

# Criteria for assessing core standards in 2007/2008

## Ambulance trusts

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# Overview

These are the 2007/2008 criteria for assessing core standards for trusts that provide ambulance services. As in previous years, we have set out our criteria as “elements” for each of the core standards.

## What has changed?

One main change is that this year we have produced separate criteria documents, one for each type of trust (i.e. acute and specialist services, mental health and learning disability services, ambulance services, and primary care trusts). Each trust will need to consider the sets of criteria relevant to the services they provide.

The other main change is that, as we detailed in our publication *The annual health check in 2007/2008: Assessing and rating the NHS*, we have rationalised the elements further, and where possible, reduced the number that apply to each trust.

In particular, we have:

- focused on the outcomes of the standards. We have revised some of the elements to set out more clearly the outcomes required for each standard – particularly those that affect patients. We expect trusts’ boards to consider these outcomes when reviewing their compliance.

For example, in standard C14c (learning from complaints), the second element now states “demonstrable improvements are made to service delivery as a result of concerns and complaints from patients, relatives and carers”. So trusts’ boards will wish to be assured that service improvements have occurred

- simplified the wording of the elements. We have done this by reducing the number of the references to guidance and removing all references that we had previously asked trusts to “take into account”. These are now listed in appendix two as background information but they will not be the basis on which the Healthcare Commission makes judgments in inspection
- reduced the number of elements for some standards, particularly where trusts have told us that there was duplication, for example, in the evidence needed for a number of different elements
- increased our reliance on the findings of others. For trusts that are taking part in the NHS Litigation Authority’s pilot assessments for the new risk management standards for ambulance trusts, trusts’ boards can rely on this information at level 2 and above for the

relevant standards. Once the NHS Litigation Authority has rolled out its revised standards to all ambulance trusts we will rely on this information for the 2008/2009 assessment for the relevant core standards

We have detailed all of the changes to the elements for 2007/2008 in a separate document, available on the Healthcare Commission's website [www.healthcarecommission.org.uk](http://www.healthcarecommission.org.uk).

## How should trusts consider the elements?

Trusts' boards should consider the level of compliance required by the elements when considering the extent to which they meet a core standard. In keeping with previous years, boards should determine whether they are compliant with a standard by assessing whether they have "reasonable assurance" that they have been meeting it, without "significant lapses", in the period 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008.

### Reasonable assurance

Reasonable assurance, by definition, is not absolute assurance. Reasonable assurance must be based on documentary evidence that can stand up to internal and external challenge.

The core standards are not optional and describe a level of service which is acceptable and which must be universal. We expect each trust's objectives to include compliance with the core standards, and that the organisation will use its routine processes for establishing assurance.

Trusts' boards should consider **all** aspects of their services when judging whether they have reasonable assurance that they are meeting the elements.

Where ambulance services provide services directly, they have the main responsibility for ensuring that they meet the core standards. However, their responsibility also extends to those services that they provide via partnerships or other forms of contractual arrangement (e.g. where human resource functions are provided through a shared service). When such arrangements are in place, each organisation should have reasonable assurance that those services meet the standards.

## Significant lapse

Trusts' boards should decide whether a given lapse is significant or not by considering the extent of risk to patients, staff and the public, and the duration and impact of any lapse. There is no simple formula to determine whether a lapse is significant. A simple quantification of risk, such as the death of a patient or the loss of more than £1 million, cannot provide a complete answer.

Determining whether a lapse is significant depends on the standard under consideration, the circumstances in which a trust operates (such as the services they provide, their functions or the population they serve), and the extent of the lapse (e.g. the level of risk to patients, the duration of the lapse and the range of services affected).

## Equality, diversity and human rights

One of the Healthcare Commission's strategic goals is to encourage respect within services for people's human rights and for their diversity, and to promote action to reduce inequalities in people's health and experiences of healthcare. In line with the intention of *Standards for better health*, we expect that healthcare organisations will interpret and implement the standards in ways which challenge discrimination, promote equity of access and quality of services, reduce inequalities in health, and respect and protect human rights.

