



NHSLA schemes - Additional support visits Information sheet

DNV is appointed by the NHS Litigation Authority (NHSLA) to manage and undertake the NHSLA Risk Management Standards and assessment process. DNV also offer the opportunity to provide additional support visits to NHSLA scheme members.

For further information about the additional support visits, please refer to this information sheet in the first instance, contact your assessor or email nhsla@dnv.com.

Financial

How much will it cost the organisation?

A flat fee will be charged for each day provided for the additional support visit. The six hour fixed time period allocated for each visit would therefore be charged at £795 plus VAT and expenses per day. There will be no facility to split the day.

What happens if the organisation changes its mind? Will it still be billed?

Once the organisation has signed the contract to undertake the visit, the support visit can be cancelled upon written notice up to 30 days before the date of the visit.

Will it cost the organisation more if the visit runs over time?

The NHSLA assessor will stay on site at the organisation for six hours. If the organisation requests more time a further additional visit can be arranged. An organisation can request up to five visits for each type of service provided, i.e. acute, mental health & learning disability or maternity, in any one financial year.

Can the fee be negotiated?

No. The fee is fixed and is very competitive in the current market place.

What happens if the NHSLA assessor cancels a support visit?

The assessor will only cancel a support visit due to unforeseen circumstances or ill health. If this happens DNV will provide another date to suit the organisation.

Does the organisation get a refund or free visit if it does not pass the assessment?

No. Although the visits are designed to support the organisation in its preparation for assessment, it is important to note that payment for additional support visits in no way guarantees compliance against the NHSLA Risk Management Standards at assessment.

Additional support visits - information sheet

Financial cont'd

Will the visits affect scheme contributions?

No. There is no link between scheme contributions and the take up of a support visit.

How is payment made?

The organisation will be billed directly by DNV.

Booking process

How does the organisation arrange a visit?

All visits need to be booked via the organisation's NHSLA assessor.

How much minimum notice will be required to book a visit?

It is advisable to give us as much notice as possible, but subject to NHSLA assessor availability and completion of the booking form, visits can be booked at any time. All bookings will be made following discussion with your assessor. The organisation will then need to confirm the booking in writing.

How many visits can an organisation have?

An organisation can request up to five visits for each type of service provided, i.e. acute, mental health & learning disability or maternity, in any one financial year. The organisation can also request a two day manager support training visit. Information on this training visit can be obtained from nhsla@dnv.com.

Can dates be scheduled altogether?

It is suggested that a period of time is left between the visits to allow progress against the action plan and allow the information to be absorbed effectively. However the organisation may choose to have the support visits together.

Visit format

Can the organisation have a joint visit for both acute and maternity services?

No, there would be too much to cover in a one day visit and the processes are quite different.

Will there be an upper limit on the amount organisations will be charged for additional expenses incurred by the NHSLA assessor?

Expenses will be added at a reasonable rate. Any organisation querying the amount can put a request for a review in writing to DNV's Director of NHSLA schemes.

When can an organisation have these visits in relation to the formal assessment process?

Visits can only be provided once the free informal visit provided as part of scheme membership has been undertaken.

We would recommend a gap of at least four weeks between a formal assessment and an additional support visit.

What happens if the organisation's NHSLA assessor has not got any time available?

DNV cannot offer a guarantee that your assessor will be available within the period requested. We will endeavour to offer another assessor whenever possible.

Can an organisation ask for specialist advice on a particular standard?

Following discussion with your NHSLA assessor this could be arranged depending on the subject matter you wish to cover during the visit.

Can an organisation have joint support visits? e.g. a PCT operating in all but name with two other PCTs?

Yes, if the organisations use one set of documents, policies and systems. One organisation will need to take responsibility for payment.

Can a one to one session be provided for new risk managers or personnel new in post?

Yes, although we would suggest that the two day manager support training would be more appropriate for personnel new into post.

Additional support visits - information sheet

Visit format cont'd

Can advice be given during the visit on the use of the evidence template and hyperlinking?

Yes.

Will the organisation have ownership of the agenda/programme for the additional support visits?

Each organisation/maternity service has its own particular needs and potential areas of difficulty, which the visit will aim to address. To ensure that the visit meets the needs of the organisation, we ask for an agenda for the day to be developed. This should be tailored to the specific needs of the organisation and could cover specific subjects, e.g. monitoring compliance; review of documentation; covering a specific area of policy, practice and performance; preparing for assessment; or undertaking a mock assessment.

If the visit is to take the form of a mock assessment, careful consideration will need to be made of the number of criteria that can be scheduled for review. Remember a formal assessment takes two days, with two/three assessors for higher level assessments.

Can the NHSLA assessor write a policy for the organisation in the time allowed?

The assessor can introduce the organisation to the suite of template documents currently available for use and free to download from the NHSLA website in support of the assessment process, but will not be able to write individual policies.

Can the NHSLA assessor tell the organisation if any evidence shown to them will pass an assessment?

The assessor can provide an indication of how documents may perform during an assessment. However, payment for additional support visits will not guarantee compliance with the NHSLA Risk Management Standards.

