

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

TRUST ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

Status:	Sub-group of the Trust Board
Chair:	Non Executive Director
Membership:	2 Non Executive Directors Chief Nurse Director of Business Development Medical Director Director of Estate and Facilities
Frequency of Meetings:	Quarterly
Quorum:	three, to include at least one Non Executive and one Executive

1. Remit

- 1.1 The purpose of the Trust Assurance Committee (AC) will be to ensure that the Board has a sound assessment of risk and that the Trust has adequate plans, processes and systems for minimising risk. The AC will provide a strategic perspective to the Board on issues covered within its areas (see below).

The AC will be chaired by a Non-Executive Director and consist of the leads of the key working groups that cover each of the following areas of risk:

- Clinical Governance
- Environmental
- Health and Safety
- Operations and Systems

2. Accountability

- 2.1 The AC will report directly to the Trust Board.

3. Organisational Relationships

- 3.1 The Chair of the AC will maintain a direct link from the AC to the Audit Committee by attending Audit Committee Meetings and providing assurance of effectiveness of the wider risk management programme within the Trust.

- 3.2 To ensure a comprehensive overview of the assurance agenda across the Trust, the AC will receive reports from the following Executive Committees at each meeting.

- Clinical Governance
- Risk

- Information Governance
- Operations
- Health and Safety

4. Responsibilities

- 4.1 To provide the over-riding strategic direction and guidance to facilitate the development and implementation of risk management initiatives Trust-wide.
- 4.2 To act as a central, co-ordinating management group ensuring that all related groups and committees identified within the Risk Management Strategy are working effectively and in accordance with the agreed risk management philosophy of the organisation.
- 4.3 To promote a culture in which risk management will continue to develop as an integral, seamless component of the health care process.
- 4.4 To establish priorities for attention across the range of AC responsibilities and assign responsibility to appropriate individuals and groups to address these priorities.
- 4.5 To monitor the Trust Risk Register and associated action plans to reduce risk.
- 4.6 To oversee the development of the Assurance Framework which systematically identifies risks that threaten the achievement of the Trust's objectives.
- 4.7 Ensure that the means of complying with all statutory and other guidance such as that relevant to Standards for Better Health and National Health Service Litigation Risk Management Standards are in place.
- 4.8 To report to the Trust Board on the management of significant assurance issues and the progress in reducing any identified risks through a regular report which includes agreed key Performance Indicators for the management of risk.
- 4.9 To develop a reporting framework to ensure that the Trust is achieving compliance with all relevant statutory requirements and where feasible, good practice guidelines in respect of the areas covered by the AC.
- 4.10 To receive regular reports covering all areas covered by the AC.
- 4.11 To monitor the effectiveness of organisational controls to ensure that those areas covered by the AC are properly and effectively delivered.
- 4.12 To ensure there is a range of information, training and promotion to facilitate and support staff awareness of all areas covered by the AC.
- 4.13 To establish links with other bodies such as the Strategic Health Authority, local Primary care and other Trusts, Social Services etc where risk issues affect or are affected by such agencies.
- 4.14 An Annual Report of all assurance activities will be prepared and submitted to the AC for consideration.
- 4.15 To regularly submit a summary of the issues discussed and actions agreed to the Trust Board.
- 4.16 The AC will keep a record of attendance.

- 4.17 The AC will regularly monitor the effectiveness of the minimum requirements contained within these Terms of Reference in relation to membership and regular attendance and reporting arrangements. Where monitoring has identified deficiencies, recommendations and action plans must be developed and changes implemented accordingly.

5. Reporting Arrangements

- 5.1 The AC will ensure that the Trust Board has an annual plan covering each of the key areas of responsibility. Quarterly reports will be provided to the Board on these.

Reviewed, and recommended to the Trust Board on 26 February 2007

Ratified by the Trust Board on 8 March 2007

To be reviewed in March 2008