

# TAG NEWS

TRAINING NEWS FOR NHS SUPPORT SERVICES STAFF WORKING IN THE NORTH WEST

S U M M E R , 1 9 9 7

## October Conference at Manchester Airport

*See inside for details*

### WHAT ARE THE TAGs?

The TAGs are Training Advisory Groups which provide training for NHS managers and support staff — the people who, while they may not be at the front line of patient care, are nevertheless vital to the provision of high quality service.

All TAG members are themselves NHS staff, so they have first-hand knowledge of what is required on the training front and are well placed to organise it.

TAGs are good news for the NHS and good news for the individuals involved. The NHS gains by having staff who are better trained and more motivated, the staff gain confidence, job knowledge and possible future career opportunities.

There are three NHS TAGs in the North West:

- **The Facilities TAG provides management training for senior staff working in Facilities;**
- **The Estates TAG provides technical estates training;**
- **The Hotel Services TAG provides training for support service staff – catering, linen services, portering and domestic services.**

As you can read inside, all three TAGs have courses and conferences coming up.

The Facilities Management TAG has chosen Manchester Airport as the venue for its October conference, an exciting modern location which has the added advantage of excellent road and rail links with all parts of the North West.

The transport aspect is important because the North West TAGs are serving not only the old NHS North West Region but also what was previously the Mersey Region.

Many Trusts are now pursuing the Investors in People standard and TAG courses are designed to tie in with this. Read on to find out how you and your colleagues can take advantage of these initiatives.



# By popular demand



## First Impressions Count

So much interest was generated by the first Hotel Services conference of the year that the TAG has organised a repeat for the autumn. "We Never Get a Second Chance to Make a First Impression" was held at the Postgraduate Education Centre, Chorley & South Ribble NHS Trust on 8 May, 1997.

It focused on the importance of Customer Care & Attention and was aimed at *anyone* working at a supervisory level within hotel services.

The repeat conference will be held later this year. A wide range of NHS employees will find it useful, including charge hand/first line managers from catering, domestic, portering, HSDU or linen & laundry services, estate and works maintenance personnel; security and traffic management supervisors; front of house staff; medical receptionists; telephonists, etc.

## Linen & Laundry

Another forthcoming course is a series of one-day workshops on Linen & Laundry Services, providing technical and theoretical training for laundry assistants and supervisors.

Facilitated by Lynn Fort, the Linen Services Manager at Queens Park Hospital where the event will be based, the workshops will be divided into four sessions. Delegates can choose which of the four they attend, subjects being textiles, wash house practice, ironers, and quality and resource management.

## Domestic Services

For 1997, the highly popular residential course for Deputy/First Line Managers and Supervisors from Domestic Services has been extended from two to three days.

A highlight of the course is likely to be the sessions on Personnel Issues, which will be presented by Marion

Forrest, Director of Personnel at Mental Health Services of Salford. Marion's contribution on this subject at previous courses has been very well received and gives delegates an understanding of personnel issues relating to domestic services, including practical work looking at case studies.

The facilitator is Marion Gildert, Domestic Services Manager and Trust Advisor, Chorley & South Ribble NHS Trust. Ladybridge Training & Conference Centre in Bolton is the venue and the date for the course is 21-23 October, 1997.

## Staff Accommodation

November will bring a conference on staff accommodation, targeted at staff who are directly responsible for the day-to-day running of accommodation rather than managers in overall control. Principal facilitator is Ahmed Jama (Assistant Director of Facilities at Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust), who is an active member of the Hotel Services TAG.

## Portering

Later this year the TAG is planning another of the three-day development training courses for portering managers, supervisors and charge hand porters which have proved so successful over the past few years. TAG representatives responsible for facilitating the course are Barry Johnson (Support Services Manager) and Stef Bienias (Training Manager: Support Services), both from the Blackpool Victoria Hospital NHS Trust.

## Catering

Catering issues will be covered by appropriate study days and conferences. Topics are currently being investigated by TAG members Peter Davies (Catering Manager, West Lancashire NHS Trust), Ahmed Jama and Elizabeth Whewell.

## Planning the next five years

Now in its fifth year, the Hotel Services TAG meets every two months to progress the training and development of operational staff (supervisors, chargehands and middle managers) within four sectors: Catering, Linen, Portering and Domestic Services.

Membership of the TAG is made up of representatives from each of the four disciplines and the TAG is currently chaired by Marion Gildert, Domestic Services Manager & Trust Advisor from Chorley & South Ribble NHS Trust.

During those five years a wide range of courses and conferences has been organised, reflecting both 'functional' need and corporate 'Hotel Service' issues.

Topics for each year are decided not only by carrying out training needs analysis but also by analysing feedback from the participants themselves, as well as requests from potential participants. The TAG places a high value on responding to the staff's own suggestions, hence the questionnaire in this newsletter.