More specifically, core standard C7e asks trusts to challenge discrimination, promote equality and respect human rights. The second element of the standard focuses on how the trust is promoting equality, including by publishing information specified by statute in relation to race, disability and gender. We have run two audits of trusts' websites, looking for this information, and we are concerned that many trusts are still not complying with the legislation, particularly in relation to race equality. In 2007/2008, therefore, if we discover that a trust has not published the information required under the Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended) or the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, we will be minded to qualify its declaration of compliance with standard C7e.

## Using the findings of others

Our intention is to increase our use of the findings of others in the core standards assessment for ambulance services. We will use information from our Concordat partners, and from other bodies, in three particular ways: as adequate assurance that an element or a standard has been met for the year, secondly, to answer specific lines of enquiry in inspection and thirdly, we will continue to use information in our cross checking process to target trusts for inspection.

The NHS Litigation Authority's standards for ambulance services are being piloted in 2007/2008, and therefore we will not be able to rely on this information for all ambulance trusts until 2008/2009. However, for those trusts taking part as pilot sites in 2007/2008, the trust's board may wish to rely on the NHS Litigation Authority's findings at level 2 and above, as adequate assurance for specific standards when making its declaration. We have set out, as part of appendix one, the standards for which information from the NHS Litigation Authority, at level 2 and above, provides an appropriate level of assurance.

We will continue, where relevant, to use information from the Audit Commission's Auditor's Local Evaluation (ALE) to answer specific lines of enquiry in inspection.

In appendix one, we have also set out further details of the findings of others that we are using in the core standards assessment 2007/2008.

# First domain: Safety

**Domain outcome:** Patient safety is enhanced by the use of healthcare processes, working practices and systemic activities that prevent or reduce the risk of harm to patients.

## Core standard C1

## Elements

Healthcare organisations protect patients through systems that:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>a) identify and learn from all patient safety incidents and other reportable incidents, and make improvements in practice based on local and national experience and information derived from the analysis of incidents</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1 Incidents are reported locally and to the National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) via the National Reporting and Learning System</li><li>2 Reported incidents are analysed to seek to identify root causes, relevant trends and likelihood of repetition</li><li>3 Demonstrable improvements in practice are made to prevent reoccurrence of incidents as a result of information arising from the analysis of local incidents and from the NPSA's national analysis of incidents</li></ol> |
| <p>b) ensure that patient safety notices, alerts and other communications concerning patient safety, which require action, are acted upon within required timescales</p>   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1 All communications, including drug alerts, issued by the Safety Alert Broadcast System (SABS) are implemented within the defined timescales, in accordance with <i>Chief executive's bulletin article</i> (Gateway 2326)</li></ol>  |



## Core standard C2

## Elements

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Healthcare organisations protect children by following national child protection guidelines within their own activities and in their dealings with other organisations

- 1 Effective processes are in place for identifying, reporting and taking action on child protection issues in accordance with *Working together to safeguard children* (HM Government, 2006)
- 2 The ambulance service works with partners to protect children as set out in *Working together to safeguard children* (HM Government, 2006)
- 3 Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks are conducted for all staff and students with access to children in the normal course of their duties in accordance with *CRB disclosures in the NHS* (NHS Employers, 2004)

## Core standard C3

## Elements

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Healthcare organisations protect patients by following National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) interventional procedures guidance

This standard will not be assessed for ambulance services for 2007/2008

## Core standard C4

## Elements

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Healthcare organisations keep patients, staff and visitors safe by having systems to ensure that:

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|--|---|
| <p>a) the risk of healthcare acquired infection to patients is reduced, with particular emphasis on high standards of hygiene and cleanliness, achieving year on year reductions in Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA)</p> | <p>1 The ambulance service has systems to ensure the risk of healthcare associated infection is reduced in accordance with <i>The Health Act 2006 Code of Practice for the Prevention and Control of Health Care Associated Infections</i> (Department of Health, 2006)</p>   |
| <p>b) all risks associated with the acquisition and use of medical devices are minimised</p>   | <p>1 The ambulance service has systems in place to minimise the risks associated with the acquisition and use of medical devices in accordance with guidance issued by the MHRA</p>   |
| <p>c) all reusable medical devices are properly decontaminated prior to use and that the risks associated with decontamination facilities and processes are well managed</p>   | <p>This standard will not be assessed for ambulance services for 2007/2008. Cleaning and disinfection of ambulances is covered under standard C21</p>   |
| <p>d) medicines are handled safely and securely</p>  | <p>1 Medicines are safely and securely procured, prescribed, dispensed, prepared, administered and monitored including in accordance with the statutory requirements of the Medicine Act 1968</p> <p>2 Controlled drugs are handled safely and securely in accordance with the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 (<i>Modification</i>) Order 2001 and <i>Safer management of controlled drugs: Guidance on strengthened governance arrangements</i> (Department of Health, 2006)</p> |

