

**From The Chief Medical Officer:
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To: Medical Directors of Trusts
Consultant ENT Surgeons
Plastic Surgeons
Directors of Public Health
Chief Executives of Trusts
Risk Managers of Trusts

Dear Colleague

TONSIL AND ADENOID SURGERY

I last wrote to you on 21 December 2001 about this issue (letter attached). I wanted to update you on the position since then.

At a meeting on the 10 January 2002 with the Consultant ENT Surgeons (minutes attached) it was noted that there had not been any increase in post operative haemorrhage in Northern Ireland since the introduction of single use instruments. However, it was decided that those ENT surgeons who wished to return to reusable instruments for tonsillectomy and adenoidectomy could do so if and when their hospital units could provide satisfactory decontamination facilities. In particular, instruments should be reprocessed in CSSDs which had validated washer disinfectant processes in place. However some hospitals had already disposed of their reusable instruments and it was recognised that it could take some considerable time for these to be purchased. Many Trusts in England are in the same position.

Some surgeons indicated that they wished to continue to use single use instruments as they felt confident in their use and had experienced no increase in post operative haemorrhage. It was agreed that they could continue to use single use instruments but that they should also continue to closely monitor outcomes.

The Special Advisory Committee in Otorhinolaryngology met in March 2002 and endorsed this position in Northern Ireland.

Yours sincerely

**DR HENRIETTA CAMPBELL
CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER**

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