

Dear Specialist Society or professional body

Working with you to promote clinical audit to your members

About HQIP

As many of you will already know, HQIP is co-owned by the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, the Royal College of Nursing and National Voices, and works to promote professionally led quality improvement approaches in healthcare in partnership with patients, notably clinical audit, registers and databases, throughout the UK.

Our work has two main parts:

- The commissioning and contract managing (on behalf of UK governments) of national and regional clinical audits, national confidential enquiries and registers; and providing help for these, as well as others we do not fund, to improve their quality and impact on clinical practice and outcomes.
- The promotion of good practice and use of clinical audit and other data as part of quality improvement amongst all healthcare staff, especially clinicians; this includes promoting local audit

In the former role we periodically invite bids for funding for national and regional projects, in two forms, large national studies and smaller grants. Many specialist professional groupings of clinicians, whether known as associations, faculties or societies, and of course colleges, have previously bid for funding through these routes, either as the primary bidder or in support to a larger body (such as an academic centre of Royal College) and for several of those who have received this letter, we have developed funding and extensive co-operation already. Many have been successful with funding and we have been able to widen the number of specialist groups enabled to run their own projects through this, although of course there have also been disappointed bidders. This applies to our recent round of national audits where we have notified successful and unsuccessful bidders and can provide feedback to those who were unsuccessful as desired.

We also map audits and other clinical registers, some funded by us, but most not, and this information is available on our website at <http://www.hqip.org.uk/hqip-directory-of-registers-and-clinical-databases/> . You are invited to review the list on the website and send us any details of registers we do not currently list.

In this letter we are writing to you in relation to both our main roles.

How specialist bodies can support audit practice

Regional and national projects such as HQIP funds are a useful way of promoting clinical audit amongst specialists in a discipline, but encouraging participation in and leadership of local audits within a speciality is another way of encouraging professionals to use audit in their practice. Many

societies (and colleges), as well as running national projects in which their members participate, also actively support and promote local audit through a range of means. These can include:

- Specific tools to enable local audit, such as software made available to members
- Organising training and teaching about clinical audit, either in person or on-line
- Providing quality assessment tools for local practitioners to review the quality of their audit work, for appraisal and revalidation
- Suggesting topics and standards for auditing
- Signposting to the large range of materials available on HQIP's site
- Maintaining libraries of audit reports and published studies
- Supporting junior clinicians to run audits in the discipline

Our website includes examples of excellent practice, from both larger and smaller societies. A good example is the work done by the British Association for Sexual Health and HIV (BASHH, see: http://www.bashh.org/groups/national_audit_group). BASHH has established national clinical audit within Sexual Health and HIV Medicine (also known as Genitourinary Medicine) as well as many activities similar to those listed above, including supporting regional and local audit. By helping their members review their work through clinical audit, the society ensures members are effective, analytical practitioners with a strong sense of professionalism.

Many of these activities don't require specific funding and can be achieved very simply; but the effect on clinical practice and outcomes is profound.

The Directory of Specialist Groups, and how you can ensure your group is correctly included:

HQIP intend to provide on our website a directory of disciplines in medicine and healthcare, further broken down into specialist societies, colleges and other bodies and groups, with links to national audits that cover that discipline. A **draft** of this is attached. We anticipate this will not be complete or entirely accurate at the present time, so we invite your help in adding information, or correcting where it is not accurate. We would like to add a statement against each society or college listed saying in its own words what it currently does to promote audit. The entry for BASHH includes their text, as an example. If you want to submit a short précis of what you do, in no more than 150 words, or give comments or suggested additions or amendments to the table as a whole, please send these to qid@hqip.org.uk and we will add this to the directory, which will be updated regularly.

How HQIP can help

If expanding the support and encouragement you provide to your members to practice high quality audit is an activity you are keen to undertake, HQIP can help. In the first instance, keeping in regular contact with us, by signing on to our ebulletins and perhaps using our on-line networking software, NCAF, will ensure you are aware of funding opportunities and events we run, and you can signpost your members to our website where they can get help. We also provide useful free software, CAKE, which enables results of different centres to be shared and compared to enable benchmarking and to drive performance upwards. There are various resources available on the website aimed at clinicians, including material showing how to use audit as supporting information for appraisal and revalidation. There is also the listing of registers mentioned above.

However, if you want help with doing something more, or want advice about developing national audits, we can also offer advice and practical suggestions, speakers at events and even potentially

small scale development funding. You can access this by arranging a meeting with us to talk ideas through, by contacting us above, at gid@hqip.org.uk.

We very much welcome supporting you in this work and look forward to hearing from as many societies and other specialist bodies as possible.

Yours faithfully

Robin Burgess

Chief Executive of HQIP