management of the NHS Estate in Wales on 24 January 2002.

Where are the main improvements needed against the IT Strategy?

The Information Task & Finish Group, established as part of the implementation of 'Improving Health In Wales' had as its key deliverable a product previously described as the 'National IM&T Development Plan'. The Task & Finish Group has completed 'Informing Healthcare' - a Programme of Strategic Actions. The Task & Finish group commended the Welsh Assembly Government to develop this document into both Assembly policy and an implementation programme. Given Ministerial authorisation, this work will commence shortly and should be completed within this financial year.

There are two components of the 'Early Actions' proposed by 'Informing Healthcare' that are relevant to this question.

The first is that a baseline of the state of current information systems in Trusts will be collated during the next few months, building on earlier work initiated as part of the implementation of 'Better Information - Better Health'. The results of this exercise, combined with intelligence from the ICT Foundation Programme for General Medical Practices, will provide a comprehensive status report on 'IT Systems' in NHS Wales.

The second is that all organisations in Wales should be required to go through a programme of organisational readiness activity to enable them to be ready to move to the next generation of clinically focused information systems. The outputs from this activity will identify how effectively current information services are operating.

May 2002