

We're back

With the positive reaction to the newsletter in December 2003, it became clear that it was helpful for lay reviewers to keep in touch with the wider issues which have relevance for them.

This is our second edition to help that process.

Rosemary's maternity cover

Interviews have taken place and Wladyslaw Mejka has been appointed, initially on a 6 month contract, to provide maternity cover for Rosemary. Wladyslaw took up his post on 20 April while Rosemary left in the middle of this month to prepare for the arrival of her second child.

Wladyslaw comes with what is, in his own words, an unusual career path and an equally unusual hairstyle. Starting as a chartered surveyor, his working life has since embraced life as a trade union official, working with drug users and prostitutes and, more recently, setting up and running a housing charity working with and for disabled people. He has a passion for person-centred working and believes the public involvement work of NHS QIS will be critical to the future of the NHSScotland. This will be grown to involve ever more people in the work of NHS QIS.

2004 Conference

The Lay Reviewers' Conference held on 10 February at the Holiday Inn, Edinburgh, was very successful. A formal report on the conference has been written up and is being prepared for publication. Copies will be sent to all lay reviewers and to the NHS QIS Board. It includes a summary of your valuable feedback and notes on the four morning presentations. This should prove useful for those who were unable to attend.



Apart from the report, the shared experience revealed a consensus that it would benefit all of us to stage a one day event on a regular basis. This being the case, we would want to use your feedback as the basis for shaping the content and focus of the next conference. For example, many of you were disappointed not to have had the opportunity to attend more than one workshop and many would have liked more time to network. We will look at the idea and reach a decision by late summer.

Contact the Public Involvement Team

Wladyslaw Mejka
Tel: 0131 623 4604
wladyslaw.mejka@nhshealthquality.org

Anne Miller
Tel: 0131 623 4328
anne.miller@nhshealthquality.org

Forthcoming Peer Review Visits

June 2004 – March 2005 : Anaesthesia

September 2004 – May 2005 : Stroke Services

September 2004 – July 2005 : Learning Disabilities [this is a pilot involving people with learning disabilities being the lay reviewers]



Nine members of the public successfully completed training for peer review visits earlier this month. We will of course be relying on some of you to 'buddy' them and offer any support they may need during upcoming visits.

Some of you have expressed concern at NHS QIS not offering you enough to do. We are finding that besides offering peer review visits, we are receiving increasing requests from external agencies for lay representatives to assist them with specific tasks. While this will give lay reviewers who want it some added variety to their involvement, we may need to review the content of our training programme to ensure that it reflects any changing demands made on reviewers.

Mental Health Services

As part of the continuing effort to ensure we involve a diversity of people in the work of NHS QIS, we recently attempted to recruit an additional member of the Public Involvement Team to focus on the area of mental health services. The aim is to help NHS QIS staff involve service users and carers in drafting the standards for these services, as well as being involved in performance reviews.

For a variety of reasons we were not able to get someone into the post. The feedback from the interview experience will be used to review the core elements of the job before re-advertising.

Two-way networking

We want this newsletter to reflect your thoughts and experiences.

If you have something to share with other lay reviewers, drop a 'bite-size' note of about 100 words to Anne Miller and we'll try to make sure it features in the next edition.

Exceptions to the rule

Just a reminder to all lay reviewers that while we are delighted to ensure that all your travel, accommodation and other practical arrangements are tailored to suit your particular needs when on NHS QIS visits, it helps us if you let us know well in advance what your needs might be.

This ensures that the payment of expenses is not hindered and finance colleagues can be made aware of non-standard arrangements. Both Anne and Wladyslaw will be pleased to clarify these issues with you.

New NHS QIS structure

As of April 2004, a new structure was put in place. There are now four NHS QIS directorates (previously two) :

- Guidance and Standards
- Performance Assessment and Practice Development (Public Involvement is within this directorate)
- Planning & Resource Management
- Nursing