

THE REGULATION AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY
IMPROVEMENT NOTICE TO COMPLY WITH A STATEMENT OF MINIMUM
STANDARDS

<p>Facility Name: Northern Ireland Ambulance Service Trust (NIAS)</p> <p>Bangor Ambulance Station</p>	<p>IN Ref No: IN/020227/2017-18/02-Bangor</p>
<p>Chief Executive: Mr Shane Devlin</p>	<p>Issue Date: 2 October 2017</p>
<p>The Quality Standards for Health and Social Care: Supporting Good Governance and Best Practice in the HPSS (March 2006)</p> <p>Minimum Standard: Safe and Effective Care: Ensuring Safe Practice and the Appropriate Management of Risk</p> <p>Minimum Standard 5.3.1</p> <p>The organisation:</p> <p><i>(f) has properly maintained systems, policies and procedures in place, which are subject to regular audit and review to ensure:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>-promotion of general hygiene standards, and prevention, control and reduction in the incidence of healthcare acquired infection and other communicable diseases;</i> <i>-appropriate decontamination of reusable medical devices;</i> <i>-safe and effective handling, transport and disposal of waste, recognising the need to promote the safety of service users and carers, staff and the wider public, and to protect the environment;</i> 	
<p>Specific failings to comply with the standard:</p> <p>During an unannounced Infection Prevention and Control and Cleanliness inspection of the Bangor Ambulance Station on 17 July 2017, the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) identified significant concerns. These related to: station environment; vehicle and equipment cleaning; and, staff knowledge and practices regarding infection prevention and control (IPC). RQIA also identified significant concerns regarding internal monitoring and assurance mechanisms relating to hygiene, cleanliness and IPC within Bangor Ambulance Station.</p> <p>Subsequently, on 25 July 2017 RQIA held a serious concerns meeting with NIAS Chief Executive and senior trust representatives. This was followed by meetings on 30 August 2017 and 13 September 2017 with senior NIAS staff to support improvement work in relation to hygiene, cleanliness and IPC.</p>	

RQIA also held a meeting on 8 September 2017 to review progress in relation to improvements required.

On 26 September 2017, RQIA inspectors undertook a follow up unannounced inspection to Bangor Ambulance Station to review progress on the actions outlined in the action plans submitted by NIAS to RQIA on 18 July 2017, 18 August 2017 and 13 September 2017. Despite RQIA's efforts to support and encourage improvements in the service, RQIA considers that insufficient progress has been made to address the concerns identified. RQIA considers that governance and operational systems within Bangor Ambulance Station continue to fall below the required quality standards.

RQIA Inspectors identified that basic hygiene, cleaning and planned maintenance of the ambulance station was sub-optimal. NIAS staff were not familiar with the steps for effective hand hygiene. The provision and cleanliness of hand hygiene facilities within the station was inadequate.

The standard of cleanliness of reusable patient equipment within the ambulance station and ambulance vehicles was poor.

RQIA identified that waste was not disposed of correctly; waste bins were dirty and in need of repair. The temporary closure mechanisms on the sharps boxes were not in place.

There was no evidence that the NIAS Trust had effectively communicated policies and procedures addressing hygiene, cleanliness and IPC to staff. RQIA found no evidence of effective organisational audit of practices and procedures.

Improvement necessary to achieve minimum compliance:

The NIAS Chief Executive and Executive Team must:

- Ensure that the fabric of the ambulance station is maintained in a good state of repair to support good hygiene, cleanliness and IPC practice.
- Ensure that the station's internal/external facilities are cleaned in an appropriate manner.
- Ensure cleaning equipment is clean, fit for purpose and used appropriately.
- Introduce appropriate cleaning schedules for: environment, vehicles and patient/cleaning equipment.
- Implement ongoing processes to monitor the cleanliness of the ambulance station, vehicles and reusable patient equipment.
- Monitor staff compliance with best practice in the management of waste, sharps management and linen.
- Ensure incident forms are completed and forwarded to the trust risk manager when vehicles are not stepped down for cleaning or other risks related to hygiene, cleanliness and IPC are identified.

- Review and improve the provision and specification of hand hygiene facilities, in line with relevant health building notes.
- Introduce a continued assessment of staff competency and practice in relation to compliance with hygiene, cleanliness and IPC standards, as part of an ongoing practice and appraisal process.

Date by which compliance must be achieved: 30 October 2017

Signed... 

Medical Director and Quality Improvement Lead

This notice is made under Articles 38 and 39 of The Health and Personal Social Services (Quality, Improvement and Regulation) (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 and the Quality Standards for Health and Social Care: Supporting Good Governance and Best Practice in the HPSS (2006).

It should be noted that failure to comply with the quality standards identified in this Improvement Notice may result in RQIA recommending that the Department of Health take special measures in relation to the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service Trust, with a view to improving the services for which it is responsible, or the way in which the service is being run.