

3 December 2010

Dear

CONSULTATION ON SPECIAL ADVANCE PAYMENTS

The Health and Social Care Board, along with its partner organisations, is committed to continual improvement of business systems. The pharmaceutical payments system is a very important financial and information management system given the scale and complexity of the financial transactions which it handles.

The Pharmaceutical Contractors' Committee has, in the past, raised issues regarding special advance payments. The HSC Board has reviewed arrangements that pertain to special advance payments elsewhere in the UK and has held discussions with the Business Services Organisation. The Board believes that the proposals as set out will provide better arrangements in Northern Ireland than in other parts of the UK.

The HSC Board is seeking PCC's views on the two phases of business improvement as set out in the attached consultation paper:

1. To reduce the payment schedule from 60 to 45 days
2. To adopt a revised methodology for calculation of the special advance.

The Board would welcome your views on these proposals, in writing and to this office, by 25th February 2011. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Dr Sloan Harper
Director of Integrated Care