Can the NHSLA assessor attend before the assessment day to ensure that bespoke software will work on the day?

No. However, as part of the visit the assessor could advise on whether the review of documents stored on the software would be feasible during the assessment.

Following a failed assessment, can the NHSLA assessor return to the organisation to meet the executive team to give more thorough feedback and help develop an action plan?

Yes. However, this would need to be conducted by the assessor who undertook the assessment.

Can the NHSLA assessor advise the organisation exactly which level to go for following the visit?

The decision on which level to go for must be made by the organisation. The assessor can make a recommendation based on what they see during the day but no guarantees can be made by DNV on the success of the organisation against the chosen level.

If the NHSLA assessor undertaking the support visit is not the organisation's own allocated assessor, will they discuss the organisation with the allocated assessor to gain an understanding of the organisation?

Yes, any pertinent information will be shared with the assessor prior to the visit.

Does the organisation need to send any documentation to the NHSLA assessor prior to the visit?

Yes, to ensure the assessor is prepared and that the visit meets the organisation's needs we ask for a framework document to be completed and sent to the assessor prior to the visit.

Can the organisation discuss any aspects of risk management or is the visit focused purely on the NHSLA Risk Management Standards?

The aim of the additional support visits will be to provide extra support for organisations beyond that which is currently offered as part of scheme membership. The visit will be used to guide organisations towards compliance against the NHSLA Risk Management Standards including the CNST Maternity Clinical Risk Management Standards but would not focus on issues of risk management outside of the assessment process.

Additional support visits - information sheet

Post visit

Can an organisation use a support visit to provide assurance to other stakeholders?

No. The additional support visits are not an assessment and will not be able to provide assurance to other stakeholders.

How can the organisation guarantee the achievement of compliance following the paid support visit?

There can be no guarantee of compliance following the support visits. However, the gaining of an increased awareness, knowledge and ownership of risk management throughout all levels of the organisation will help to increase patient and staff safety and should assist an organisation in working towards demonstrating compliance with the NHSLA Risk Management Standards.

Miscellaneous

Can regional groups of risk/safety managers ask for a support visit?

No, we could not provide a support visit. Please note however, that where appropriate and possible this service could be provided for free as part of scheme membership and you should contact your NHSLA assessor for further information.

Can a strategic health authority (SHA) ask for a support visit?

No, but see above.

Can a commissioning PCT ask for a support visit?

No, because commissioners are not assessed by our programme. Please refer to the PCT FAQs for further information.

Can the organisation discuss issues over the phone after the visit, and who would that be with - the NHSLA assessor or the person who came if it was not the organisation's own assessor?

The organisation can discuss any issues with its allocated assessor or alternatively can contact the DNV Enquiries and Support Team on 0161 475 7054 or via nhsla@dnv.com.

What will the organisation get following the visit? Will there be a report?

DNV will not provide written feedback during or following the visit. The visits have been competitively priced to cover the 6 hours that the assessor spends on site. The assessor will provide comprehensive verbal feedback during the visit and a framework document is provided in advance of the assessment which the organisation may use to capture feedback and develop an action plan.

Can an organisation request the participation of an NHSLA assessor in the investigation team of a very serious untoward incident?

No, as this is outside of the scope of the NHSLA standards and assessments.

Who does the organisation go to if it has a concern or complaint?

The provision of this service is outside of the scope of the NHSLA and DNV contract. In agreeing to and undertaking a support visit there is a contractual agreement between the organisation requesting the visit and DNV, and as such, any concerns or complaints should be raised in writing with Aileen Orr, Head of Operations at DNV at aileen.orr@dnv.com.

Additional support visits - information sheet

Purpose of the support visits

Why might an organisation benefit from additional support visits?

The visits are entirely optional. As well as the option of a free informal visit, organisations have access to a named contact in the assessment team during working hours and support from NHSLA risk management assessors in the form of verbal and written feedback as part of the formal assessment process. In addition, assessors provide a number of annual learning events, review of self-assessments and gap analyses. For some organisations this is sufficient to help them move through the levels of the NHSLA Risk Management Standards and implement safe systems and processes, but for others it is not. Many organisations require and indeed ask for additional help.

Having this bespoke service available to individual organisations will assist them in engaging the relevant staff and spreading ownership of risk management through all levels of the organisation.

Many organisations struggle to address risk management ownership amongst senior staff and embed it within the culture and day to day running of the organisation. The option for additional support will be aimed at assisting risk managers in raising awareness of the importance of good risk management systems and processes to the senior executive team.

A service that is purchased by an organisation is often more highly valued than one that is offered for free. By paying for the additional support and expertise it is hoped that greater relevance will be placed on risk management by the executive team as it is anticipated that outcomes will be monitored by the board following expenditure.

Finally the provision of the additional support service can lead to significant savings to scheme members both directly and indirectly. Savings will be made directly by having access to an assessor at a rate considerably below that of the current market rate for a consultant. Savings will be made indirectly due to the gaining of an increased awareness, knowledge and ownership of risk management at all levels of the organisation which will help to reduce claims, increase patient safety, and potentially increase discounts to scheme contributions by assisting progression through the scheme levels.