

DP/KG

5 October 2012

To : Managers and Proprietors:

Residential Care Homes
Nursing Homes
Children's Homes
Residential Family Centres

Dear Sir/Madam

Fire safety and fire risk assessment in premises providing residential care

1.0 Fire safety regulation

- 1.1 The Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service (NIFRS) is responsible for the regulation of fire safety under the Fire and Rescue Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 and reinforced by the Fire Safety Regulations (NI) 2010.
- 1.2 The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) is responsible for the regulation of health and social care in Northern Ireland including establishments providing residential care under the Health and Personal Social Services (Quality, Improvement and Regulation) (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 and reinforced by the following regulations:
 - The Residential Care Homes Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005
 - The Nursing Homes Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005
 - The Children's Homes Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005
 - The Residential Family Centres Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007.

These regulations include fire safety specific elements which RQIA are mandated to enforce.

2.0 Responsibility for fire safety management and fire risk assessment in premises providing residential care

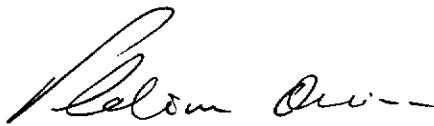
- 2.1 RQIA wrote to you in January 2012 regarding the Rosepark Care Home fatal accident inquiry enclosing a checklist for your use and action as necessary.
- 2.2 The purpose of this letter is to further remind you that while in the majority of cases providers may appoint an independent competent fire risk

assessor or fire safety adviser, the responsibility for the implementation of fire safety management and a suitable fire risk assessment in premises lies with the responsible person, normally the registered providers and managers.

- 2.3 Providers and managers should ensure that fire risk assessments are up to date and that adequate resources are afforded to address shortcomings identified for action by the competent fire risk assessor within recommended and reasonable timescales. It is important that providers and managers ensure that fire safety advisers and fire risk assessors are provided with accurate and up to date information in respect of all issues affecting fire safety in the premises.
- 2.4 Emergency evacuation plans should be regularly reviewed to account for changing dependencies and mobility of patients and residents so that fire safety management and evacuation plans are meaningful and effective.

3.0 NIFRS and RQIA co-operation

- 3.1 NIFRS and RQIA are committed to working collaboratively to ensure that patients and residents living in residential care homes, nursing homes, children's homes and residential family centres are afforded the highest standards of fire safety.



Phelim Quinn
Director of Regulation and Nursing
RQIA



Dale Ashford
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NIFRS

cc Brian Godfrey, HEIG
Dominic Cafolla, HEIG