Medical Exposures - Regulatory Background

The Ionising Radiation (Medical Exposures) Regulations 2000, (IRMER 2000), came into force on 13 May 2000 to implement the European Directive 97/43/Euratom (The Medical Exposures Directive). The regulations replaced the Ionising Radiation (Protection of Persons Undergoing Medical Examination or Treatment) Regulations 1988 (POPUMET) which have been repealed. On 1 April 2009, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) assumed responsibility from the Healthcare Commission for the inspection and enforcement for incidents in England under IRMER 2000. Further information is available on the CQC website.

The Ionising Radiation (Medical Exposure) (Amendment) Regulations 2006, SI 2006/2523 (‘the Regulations’) amend IRMER 2000 Regulations. They passed the enforcement powers under the 2000 Regulations to the “appropriate authority”. In England, the current “appropriate authority” is the Care Quality Commission. The Amendment Regulations also make amendments to certain definitions in the 2000 Regulations in order to clarify:

- their meaning
- reflect changes to terminology used in the 2000 Regulations
- make transitional provision for incomplete matters or matters not finally disposed of before the Regulations came into force on 1 November 2006.

The Ionising Radiation (Medical Exposure)(Amendment) Regulations 2011 amend the IRMER 2000. A minor amendment was made to Regulation 3(a) IRMER 2011.

Diagnostic Reference levels

The Ionising Radiation (Medical Exposure) Regulations 2000 (IR(ME)R 2000), which partially implements Council Directive 97/43/Euratom, require employers undertaking medical exposures to establish diagnostic reference levels (DRLs) and to undertake appropriate reviews if these are consistently exceeded.

The Diagnostic Reference levels can be found here.