



May 2013

**To : All Birmingham GPs/Practice Managers**

Dear Doctor

**National actions for Family Health Services teams**

The FHS Primary Care Support team (formerly known as Shared Services) in Birmingham has historically acted as a "clearing house" for redirecting clinical letters which have been sent to the wrong practice – practices send them to us via the Blue Bags. One of the main reasons for this was that hospitals did not have the facility that enabled them to establish the individual patient's GP.

As you are aware hospitals now have access to patient data via the Spine, and therefore should be ensuring that correspondence is sent directly to the correct practice, ensuring critical clinical patient information is passed on in a timely way.

We would therefore ask that any hospital letters that you receive for patients not registered with your practice are returned to the sender, so that they can check the details on the Spine and update their records accordingly, ensuring that the same mistake doesn't continue to happen.

Occasionally letters from private hospitals, solicitors, insurance companies etc are also sent through to us. If you receive a letter from a company regarding a person who is not registered with you, please do the same, returning the letter to the sender.

The exception to this is if a clinical note you receive relates to a patient that is now deceased or has been removed from your list as emigrated, gone away etc. These can be forwarded to us via the Blue Bags in order that they can be added to the medical record held in our archive storage. **Please ensure that you clearly indicate the reason for removal.**

Please note that any letters / paperwork put in the internal bags that are not specifically for our teams (as described above) will be returned to you.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Yours Sincerely

Janet Baxter  
Head of Patient Services and Contract Management