**e) the prevention, segregation, handling, transport and disposal of waste is properly managed so as to minimise the risks to the health and safety of staff, patients, the public and the safety of the environment**

**1** The prevention, segregation, handling, transport and disposal of waste is properly managed to minimise the risks to patients, staff, the public and the environment in accordance with *Environment and sustainability Health Technical Memorandum 07-01: Safe management of healthcare waste* (Department of Health, November 2006)

## Second domain: Clinical and cost effectiveness

**Domain outcome:** patients achieve healthcare benefits that meet their individual needs through healthcare decisions and services, based on what assessed research evidence has shown provides effective clinical outcomes.

### Core standard C5

### Elements

Healthcare organisations ensure that:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>a) they conform to National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) technology appraisals and, where it is available, take into account nationally agreed guidance when planning and delivering treatment and care</b> | <b>1</b> The ambulance service can demonstrate how it takes into account nationally agreed best practice as defined in national service frameworks (NSFs), NICE clinical guidelines, JRCALC guidelines, national plans and nationally agreed guidance, when delivering care and treatment |
| <b>b) clinical care and treatment are carried out under supervision and leadership</b>  | <b>1</b> Appropriate supervision and clinical leadership is provided to staff involved in delivering clinical care and treatment in accordance with guidance from relevant professional bodies  |
| <b>c) clinicians<sup>1</sup> continuously update skills and techniques relevant to their clinical work</b>  | <b>1</b> Clinicians from all disciplines participate in activities to update the skills and techniques relevant to their clinical work  |
| <b>d) clinicians participate in regular clinical audit and reviews of clinical services</b>   | <b>1</b> Clinicians are involved in prioritising, conducting, reporting and acting on clinical audits<br><br><b>2</b> Clinicians participate in reviewing the effectiveness of clinical services through evaluation, audit or research  |

### Core standard C6

### Elements

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|--|---|
| <b>Healthcare organisations cooperate with each other and social care organisations to ensure that patients' individual needs are properly managed and met</b> | <b>1</b> Staff work in partnership with colleagues in other health and social care organisations to meet the individual needs of patients |
|--|---|

<sup>1</sup> Professionally qualified staff providing care to patients

## Third domain: Governance

**Domain outcome:** managerial and clinical leadership and accountability, as well as the organisation's culture, systems and working practices, ensure that probity, quality assurance, quality improvement and patient safety are central components of all activities of the healthcare organisation.

### Core standard C7

### Elements

Healthcare organisations:

a) apply the principles of sound clinical and corporate governance

c) undertake systematic risk assessment and risk management

- 1 The ambulance service has effective arrangements in place for clinical governance
- 2 There are effective corporate governance arrangements in place that accord with *Governing the NHS: A guide for NHS boards* (Department of Health and NHS Appointments Commission, 2003), and the *Corporate governance framework manual for NHS trusts* (Department of Health, April 2003)
- 3 The ambulance service systematically assesses and manages its risks

b) actively support all employees to promote openness, honesty, probity, accountability, and the economic, efficient and effective use of resources

- 1 The ambulance service actively promotes openness, honesty, probity and accountability to its staff and ensures that resources are protected from fraud and corruption in accordance with the *Code of conduct for NHS Managers* (Department of Health, 2002) and *NHS Counter Fraud and Corruption Manual third edition* (NHS Counter Fraud Service, 2006)

d) ensure financial management achieves economy, effectiveness, efficiency, probity and accountability in the use of resources