It is partly as a result of such suggestions that the TAG has become convinced of the need to offer training to other support groups, particularly Telephonists, Front of House Staff, and Security & Car Parking personnel. The TAG would welcome membership from these disciplines.

Indeed, any manager who feels he or she has something to contribute should contact Hotel Services TAG Chairperson Marion Gildert on 01257 245237.

### COURSES CHECKLIST

Name	Format	Venue	Date
Customer Care & Attention: 'We Never Get a Second Chance to Make a First Impression'	One-day conference	Postgraduate Education Centre, Chorley & South Ribble District General Hospital	Autumn (TBA)
Linen & Laundry Services Textiles Workshop	One-day workshop	Queens Park Hospital, Blackburn	Autumn (TBA)
Linen & Laundry Services Wash house Practice Workshop	One-day workshop	Queens Park Hospital, Blackburn	Autumn (TBA)
Linen & Laundry Services Ironers Workshop	One-day workshop	Queens Park Hospital, Blackburn	Autumn (TBA)
Linen & Laundry Services Resource Management Workshop	One-day workshop	Queens Park Hospital, Blackburn	Autumn (TBA)
Domestic Services	Three-day residential course	Ladybridge Training & Conference Centre, Bolton	Tuesday-Thursday 21-23 October
Staff Accommodation	One-day conference	TBA	November
Portering	Three-day residential course	Ladybridge Training & Conference Centre, Bolton	Tuesday-Thursday 20-22 January 1998



## Looking to the trades

To date, courses run by the Estates TAG have been mainly directed at Estate Management staff, but this year the TAG plans to extend its training activities into areas more applicable to tradesmen and supervisors.

There will be no reduction in the attention given to Estate Management, merely an extension of TAG activities into other areas.

A glance at the wide range of subjects covered in the first three years of the TAG's existence shows the kind of in-depth attention which tradesmen and supervisory training can now expect. Topics have included:

- Competition or Partnership?
- Risk Management & Pressure Systems
- Capital Investment & Quality
- Condition Appraisal
- Performance Measurement: Benchmarking & Labour Management System
- Planning & Procurement
- Business & Strategic Planning

The creation of the Estates TAG dates back to 1993, when it was decided at a meeting of the National Association of Health Estate & Facilities Managers (North West) to establish the group.

Its objectives were simple: to assess the training requirements of everyone within Estates, from tradesman to Director, to organise training events to meet those needs, and to do it as economically as possible.

That way, the NHS could be confident that its staff have the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to achieve its objectives and face the challenges of the future.

'In an ever changing environment, it is vital that staff keep abreast of current developments and changes within the service' explains TAG Chairman Colin Fitzpatrick, who is Director of Facilities at Manchester Children's Hospital NHS Trust.

Other Estates TAG members are Colin Cadwallader (Director of Estates, Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust), John Guiver (Estates Planning Manager, Lancaster Priority Services NHS Trust), Howard Jackson (Assistant Director of Estates & Facilities, Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust), John Kerrane (Estates Manager, Salford Royal Hospitals NHS Trust) and Philip Thorpe (EBME Manager, Bolton Hospitals NHS Trust).

# Building on success

## Time for the Tradesmen

Tradesmen accreditation is being given a high profile in the 1997 Estates TAG programme.

Workshops will be organised to support the introduction of the construction industry scheme, mounted jointly by the Estates TAG and local colleges, along with Union support. These workshops are planned to continue this year and next.

In addition to this, the TAG will be helping update engineering tradesmen's skills in areas such as CORGI registration, European Legislation and Customer Care.

## Estate Management

Estate Management seminars for 1997 are directed at Benchmarking and Improved Management of Maintenance.

With the Benchmarking seminar having already been held (see separate report), attention is now focused on the autumn seminar, entitled Improving the Management of Maintenance. It will look at different ways of structuring the Estate Department. Consider new software packages which are becoming available to support Estate Managers with their routine activities. Examine the use of performance agreements as an alternative to the Labour Management System (LMS). Consider simplicity of operation, cost-effectiveness and functionality in what promises to be a very worthwhile day.

The venue for this seminar will again be the Conference Centre at Wrightington, now a well-known conference location among Estates personnel.

# Setting a benchmark

Benchmarking is a very topical subject at the moment and July's seminar on this subject proved very interesting and informative.

It concentrated on the existing Benchmarking Clubs and was directed at the development of more specialised groupings within Estates, enabling better comparatives to be developed.

Speakers at the event, at the Conference Centre in Wrightington Hospital, Wigan, included Ian Cox, Clifford Price, Geoff Callan and Colin Fitzpatrick.

