

To:

**Regional Directors
District General Managers
FHSA General Managers
Trust Chief Executives**

EL (94) 101
22 December 1994

REVISED AND EXPANDED PATIENT'S CHARTER

1. I am writing to give you advance warning of arrangements for the new **Patient's Charter**.
2. The revised and expanded Charter will be published in January. Our present target is 18 January, but this will be confirmed in the New Year. It brings together existing rights and standards together with those which have been introduced since the original Charter was published in 1991. The new Patient's Charter will also set out new rights and standards which will include:
 - an 18 month guarantee for all inpatient treatment;
 - a 12 month standard for Coronary Artery Bypass Grafts and some associated procedures;
 - a national standard for waiting times for first outpatient appointments;
 - a national standard for emergency admission to hospital through the Accident and Emergency department;
 - a national standard addressing community nurse home visits (details of which were published in the recent Community Care Framework document);
 - a new right to advance notification if being placed on a mixed sex ward and an associated standard on single sex toilet and washing facilities whilst in hospital;
 - a standard addressing child admissions to children's wards rather than adult wards;
 - standards addressing catering services, security and cleanliness in hospitals.

The booklet will also set out the public's rights and standards in using NHS dental, optometrical and pharmaceutical services.

3. There will be a national launch and a national advertising campaign to allow patients to write in and receive copies of the Charter. We also expect that there will be regional

and local media interest and, of course, heightened interest from patients and the general public. You may therefore wish to consider whether to take any complementary publicity activity locally. What is appropriate will obviously vary greatly depending on local circumstances, but possibilities might include telling the public the positive changes achieved in local hospitals and GP surgeries, your latest Charter performance (Q3 Patient's Charter performance data will be available to you to illustrate success), celebrating the success of Charter Mark winners and those who were highly commended, or highlighting other local initiatives and good practice.

4. The Secretary of State would like each member of staff in the NHS to receive a copy of the Patient's Charter. To help us achieve this, we will shortly be asking all NHS bodies to identify an individual and a delivery point to whom we can send bulk supplies. This will allow us to arrange the speediest possible delivery and give you scope to consider how best to arrange onward distribution in your organisation. (You may, for example, wish to consider adding a covering note thanking staff for all their efforts so far in delivering the Charter locally). The bulk copies should be available in early February.

5. The Executive's Communications Unit will be liaising with regional communications officers over the precise timing and arrangements for the launch. Our intention is to make available to you a few days before publication, through regional communications officers, briefing packs which will include an advance text of the new Charter, Q&A briefing, a schedule of national advertising and a draft press release which can be adapted to reflect local activity. Chairmen and Chief Executives will separately receive the Charter text and a one-page summary brief.

6. Any queries on the content of this letter should be addressed to Mrs Chris Smith, NHS Executive HQ, Patient's Charter Unit, 4N34B Quarry House, Quarry Hill, Leeds, LS2 7UE. Telephone number 0532 546109.

Yours sincerely,



JOHN SHAW

DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS