Roles and responsibilities of Specialist Advisers for Radiation Protection

NHS Lothian

Radiation Protection Adviser (RPA)

One or more Radiation Protection Advisers (RPAs) must be appointed in writing by NHS Lothian, as a statutory requirement under the Ionising Radiations Regulations 2017 (IRR17).

The RPA has an advisory and supporting role in assisting the Radiation Employer, NHS Lothian, to undertake their work in compliance with regulations.

The role and responsibilities of the RPA are documented in Regulation 14 and Schedule 4 of the Ionising Radiations Regulations 2017 (IRR17) and the relevant Approved Code of Practice and guidance published by the HSE in "Work with Ionising Radiation".

The role and responsibilities of the RPA include:

- Advising on the practical implementation of legislation and guidance, to ensure the health and safety of staff, patients and members of the public;
- Ensuring Notification, Registration or Consent has been granted, as appropriate, for all practices involving ionising radiations carried out by NHS Lothian;
- Assistance with the drafting of radiation protection policies and other documentation required by legislation;
- Undertaking radiation risk assessments for activities involving the use of ionising radiations and advising on the designation of Controlled or Supervised Areas;
- Ensuring appropriate control measures and systems of work, as informed by the Radiation Risk Assessment, are provided in Local Rules and that these include provision of advice for pregnant or breast feeding staff;
- Providing advice on radiation protection requirements for the planning and development of new and modified radiation facilities, including the inspection and approval of shielding assessments;
- Inspection, testing and commissioning of engineering controls, design features, safety features and warning devices relevant to radiation protection for new or modified radiation facilities or equipment;
- Advising on the dosimetric specification of new x-ray equipment to ensure that it is capable of restricting doses to patients as far as reasonably practicable;
- Advising on the appointment of Radiation Protection Supervisors, and the provision of guidance and training to Radiation Protection Supervisors; Advising on the requirements for staff radiation dose monitoring programmes, including the selection of an Approved Dosimetry Service (ADS), the nature and frequency of staff monitoring, setting and review of Dose Investigation Levels (DILs) and the requirement to designate staff as Classified Persons;

- Ensuring the provision of suitable radiation monitoring equipment and that such equipment is subject to appropriate calibration and quality control testing;
- Investigation of radiation incidents, including analysis of consequences and recommendations for prevention of accidents and incidents;
- Providing advice to the Chief Executive concerning statutory notifications to regulatory agencies, where required, as a consequence of adverse incidents;
- Ensuring a system of audit and compliance review is in place and that results from such audits are reported through line management and governance structures;
- Advising on requirements for emergency and contingency planning.

Radioactive Waste Adviser (RWA)

The RWA will provide advice to NHS Lothian on handling of radioactive materials and disposal of radioactive waste, as required by the Authorisations granted under the Environmental Authorisations (Scotland) Regulations 2018 (EASR). The Board will consult the RWA on the following matters:

- Achieving and maintaining an optimal level of protection of the environment and the population;
- Submission of applications for Permits under the Environmental Authorisations (Scotland) Regulations to the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA);
- Allocation of proportions of holding and disposal limits to individual departments, monitoring of compliance with authorised limits and collation of disposal records and submission of reports to SEPA;
- Advising on procedures for the disposal of radioactive clinical waste;
- Advising on regulatory requirements for the safe storage of radioactive materials;
- Checking the effectiveness of technical devices for protecting the environment and the population;
- Regular calibration of measuring instruments and regular checking that they are serviceable and correctly used