

*From the Office of Sir David Nicholson KCB CBE
Chief Executive of the NHS in England*



*Richmond House
79 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2NS
david.nicholson@dh.gsi.gov.uk*

To:

All chairs and chief executives in NHS trusts in England
All chairs and chief executives in NHS foundation trusts in England
All chairs and chief executives in primary care trusts in England
All chairs and chief executives in strategic health authorities in England

Cc: Monitor

Gateway reference number: 18268

19 October 2012

Dear Colleague,

HILLSBOROUGH: THE REPORT OF THE HILLSBOROUGH INDEPENDENT PANEL

You will all have seen the recent coverage of the Report of the Hillsborough Independent Panel, published on 12th September. Copies of the full report are available at the Panel's website at <http://hillsborough.independent.gov.uk/report>.

The findings are, as you will know, a tragic account of a whole range of authorities fundamentally failing the people they were supposed to be looking after. This included the Ambulance Service and in particular, their inadequate response to what was a major incident, which, we now know, could have cost lives.

Although these events were over 23 years ago and there have been many improvements to emergency and acute care and responding to major incidents since then, we owe it to all those affected and the wider public, to ensure that we reflect carefully on the findings in the context of the services we provide today.

As you would expect the successor NHS organisations in Yorkshire have been studying the report carefully to ensure any lessons are learned for those organisations and that current systems and processes are fit for purpose.


When this work has concluded we would expect any learning relevant for the wider system to be shared across the service as a whole.

However, I would ask that in the light of the report, you review, with your Boards, your own arrangements for responding to major incidents, including the way in which you work together with local agencies, and that you take any appropriate action to ensure your current practices and processes are as robust as possible.

Looking to the future, the NHS Commissioning Board is working closely with local agencies and all its partners to establish new arrangements for emergency preparedness, resilience and response (EPRR) from April 2013. The Board is currently refreshing systems and guidance for major incident planning and command and control and establishing Local Health Resilience Partnerships (LHRPs) and will consider the findings of the Hillsborough report as part of that.

I would encourage you all to engage actively with that work, which is taking place between now and April so we can ensure any lessons from what happened at Hillsborough are woven into the fabric of the new system from the outset.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Nicholson', written over a thin vertical red line.

Sir David Nicholson KCB CBE
NHS Chief Executive