This standard will be measured through the use of resources assessment

**e) challenge discrimination, promote equality and respect human rights**

- 1 The ambulance service challenges discrimination and respects human rights in accordance with the Human Rights Act 1998, *No Secrets: Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse* (Department of Health, 2000), The Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999, The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003, The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003, and The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- 2 The ambulance service promotes equality, including by publishing information specified by statute, in accordance with the general and specific duties of the Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended), the Code of practice on the duty to promote race equality (Commission for Racial Equality, 2002), the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, the Code of practice on the duty to promote disability equality (Disability Rights Commission, 2005), the Equality Act 2006 and the Gender Equality Duty Code of Practice (Equal Opportunities Commission, November 2006)

**f) meet the existing performance requirements**

This standard will be measured through the existing national targets assessment

## Core standard C8

## Elements

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Healthcare organisations support their staff through:

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|--|--|
| a) having access to processes which permit them to raise, in confidence and without prejudicing their position, concerns over any aspect of service delivery, treatment or management that they consider to have a detrimental effect on patient care or on the delivery of services | 1 Staff are supported, and know how to raise concerns about services confidentially and without prejudicing their position, including in accordance with <i>The Public Disclosure Act 1998: Whistle Blowing in the NHS (HSC 1999/198)</i>  |
| b) organisational and personal development programmes which recognise the contribution and value of staff, and address, where appropriate, under-representation of minority groups   | 1 The ambulance service supports and involves staff in organisational and personal development programmes as defined by the relevant areas of the Improving Working Lives standard at Practice Plus level<br><br>2 Staff from minority groups are offered opportunities for personal development to address under-representation in senior roles |

## Core standard C9

## Elements

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Healthcare organisations have a systematic and planned approach to the management of records to ensure that, from the moment a record is created until its ultimate disposal, the organisation maintains information so that it serves the purpose it was collected for and disposes of the information appropriately when no longer required

The ambulance service has effective systems for managing clinical records in accordance with *Records management: NHS code of practice* (Department of Health, April 2006)

## Core standard C10

## Elements

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Healthcare organisations:

a) undertake all appropriate employment checks and ensure that all employed or contracted professionally qualified staff are registered with the appropriate bodies

1 The necessary employment checks are undertaken for all staff in accordance with *Safer recruitment – A guide for NHS employers* (NHS Employers, 2006) and *CRB disclosures in the NHS* (NHS Employers, 2004)

b) require that all employed professionals abide by relevant published codes of professional practice

1 The ambulance service explicitly requires staff to abide by relevant codes of professional conduct and takes action when codes of conduct are breached

## Core standard C11

## Elements

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Healthcare organisations ensure that staff concerned with all aspects of the provision of healthcare:

a) are appropriately recruited, trained and qualified for the work they undertake

1 The ambulance service recruits staff in accordance with relevant legislation and with particular regard to the Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999, The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003, The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003, The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006, Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended), the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and the Equality Act 2006

2 The ambulance service undertakes workforce planning which aligns workforce requirements to its service needs



**b) participate in mandatory training programmes**

- 1 Staff participate in relevant mandatory training programmes
- 2 Staff and students participate in relevant induction programmes

**c) participate in further professional and occupational development commensurate with their work throughout their working lives**

- 1 Staff have opportunities to participate in professional and occupational development at all points in their career in accordance with *Working together – learning together: a framework for lifelong learning for the NHS* (Department of Health, 2001)

## Core standard C12

## Elements

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**Healthcare organisations which either lead or participate in research have systems in place to ensure that the principles and requirements of the research governance framework are consistently applied**

- 1 The ambulance service has an effective research governance framework in place which complies with the requirements of the *Research governance framework for health and social care, second edition* (Department of Health, 2005)

## Fourth domain: Patient focus

**Domain outcome:** healthcare is provided in partnership with patients, their carers and relatives, respecting their diverse needs, preferences and choices, and in partnership with other organisations (especially social care organisations) whose services impact on patient wellbeing.

