

19 July 2010

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence

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Dear Mrs McKinnell,

Parliamentary question PQ 8049

The Department of Health has asked me to respond to your Parliamentary question about delays in the review of the Institute's published clinical guidelines.

Our guidelines make recommendations about on the treatment and care of people with diseases and conditions treated in the NHS. For some topics, we work with the Social Care Institute for Excellence on conditions, like Dementia, for which services are provided by the NHS, local government and (in this example) the private sector.

Each guideline is considered for updating 3 years after its publication, although where the evidence for a change in any of the substantive recommendations is compelling, we can consider a review at an earlier date.

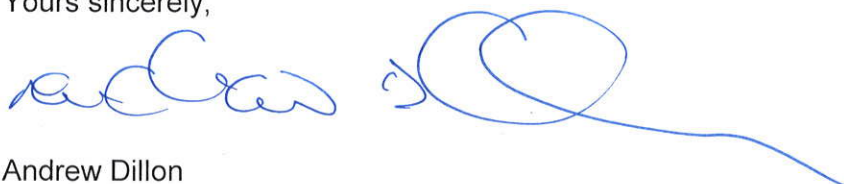
The following clinical guidelines are beyond their scheduled review date:

- Secondary prevention of myocardial infarction (planned review date May'10)
- Treatment of fever in children (planned review date May'10)
- Pre-operative testing (planned review date June'10)
- Treatment of faecal incontinence (planned review date June'10)
- Referral for suspected cancer (planned review date June'10)
- Heavy menstrual bleeding (planned review date June'10)

We have delayed the above reviews while we make some changes to our process and methods for conducting reviews of clinical guidelines. These changes will improve the quality and consistency of the reviews and will help us in our prioritisation and decision making.

We anticipate a decision to have been taken on the heavy menstrual bleeding review by the end of July. We anticipate a decision to have been taken on all the other reviews of all these guidelines during the autumn.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Dillon
Chief Executive