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SCOTTISH PUBLIC PENSIONS AGENCY

National Health Service Superannuation Scheme Circular No 4/2005

Chief Executives, HR Managers and Payroll Managers of:
NHS Health Boards
NHS Quality Improvement Scotland
NHS National Services Scotland,
NHS Health Scotland,
NHS Education Scotland,
Scottish Ambulance Service,
Golden Jubilee National Hospital,
State Hospital,
NHS 24,
Mental Welfare Commission.
GP Practice Managers.
Direction Bodies.
Members of the Pensions Technical Working Group
Chair of the NHS HR Forum.

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26 August 2005

Dear Sir/Madam,

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE SUPERANNUATION SCHEME (SCOTLAND)

Changes in the Administration of the NHS Superannuation Scheme

I am writing to inform you about a major change programme being undertaken at the SPPA and to ask you to ensure that the relevant staff within your organisation are made aware of this.

The UK Government's proposals to introduce substantial reforms to the various public sector pension schemes in 2006, coupled with the significant changes in the taxation arrangements for pension schemes being introduced from April 2006 has prompted the Agency to carry out a review of its current arrangements for administering the NHS superannuation scheme.

SPPA's current casework management process is dependent upon a bespoke IT system developed in 1994. The system allows SPPA to provide a wide range of services to around 185,000 pension scheme members and beneficiaries in the NHS superannuation scheme. It is clear that the scale of changes necessary to respond to the pension reforms will require the Agency to replace its existing IT system.

The Agency has therefore established a dedicated Project Team to develop and implement a new pension's administration system. Contact details for the core members of the Project Team can be found at the end of this letter.

This Project will require the support and involvement of all our key stakeholders, especially NHS employers, in order to ensure that the new system meets all the Agency's business requirements whilst also providing business benefits to employer organisations. We are also acutely aware of the importance of maintaining a high quality service to our pension scheme members during the development period and we are confident that the Project will not impact adversely on our day to day service.

To ensure effective liaison between NHS employers and the Agency during the Project, we intend to work closely with the Pensions Technical Working Group, which brings together representatives from the SPPA, from NHS Employer groups and ATOS Origin, the organisation which manages the Scottish Standard Payroll System (SSPS) used by most NHS employers for submitting data to the Agency. We will supplement this by contacting all our known Payroll Manager contacts for each individual employing organisation and a large number of GP Practice Managers to discuss current arrangements and any improvements that may be desirable for both parties.

I trust that these arrangements will ensure that an effective two-way dialogue develops between the Agency and NHS employers during the duration of this Project. Information about the Project will shortly be made available on the SPPA website at www.sppa.gov.uk and I will write to you again periodically with further updates as the Project progresses. In the meantime I look forward to working with your colleagues on this important piece of work.

If you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact myself or any of the Project Team listed below.

Yours faithfully,

Neville Mackay
Chief Executive
Scottish Public Pensions Agency.

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