### Core standard C13

### Elements

Healthcare organisations have systems in place to ensure that:

a) staff treat patients, their relatives and carers with dignity and respect

- 1 The ambulance service ensures that staff treat patients, carers and relatives with dignity and respect at every stage of their care and treatment, and, where relevant, takes action where dignity and respect has been compromised
- 2 The ambulance service meets the needs and rights of different patient groups with regard to dignity including by meeting the relevant requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998, the Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended), the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and the Equality Act 2006

b) appropriate consent is obtained when required, for all contacts with patients and for the use of any confidential patient information

- 1 Valid consent, including from those who have communication or language support needs, is obtained by suitably qualified staff for all treatments, procedures and investigations in accordance with the *Reference guide to consent for examination or treatment* (Department of Health, 2001)
- 2 Patients, including those with language and/or communication support needs, are provided with information on the use and disclosure of confidential information held

about them in accordance with  
*Confidentiality: NHS code of practice*  
(Department of Health, 2003)

**c) staff treat patient information confidentially, except where authorised by legislation to the contrary**

- 1 Staff act in accordance with *Confidentiality: NHS code of practice* (Department of Health, 2003), the Data Protection Act 1998, *Protecting and using patient information: a manual for Caldicott guardians* (Department of Health, 1999), the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000 when using and disclosing patients' personal information

## Core standard C14

## Elements

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Healthcare organisations have systems in place to ensure that patients, their relatives and carers:

**a) have suitable and accessible information about, and clear access to, procedures to register formal complaints and feedback on the quality of services**

- 1 Patients, relatives and carers are given suitable and accessible information about, and can easily access, a formal complaints system
- 2 Patients, relatives and carers are provided with opportunities to give feedback on the quality of services

**b) are not discriminated against when complaints are made**

- 1 The ambulance service has systems in place to ensure that patients, carers and relatives are not treated adversely as a result of having complained

**c) are assured that the organisation acts appropriately on any concerns and where appropriate, make changes to ensure improvements in service delivery**

- 1 The ambulance service acts on, and responds to, complaints appropriately and in a timely manner
- 2 Demonstrable improvements are made to service delivery as a result of concerns and complaints from patients, relatives and carers

### Core standard C15

### Elements

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Where food is provided healthcare organisations have systems in place to ensure that:

This standard will not be assessed for ambulance services for 2007/2008

- a) patients are provided with a choice and that it is prepared safely and provides a balanced diet
  
- b) patients' individual nutritional, personal and clinical dietary requirements are met, including where necessary help with feeding and access to food 24 hours a day

### Core standard C16

### Elements

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Healthcare organisations make information available to patients and the public on their services, provide patients with suitable and accessible information on the care and treatment they receive and, where appropriate, inform patients on what to expect during treatment, care and after care

- 1 The ambulance service provides suitable and accessible information on the services it provides and in languages and formats relevant to its service population which accords with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and the Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended)
  
- 2 Patients and, where appropriate, carers (including those with communication or language support needs) are provided with sufficient and accessible information on their individual care, treatment and after care

## Fifth domain: Accessible and responsive care

**Domain outcome:** patients receive services as promptly as possible, have choice in access to services and treatments, and do not experience unnecessary delay at any stage of service delivery or the care pathway.

### Core standard C17

### Elements

The views of patients, their carers and others are sought and taken into account in designing, planning, delivering and improving healthcare services

- 1 The ambulance service seeks the views of patients, carers and the local community, including those from disadvantaged and marginalised groups, when planning, delivering and improving services in accordance with *Strengthening Accountability, patient and public involvement policy guidance – Section 11 of the Health and Social Care Act 2001* (Department of Health, 2003)
- 2 The ambulance service demonstrates to patients, carers and the local community how it has taken their views into account when planning, delivering and improving services for patients in accordance with *Strengthening Accountability, patient and public involvement policy guidance – Section 11 of the Health and Social Care Act 2001* (Department of Health, 2003)

## Core standard C18

## Elements

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Healthcare organisations enable all members of the population to access services equally and offer choice in access to services and treatment equitably

- 1 The ambulance service ensures that all members of the population it serves are able to access its services on an equitable basis including acting in accordance with the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, the Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended) and the Equality Act 2006
- 2 The ambulance service offers patients choice in access to services and treatment, where appropriate, and ensures that this is offered equitably

## Core standard C19

## Elements

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Healthcare organisations ensure that patients with emergency health needs are able to access care promptly and within nationally agreed timescales, and all patients are able to access services within national expectations on access to services

This standard will be measured under the existing national targets and new national targets assessment

## Sixth domain: Care environment and amenities

**Domain outcome:** care is provided in environments that promote patient and staff wellbeing and respect for patients' needs and preferences in that they are designed for the effective and safe delivery of treatment, care or a specific function, provide as much privacy as possible, are well maintained and are cleaned to optimise health outcomes for patients.