First to speak was Ian Cox, Director of Estates and Facilities, Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust. Ian introduced the conference, focusing on quality and identifying how Benchmarking could improve the quality of an organisations work.

He was followed by Clifford Price, who is now a consultant but was formally Director of Facilities for an NHS Trust. He gave background information on Benchmarking and detailed his experiences as a consultant.

Next to speak was Geoff Callan, who is Director of Facilities at Milton Keynes General NHS Trust. Geoff gave an insight into his own practical experience of Benchmarking.

Finally Colin Fitzpatrick (Director of Facilities, Manchester Children's Hospital NHS Trust), explained how a small trust can use Benchmarking to best advantage.

**Any Managers who feel they may have something to contribute towards the Estates Training Advisory Group should contact its Chairman, Colin Fitzpatrick, on 0161 727 2296.**

# TRAINING QUESTIONNAIRE

## WE WANT YOUR IDEAS

To help the three TAGs provide courses and conferences to meet your needs, please indicate below topics you would like to see covered at future events.

Training issue or topic for future course or conference	Number of staff from your organisation likely to attend

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Position/Job title: \_\_\_\_\_

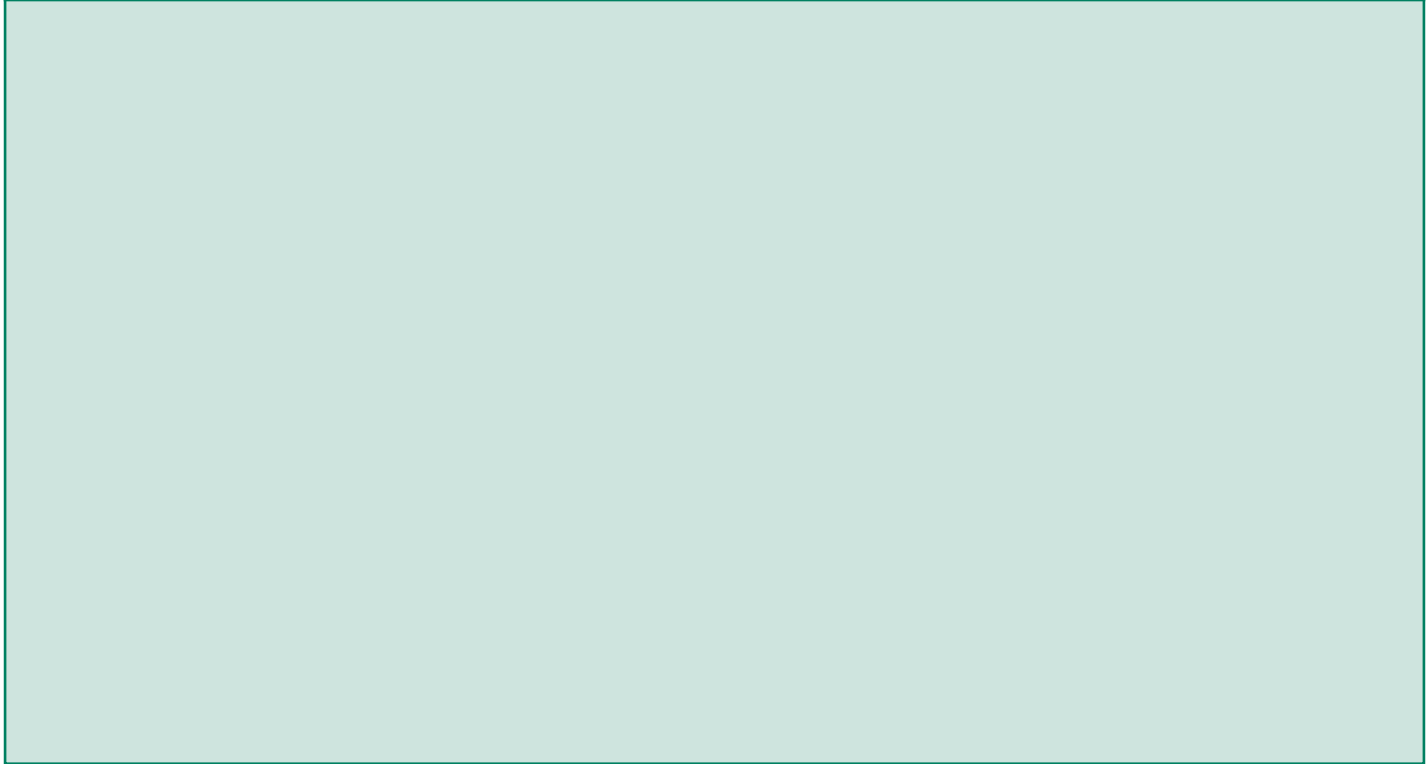
Trust/Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

**FREE PRIZE DRAW**

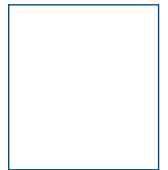
Please complete this questionnaire and send to the address overleaf. All completed questionnaires received by 30 September 1997 will be entered into a prize draw. The winning entry will receive two free tickets to a conference of the winner's choice.

