

**Chief Nursing Officer, Patients, Public and Health Professions  
Directorate**

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Dear Colleague

**National Infection Prevention and Control Manual for  
NHSScotland – Chapter 1: Standard Infection Control  
Precautions (SICPs) Policy Update May 2012**

This letter re-iterates and provides clarification on the local requirements for NHS Boards following publication of the SICPs Policy (as described in [CNO \(2012\)1](#) on the 13<sup>th</sup> January 2012). It addresses helpful feedback received following the launch of the Policy and has been produced in collaboration with the Scottish Executive Nurse Directors and Leading Better Care Leads.

The introduction of the SICPs Policy and Compliance and Quality Improvement Data Collection Tool is being supported by the *Leading Better Care – Delivering for Patients* programme to facilitate effective dissemination and implementation of the National SICPs policy at the frontline. This approach will support healthcare staff to apply the policy and integrate into every day practice and is consistent with our commitment to improvement driven monitoring.

As stated in the original communication, the SICPs Policy is published as one of three distinct SICPs documents.

1. The SICPs Policy is the practice guide, to be applied by all NHS staff  
<http://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/haic/ic/publicationsdetail.aspx?id=49785>
2. The literature reviews summarise the available evidence that underpins and informs the practical application of the SICPs Policy and highlight implications for research. The literature reviews are available to all healthcare staff and should be utilised by Infection Prevention and Control

**From Chief Nursing Officer  
Ros Moore, RGN RNT BSc  
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CNO(2012)

**Addresses**

For action

NHS Board Chief Executives

For information

NHS Board HAI Executive Leads  
NHS Board Medical Directors  
NHS Board Nurse Directors  
NHS Board Directors of Public Health  
NHS Board Infection Control Managers  
HAITF National Policy Group  
HAITF National Advisory Group  
HAITF Development and Implementation Group  
Chief Medical Officer  
Health Protection Scotland

**Further Enquiries**

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Teams (IPCTs) to inform local policy and guidance development.

<http://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/haic/ic/standardinfectioncontrolprecautions-sicps.aspx?subjectid=00D>

3. A Compliance and Quality Improvement Data Collection Tool, which can be used to monitor and evidence compliance with SICPs as well as identifying missed critical elements that require improvement. This has been revised in May 2012 to support NHS Boards with the ongoing implementation of monitoring compliance with the SICPs.

<http://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/haic/ic/publicationsdetail.aspx?id=50228>

## **Actions**

It is expected that all Boards will adopt the National Infection Prevention Control Manual, with SICPs being the inaugural chapter. Boards should therefore replace existing SICPs Policy(ies) with the National SICPs policy by 30<sup>th</sup> September 2012. After this date, Boards may be required to demonstrate that they have adopted the National Infection Control Manual as part of their Healthcare Environment Inspections.

- With regards to the monitoring of the national SICPs Policy(ies) :
  - Support for implementation and quality improvement at a local level for the monitoring of compliance of the SICPs using the revised Compliance and Quality Improvement Data Collection Tool will be supported by Leading Better Care (LBC) in conjunction with Boards Infection Prevention and Control Teams (IPCTs) for Nurses and Midwives. Boards should also ensure they have systems in place so that all healthcare workers are aware and where appropriate measure compliance with SICPs.
  - If Boards have their own, locally devised tools to monitor, evidence and improve compliance with SICPs they can continue to use these if they choose to.
  - Boards should carry out an initial baseline assessment of compliance with the SICPs which will assist in informing how they determine the frequency of measurement of compliance.
  - It is up to individual boards to determine the frequency of measurement of SICPs compliance.

There is no expectation that monitoring of compliance with all elements of SICPs should be carried out at a prescribed frequency. It is up to boards to assess monitoring requirements based on data collected during baseline assessment and follow up improvements made.

- Boards are not being requested to provide SICPs compliance monitoring data to the Scottish Government. However, it is expected that Boards will ensure they have robust systems and processes in place to assure themselves that areas for SICPs improvement are identified and the necessary improvements are being made.

SICPs are not new care practices within care settings and Boards will be required to continue to demonstrate SICPs compliance as part of their Healthcare Environment Inspections.

Yours sincerely



**ROS MOORE**  
Chief Nursing Officer