

To: NHS Accountable Emergency Officers  
NHS England and NHS Improvement:  
Regional Directors  
Regional Directors of Performance and Improvement  
Regional Directors of Performance  
Regional Heads of EPRR  
LHRP Co-chairs

NHS England & NHS Improvement  
Skipton House  
80 London Road  
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Dear colleague

### **Emergency Preparedness, Resilience and Response (EPRR) annual assurance process for 2019-20**

I would like to thank you for your continued support during what has been another busy year for the emergency preparedness community. The time and effort that has been invested in preparing for emergencies has certainly paid off as we have delivered an excellent response to a number of issues.

As you will be aware, NHS England has a statutory requirement to formally assure itself of both our own, and of the NHS in England's, EPRR readiness. This is provided through the EPRR annual assurance process. Assurance is a four stage process and we have produced the guidance enclosed to explain this in more detail and assist organisations in completing their process.

This letter notifies you of the start of stage one, the EPRR self assessment, which initiates the 2019-20 EPRR assurance process. We have produced a self assessment tool that organisations should use to complete this stage.

#### **Core standards**

The NHS Core Standards for EPRR are the basis of the assurance process. These have remained as they were in the 2018-19 assurance, with only minor clarifications made.

The NHS Core Standards for EPRR, including the decontamination equipment list, are available on the NHS England website: <http://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/eprr/>.

#### **Deep dive**

The 2019-20 EPRR annual assurance deep dive focusses on severe weather and climate adaptation. This is as a result of a request from the Government's Environment Audit Committee (which has responsibility for assessing adaptation to climate related issues). The self assessment of these deep dive statements does not

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contribute to the organisation's overall EPRR assurance rating, and these should be reported separately.

NHS Ambulance Services should also complete the new Ambulance Resilience standards. These have been agreed by the Association of Ambulance Chief Executives (AAACE) to ensure the recommendations made by Lord Carter's review (<https://improvement.nhs.uk/about-us/corporate-publications/publications/lord-carters-review-unwarranted-variation-nhs-ambulance-trusts>) are met. These standards have been included in the deep dive and should be fully met by summer 2020. The results will be reported to AAACE, but do not form part of the overall EPRR assurance rating.

### **Organisational assurance rating**

The number of Core Standards applicable to each organisation type is different. To account for this difference, the overall EPRR assurance rating is based on the percentage of Core Standards the organisations assesses itself as being 'fully compliant' with. This is explained in more detail in the attached EPRR annual assurance guidance.

### **Site assurance visits**

Regional teams will be conducting visits to selected sites using a standardised list of questions to assess preparedness. This builds on the visits made in previous years to major trauma centres, high secure mental health facilities, burns centres and high consequence infectious disease units. The regional office will confirm in due course if your organisation is to be visited.

### **National reviews**

Organisations which operate across multiple regions will be approached following the assurance where significant disparity in scores are identified across their operating areas.

### **Care Quality Commission (CQC)**

For organisations subject to a CQC inspection, NHS England and NHS Improvement will share the final agreed version of an organisation's EPRR self assessment if requested by the CQC.

### **Summary**

You are asked to ensure EPRR staff are aware of the contents of this letter to support the submission of the EPRR self assessment.

Please note the following deadlines:

- 31 October 2019: assurance returns should be made to Regional EPRR.

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- 31 December 2019: regions to have completed confirm and challenge meetings and submitted their Regional EPRR assurance report using the Regional return template.
- 31 December 2019: organisations to have shared their board report with Regional EPRR
- 28 February 2020: national EPRR to have completed confirm and challenge meetings with Regional EPRR.
- 31 March 2020 - national EPRR assurance reported to the NHS England and NHS Improvement Board.

If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact me, or your Regional EPRR contact.

Yours sincerely



**Stephen Groves**  
**National Head of EPRR**

CC NHS England and NHS Improvement Business continuity team  
CCG Accountable Officers  
CCG Clinical Leads  
CSU Managing Directors  
Emergency Preparedness, Resilience and Response Officers  
Clara Swinson, Director General for Global and Public Health, Department of Health and Social Care  
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