### Core standard C20

### Elements

Healthcare services are provided in environments which promote effective care and optimise health outcomes by being:

a) a safe and secure environment which protects patients, staff, visitors and their property, and the physical assets of the organisation

- 1 The ambulance service effectively manages the health, safety and environmental risks to patients, staff and visitors, including by meeting the relevant health and safety at work and fire legislation, *The Management of Health, Safety and Welfare Issues for NHS staff* (NHS Employers, 2005) and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- 2 The ambulance service protects patients, relatives, carers and staff and their property, and the physical assets of the organisation, by ensuring that vehicles are safe and secure

b) supportive of patient privacy and confidentiality

- 1 The ambulance service provides services in environments, including on scene and in vehicles, which are supportive of patient privacy and confidentiality

## Core standard C21

## Elements

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Healthcare services are provided in environments, which promote effective care and optimise health outcomes by being well designed and well maintained, with cleanliness levels in clinical and non-clinical areas that meet the national specification for clean NHS premises

- 1 The ambulance service has taken steps to ensure its fleet is well designed and well maintained including in accordance with the *Disability Discrimination Act 1995*, the *Disability Discrimination Act 2005* and associated code of practice
- 2 Care is provided in clean ambulances that meet the relevant requirements of *The Health Act 2006 Code of Practice for the Prevention and Control of Health Care Associated Infections* (Department of Health, 2006) and *National guidance and procedures for infection prevention and control: Managing Healthcare Associated Infection & Control of Serious Communicable Diseases in Ambulance Services* (Ambulance Service Association, 2004)



## Seventh domain: Public health

**Domain outcome:** programmes and services are designed and delivered in collaboration with all relevant organisations and communities to promote, protect and improve the health of the population served and reduce health inequalities between different population groups and areas.

### Core standard C22

### Elements

Healthcare organisations promote, protect and demonstrably improve the health of the community served, and narrow health inequalities by:

a) cooperating with each other and with local authorities and other organisations

c) making an appropriate and effective contribution to local partnership arrangements including local strategic partnerships and crime and disorder reduction partnerships

1 The ambulance service actively works with key strategic partners, such as coronary heart disease implementation groups and emergency care groups, to improve care pathways for patients

b) ensuring that the local Director of Public Health's annual report informs their policies and practices

This standard will not be assessed for ambulance trusts for 2007/2008

## Core standard C23

## Elements

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Healthcare organisations have systematic and managed disease prevention and health promotion programmes which meet the requirements of the national service frameworks (NSFs) and national plans with particular regard to reducing obesity through action on nutrition and exercise, smoking, substance misuse and sexually transmitted infections

The elements for ambulance services are driven by the health improvement and health promotion requirements set out in NSFs and national plans with a particular focus on the following priority areas:

- encouraging sensible drinking of alcohol
- reducing drug misuse
- improving mental health and well-being
- preventing unintentional injuries

- 1 The ambulance service collects and shares data about its patients and services, including with its commissioners, to influence health needs assessments and strategic planning to improve the health of the community served
- 2 The ambulance service contributes as appropriate to disease prevention or health promotion programmes in relation to the public health priority areas, to improve health and narrow health inequalities
- 3 The ambulance service implements policies and practices to improve the health and well being of its workforce

## Core standard C24

## Elements

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Healthcare organisations protect the public by having a planned, prepared and, where possible, practised response to incidents and emergency situations, which could affect the provision of normal services

