# Control of Legionella in Healthcare Premises

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference Number:</th>
<th>NHSCT/12/482</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Target audience:</strong></td>
<td>This policy is directed to all Trust staff groups as they have a responsibility to flush all hot and cold water taps which are infrequently used i.e. less than once per week</td>
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| **Sources of advice in relation to this document:** | Raymond Scullin, Head of Engineering  
Alistair Donaldson, Head of Estates |
| **Replaces (if appropriate):** | Policy for the control of Legionella – United Legacy Trust |
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**NHSCT Mission Statement**

To provide for all the quality of services we would expect for our families and ourselves
Control of Legionella in Healthcare Premises
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Control of Legionella in Healthcare Premises

1. Introduction

Legionnaires’ disease is potentially a fatal form of pneumonia, caused by inhalation of contaminated water aerosols containing the bacterium *Legionella Pneumophila* or related bacteria. Engineered water systems may become contaminated by such bacteria and hence pose a health risk to susceptible individuals. Factors determining the susceptibility of the individual to this disease includes age, illness, immunosuppression and smoking. Other legionella bacteria can also cause less serious illnesses. The collective term used to cover the group of diseases caused by legionella bacteria is legionellosis or Legionnaires’ disease.

Cases of Legionnaires’ disease have occurred amongst staff in the workplace (including hospitals) and members of the public (patients). Therefore, management of all healthcare premises have an overriding general duty of care under the Health and Safety at Work Order (NI) 1978 to safely supply, store, distribute and manage water services under their control.

This document outlines the Northern Health & Social Care Trust (the Trust) Policy, lists its objectives and identifies the procedures it will put in place to provide guidance to staff responsible for implementing the Trust's Legionella Control Policy.

2. Purpose / Aim

The purpose is to articulate, strategically, how the Trust will meet its obligations in respect of the Control of Legionella.

This policy aims to demonstrate the Chief Executive and Trust Board’s commitment to, insofar as reasonably practical, control and minimise the risks arising from Legionella Bacteria in the Water Systems in its estate and to outline the mechanisms it proposes to use to do this.

3. Policy Statement

The Trust recognises its duties in respect of the installation, operation, maintenance and testing of all water systems to control Legionella as laid out in the Health and Safety at Work Order (NI) 1978, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (NI) 2000, Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulation (NI) 2003 (COSHH), Public Health Notifiable Disease Order (NI) 1989, The Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations (NI) 2007, The Water Supply (Water Fitting) Regulations (NI) 2009, The Food Safety (NI) Order 1991 so as to eliminate, or minimise the risk, to all those who are within or are affected by its estate.
The Trust will discharge these duties by timely provision, insofar as is reasonably practical, of the resources to implement Health Technical Memoranda (HTM) 04-01; The Control of Legionella hygiene, “safe” hot water, cold water and drinking water systems, HTM 00; Policies & Principles, and The Health and Safety Commission’s (2000) Approved Code of Practice L8 so that all water systems are installed, operated, maintained and tested to the correct standard.

The key measures taken to achieve this are –

- The appointment of the Responsible Person (Water), Infection Control Officer, Deputy Responsible Persons (Water); Senior Engineers (Water);

- Formulation of a **Written Scheme** to ensure the overall integrity of domestic water systems and equipment are in compliance with the Approved Code of Practice (L8). (The written scheme is available on Staffnet);

- To survey and carry out a risk assessment of all relevant systems and equipment to establish any items of non-compliance in accordance with the Written Scheme;

- To establish a programme of modification of such systems and equipment and to work toward compliance;

- To ensure the design of relevant building services for new, refurbished or modified systems is such that the relevant statutory guidance is followed;

- To maintain record drawings of domestic water pipework systems;

- To maintain operation and maintenance manuals for domestic water plant and equipment;

- To keep all relevant personnel adequately trained in practices and procedures with respect to the control of legionella.

### 4. Target Audience

This policy is directed to all Trust staff groups as they have a responsibility to flush all hot and cold water taps which are infrequently used i.e. less than once per week.
5. Responsibilities

The overall responsibility for controlling and minimising the risks arising from legionella bacteria in all water systems in its Estate rests with the Trust Board. The Board will ensure that, insofar as is reasonably practical, the necessary resources are made available to implement this policy. The Chief Executive delegates the implementation of this policy to the Director of Planning & Performance Management and through him/her to the Head of Estates.

The management structure (page 6) identifies the key personnel as the Responsible Person, Infection Control Officer, Deputy Responsible Persons, and Senior Engineers. The role of these staff are detailed in the Written Scheme.

6. Equality, Human Rights and DDA

The policy is purely clinical/technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.

7. Alternative Formats

This document can be made available on request on disc, larger font, Braille, audio-cassette and in other minority languages to meet the needs of those who are not fluent in English

8. Sources of advice in relation to this document

The Policy Author, as detailed on the policy title page should be contacted with regard to any queries on the content of this policy.
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