# *Your space!*

**WE NEED YOUR NEWS, VIEWS AND LETTERS FOR THE NEXT ISSUE**



**FOLD HERE**



**Anne Wilkinson,  
TAG NEWS,  
Blackpool, Wyre & Fylde Community Health Services NHS Trust,  
Organisational Development Department,  
Directorate of Human Resources,  
Wesham Park Hospital,  
Derby Road,  
Wesham,  
Lancashire PR4 3AL**

## Reflections on an era of change

All three of the conferences provided by the Facilities TAG in the 1996-7 year produced a very encouraging response, a reflection on the topical nature of the subject matter.

The pattern was set by Implications of Private Finance in the NHS, which was held at the De Vere Hotel, Blackpool in May 1996. This conference attracted over 64 delegates, including a number of Chairman, Chief Executives and Directors of Finance.

The conference was addressed by a number of top-level speakers from both the private and public sectors and provided an excellent insight into the challenges of pursuing a PFI initiative. It was also addressed by Treasury Minister Michael Jack MP, who explained the Government's approach to using PFI as an alternative to Treasury funding for NHS developments.

In October, a conference on Greening the NHS was held at Wrightington Hospital and proved appealing enough to attract a number of delegates from outside the region.

Speakers addressed a range of issues including the need for Trusts to adopt pro-environmental policies and demonstrate commitment to protecting the environment. The presentation by Alan Watson of Friends of the Earth was particularly thought-provoking and provided delegates with a global understanding of environmental issues.

It was appropriate that the year's third conference, on Risk Management, should have been held on British Nuclear Fuels' facility at Salwick. The safety record of this organisation is closely monitored and the procedures it adopts to allay public fears were outlined by BNFL's Geoff Gill. The conference, which included a tour of the plant, was well received and the feedback from those who attended was very positive.

**Any Managers who feel they may have something to contribute to the Facilities TAG should contact its Chairperson, Michael Gallagher, on 01253 303725.**

Nothing succeeds like success, the saying goes, and this year the Facilities TAG is following up its very successful 1996 with another three-conference season, all of them on highly topical and relevant subjects.

The first conference, which will examine Facilities Management in a Changing World, will be held on Thursday, 8 October 1997 in the Atlantic Suite, at Terminal 2 of Manchester Airport. The last few years have seen significant improvements in the management of support services and the conference will focus on best practice in the NHS and the private sector.

It will also consider the image of Facilities Management and will examine ways of raising its profile within a Trust.

Leadership qualities will be next to come under the spotlight, at an event entitled Leading & Motivating the

Team. Motivating staff at all levels is one of the key objectives of Support Services managers in the NHS and is vital if employees are to maximise their potential.

Persuading staff to support the organisation's mission and values is the key to providing high-quality, cost-effective services.

The conference is scheduled for Wednesday, 4 March 1998, at British Aerospace's premises in Warton near Preston. The conference will include high calibre speakers from both the NHS and the private sector and will also include a tour of the aerospace site. It promises to be an event not to be missed.

Next up is a conference entitled PFI Initiatives in the NHS, planned for later in 1998. This event will include speakers who have been involved in PFI initiatives and will concentrate on how PFI has matured since its inception.



## Who we are

The Facilities TAG, which comprises Senior Support Services managers, was formed 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> years ago and currently has the following members:

- Mike Gallagher, Blackpool Victoria Hospital NHS Trust
- Carol Atherton, Blackpool Victoria Hospital NHS Trust
- John Flannery, Bolton Hospitals NHS Trust
- Marion Gildert, Chorley & South Ribble NHS Trust
- Howard Jackson, Preston Acute Hospitals NHS Trust
- Colin Fitzpatrick, Manchester Children's Hospital
- Lesley Hartas, Wigan & Leigh Health Services NHS Trust
- Trevor Jones, Guild Community Healthcare NHS Trust
- Paul Bond, Halton General Hospital NHS Trust
- Nicola Jenkins, Glan Clwyd District General Hospital NHS Trust

### YOUR CONTACT

The three Training Advisory Groups — Facilities, Estates and Hotel Services — have appointed **Howard Naylor**, Assistant Director of Human Resources (Organisational Development) and **Anne Wilkinson**, Projects Administrator of the Blackpool Wyre & Fylde Community Health Services NHS Trust, as Lead Providers to organise their training events.

For information about any conference or news of what is coming up, contact:-  
**ANNE WILKINSON ON 01253 306415**