- 1 The ambulance service has a planned, prepared and, where possible, practised response to incidents and emergency situations (including control of communicable diseases), which includes arrangements for business continuity management, in accordance with *The NHS Emergency Planning Guidance (Department of Health, 2005)* and *UK influenza pandemic contingency plan (Department of Health, 2005)*
- 2 The ambulance service works with key partner organisations, including through Local Resilience Forums, in the preparation of, training for and annual testing of emergency preparedness plans, in accordance with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, The NHS Emergency Planning Guidance 2005 and *UK influenza pandemic contingency plan (Department of Health, 2005)*

# Appendix one: Healthcare Commission's use of other Concordat bodies' findings in the core standards assessment 2007/2008

The findings of others are integral to the Healthcare Commission's core standards assessment, and have informed which trusts have been targeted for inspection. For 2007/2008, we have increased our reliance on the findings of others, particularly with regard to the NHS Litigation Authority (please see below for further details). We will use the findings of others in the assessment in three particular ways:

- relying on the information as adequate assurance that a trust is 'compliant' for a standard
- using the information to answer specific 'lines of enquiry' in inspection, to reduce the number of questions asked of a trust
- using the information in cross checking to target our inspections

## 1. Adequate sources of assurance

### **NHS Litigation Authority's risk management standards for ambulance trusts (pilots)**

Below we have listed the core standards for which attainment of level 2 or higher in the NHS Litigation Authority's risk management standards for ambulance trusts (pilots) will provide a trust's board with appropriate assurance. Achievement of levels 2 or 3 of the NHS Litigation Authority standards is not, however, required by the Commission for a trust's board to make a declaration of 'compliant' for the listed standards. Instead alternative sources of assurance may inform the board that the standard has been met for the year. The NHSLA will provide the Healthcare Commission with information that relates to the trusts that have achieved level 2 or higher from the pilot assessments in 2007/2008. The Healthcare Commission will not have access to results relating to trusts that have not achieved compliance with the NHSLA's pilot assessment.

C1a  
C9  
C10a  
C11b  
C14a  
C14c  
C20a

## 2. Information to inform inspections

### **NHS Litigation Authority's risk management standards for ambulance trusts (pilots)**

In addition to the list of standards provided in 1 above, we will also use information from the NHS Litigation Authority's risk management standards for ambulance trusts (pilots) to inform our inspections. In the event that a trust is selected for an inspection for one of the standards listed below, we will rely upon information from the NHS Litigation Authority to answer particular lines of enquiry, and reduce the number of questions we need to ask in inspection.

C4a

C4b

C4d

C5a

C14b

### **Audit Commission's Auditor's Local Evaluation (ALE)**

In the 2006/2007 core standards assessment, we used information from ALE assessments in our inspections for standards C7a&c, C7b and C21. We did this by relying on information from the Audit Commission's ALE where this provided positive assurance that one or more relevant lines of enquiry for a standard were met, rather than requesting additional information from the trust at inspection.

In 2007/2008, we will again use positive assurance from the Audit Commission's ALE to reduce the number of questions that we need to ask a trust, in the event that they are selected for inspection for a particular standard. We recognise that there are additional standards to the three considered in 2006/2007 where there is overlap between the core standard assessment and ALE. We are working with the Audit Commission to identify additional standards where we can rely on information from ALE to reduce the questions we need to ask at inspection.

## 3. Information from other bodies used in cross checking

We will continue to use information from regulatory bodies and other organisations to inform our cross checking process, in order to target our inspection activity following declaration. We will refresh and add to the information we hold on every NHS trust throughout the year, so that we use the most up to date information possible when cross checking trusts' declarations.

We aim to use as a wide a range of data sources as possible, to build up a profile of information for every NHS trust, mapped to standards. The profiles are based on data sets that have national coverage – including some from our own assessments and work programmes (for example, information from service reviews or from hygiene code visits). We currently use information from 110 different data streams to check trusts' declarations.

## Appendix two: Reference documents

For the 2005/2006 and 2006/2007 assessment of core standards, we published a number of elements that included references to guidance that we asked trusts to “take into account”. Our intention had been that this guidance would, in many cases, provide a starting point for trusts to consider, when reviewing their compliance with a standard. However, as this guidance is not sufficient or necessary for trusts to use to determine whether they have met a particular standard, we have taken the decision to remove these references.

