



**Cardiac Investigations Dept.
Antrim Hospital
1st May 2008.**

Dear Mr McGimpsey,

I am writing as Chairperson of the Northern Ireland Regional Training and Advisory Group, to express my disappointment on behalf of all Cardiac Physiologists in the region, that statutory regulation is again delayed to 2009 or beyond.

Application to the Health Professions Council was first made in 2003 by the Registration Council for Clinical Physiologists (RCCP). At that time it was hoped that statutory regulation would have been initiated by late 2005, early 2006.

In May 2007, Professor Sue Hill, Chief Scientific Officer and Nick Clarke, Head of Health and Social Care Regulation issued a document following publication of the White Paper "Trust Assurance and Safety- The Regulation of Health Professionals in the 21st Century". Although the document states that the introduction of statutory regulation is a priority, in more recent communication it would seem that it is going to be beyond 2009.

In the interim another document "Healthcare Scientists and Regulation"(Gateway ref: 9228) November 2007, requested that Strategic Health Authorities continue to encourage physiology staff to apply and indeed to remain on the RCCP register in the interests of public protection.

As I am sure you are fully aware Cardiac Physiology staff in the province in the last 12-18 months has performed invaluable

work in meeting diagnostic targets as determined by your Department. One of the major issues for Cardiac Physiology staff throughout this period is that of ensuring the quality of any investigation has not been compromised in order to improve on quantity. Statutory regulation would assure patients that the Cardiac Physiologist whom they encounter in the healthcare setting have successfully completed a recognised training pathway and continue to undertake professional development in order to maintain competency.

Public protection is paramount, particularly at a time when services are being offered outside the controlled hospital environment and new providers are entering the arena. Without statutory regulation pretty much anybody can set themselves up to offer cardiac diagnostic services.

As a professional Group, we would appreciate your support in moving this process forward in order that we can assure our service users here in the province that cardiac physiologists providing diagnostic services are regulated.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Virginia Anderson
Chairperson NIRTAG.