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31<sup>st</sup> March 2014

To: CEOs of Trusts and Foundation Trusts with inpatient areas  
CC: Monitor CEO  
NHS TDA CEO and Director of Nursing  
Health Education England CEO and Director of Nursing  
Regional Directors and Regional Chief Nurses  
Area Team Directors  
CCG Chief Officers  
Trust Directors of Nursing and Directors of HR

Dear Colleague,

**Re: Hard Truths Commitments Regarding the Publishing of Staffing Data**

As you know the National Quality Board (NQB) issued guidance in November to optimise nursing, midwifery and care staffing capacity and capability. Research demonstrates that staffing levels are linked to the safety of care and that staff shortfalls increase the risks of patient harm and poor quality care. Patients and the public have a right to know how the hospitals they are paying for are being run, and so the Government has made a number of commitments in “Hard Truths” to make this information more publically available.

We are writing to give you clear guidance on the delivery of the “Hard Truths” commitments associated with publishing staffing data regarding nursing, midwifery and care staff.

There are a number of milestones ahead in this first phase, which will focus on all inpatient areas; including acute, community, mental health, maternity and learning disability. The commitments are to publish staffing data from April and, at the latest, by the end of June 2014 in the following ways (see appendix one and NQB Guidance for full details):

- A Board report describing the staffing capacity and capability, following an establishment review, using evidence based tools where possible. To be presented to the Board every six months
- Information about the nurses, midwives and care staff deployed for each shift compared to planned, displayed at ward level
- A Board report containing details of planned and actual staffing on a shift-by-shift basis for the previous month. To be presented to the Board every month

- The monthly report must also be published on the Trust's website, and Trusts will be expected to link or upload the report to the relevant hospital(s) webpage on NHS Choices

We will be undertaking two stock takes of progress. These will require minimal data entry and will take place on the dates set out below. They will be undertaken jointly with the NHS Trust Development Authority (TDA) for NHS trusts. We would encourage you to ensure that a member of your team is primed to respond on your organisation's behalf. Specific details will be sent in due course.

	Date Issued:	Date to be Returned:
Stock take 1	23rd April 2014	30th April 2014
Stock take 2	28th May 2014	6th June 2014

The NQB guidance is designed to assist providers in fulfilling their commitments made in Hard Truths with regard to publishing nurse, midwife and care staff levels. The guidance sets out ten expectations of commissioners and providers in relation to getting nursing, midwifery and care staffing right so that high quality care and the best possible outcomes for patients can be achieved.

Please find attached a table containing an overview of the key actions that you should take and the timeframes. We also attach a set of Frequently Asked Questions in anticipation of some of the queries that these expectations might raise. These documents will also be put on the NHS England website. If the FAQs do not provide an answer to your question or you would like to discuss further support, please contact either the Chief Nurse's Office in your region or the NHS TDA:

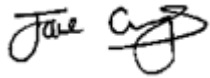
- NHS England: North – Hazel Richards
- NHS England: Midlands and East – Sylvia Knight
- NHS England: London – Bronagh Scott
- NHS England: South – Deborah Wheeler
- NHS TDA: Jacqueline McKenna

Boards must, at any point in time, be able to demonstrate to their commissioners, that robust systems and processes are in place to assure themselves that the nursing, midwifery and care staffing capacity and capability in their organisation is sufficient to provide safe care. All NHS Trusts are accountable to the NHS TDA and, as stated in the Accountability Framework 2014-15, will be expected to provide the NHS TDA with assurance that they are implementing the NQB staffing guidance and that where there are risks to quality of care due to staffing that actions are taken to minimise the risk. Monitor has worked with us in the development of this guidance and expects Foundation Trusts to have the right staff, in the right place at the right time. The Care Quality Commission will be looking for compliance with all the actions outlined in this letter as part of their

inspection regime. Monitor will act where the CQC identifies any deficiencies in staffing levels for Foundation Trusts.

We hope that this outline of the required next steps and associated milestones has been helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Jane Cummings in black ink.

Jane Cummings  
Chief Nursing Officer England  
NHS England

Handwritten signature of Professor Sir Mike Richards in black ink.

Professor Sir Mike Richards  
Chief Inspector of Hospitals  
Care Quality Commission