We have provided the references below as some trusts may still find them helpful when considering their compliance. The list is not an exhaustive list of references for each standard, but instead may be useful to trusts as a starting point.

Standard	Guidance
C01a	<i>Building a safer NHS for patients: implementing an organisation with a memory</i> (Department of Health, 2001)
C02	<i>Safeguarding children in whom illness is induced or fabricated by carers with parenting responsibilities</i> (Department of Health, July 2001)
C04a	<i>Essential steps to safe, clean care: introduction and guidance</i> (Department of Health, 2006)  <i>National guidance and procedures for infection prevention and control: Managing Healthcare Associated Infection &amp; Control of Serious Communicable Diseases in Ambulance Services</i> (Ambulance Service Association, 2004)  <i>Joint Royal Colleges Ambulance Liaison Committee (JRCALC) guidance PROC 12</i>  <i>Infection control practices for ambulance services</i> (Infection Control Nurses Association, April 2001)
C04d	<i>Building a safer NHS: improving medication safety</i> (Department of Health, 2004)
C05a	<i>How to put NICE guidance into practice</i> (NICE, December 2005)
C06	<i>Guidance on the Health Act Section 31 partnership arrangements</i> (Department of Health, 1999)

<b>Standard</b>	<b>Guidance</b>
C07ac	<p><i>Clinical governance in the new NHS</i> (HSC 1999/065).</p> <p><i>Assurance: the board agenda</i> (Department of Health, 2002)</p> <p><i>Building the assurance framework: a practical guide for NHS boards</i> (Department of Health, 2003)</p>
C07b	<p><i>Directions to NHS bodies on counter fraud measures</i> (Department of Health, 2004)</p>
C08b	<p><i>Leadership and Race Equality in the NHS Action Plan</i> (Department of Health, 2004)</p>
C11a	<p><i>Code of practice for the international recruitment of healthcare professionals</i> (Department of Health, 2004)</p>
C11c	<p><i>Continuing professional development: quality in the new NHS</i> (HSC 1999/154)</p>
C13a	<p><i>NHS Chaplaincy Meeting the religious and spiritual needs of patients and staff</i> (Department of Health, 2003)</p>
C13b	<p><i>Good practice in consent: achieving the NHS plan commitment to patient centred consent practice</i> (HSC 2001/023)</p> <p><i>Seeking Consent: working with children</i> (Department of Health, 2001)</p>
C16	<p><i>Toolkit for producing patient information</i> (Department of Health, 2003)</p> <p><i>Information for patients</i> (NICE)</p> <p><i>Guidance On Developing Local Communication Support Services And Strategies</i> (Department of Health, 2004) and other nationally agreed guidance where available</p>
C17	<p><i>Key principles of effective patient and public involvement (PPI)</i> (The National Centre for Involvement, 2001)</p>
C18	<p><i>Building on the best: Choice, responsiveness and equity in the NHS</i> (Department of Health, 2003)</p>
C20a	<p><i>A professional approach to managing security in the NHS</i> (Counter Fraud and Security Management Service, 2003) and other relevant national guidance</p> <p>BS EN 1789: 2000 <i>Medical vehicles and their equipment – road ambulances</i></p>

Standard	Guidance
C21	<i>BS EN 1789: 2000 Medical vehicles and their equipment – road ambulances</i>
C22ac	<p><i>Choosing health: making healthier choices easier</i> (Department of Health, 2004)</p> <p><i>Tackling health inequalities: a programme for action</i> (Department of Health, 2003)</p> <p><i>Making partnerships work for patients, carers and service users</i> (Department of Health, 2004)</p>
C23	<p><i>Choosing health: making healthy choices easier</i> (Department of Health, 2004)</p> <p><i>Delivering Choosing health: making healthier choices easier</i> (Department of Health, 2005)</p> <p><i>Tackling Health Inequalities: A programme for action</i> (Department of Health, 2003)</p>
C24	<p><i>Getting Ahead of the Curve</i> (Department of Health, 2002)</p> <p><i>Beyond a major incident</i> (Department of Health, 2004)</p>



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