

Room 502a PHD  
Skipton House  
Elephant and  
Castle  
London SE1 6LH

12 January 2005

Dear Colleague

### **Cost Benefit Analysis of Health Impact Assessment**

The Department of Health wishes to invite teams planning to undertake a health impact assessment (HIA) to participate in an evaluation (including a cost benefit analysis) which will be undertaken concurrently.

The intention is to identify forthcoming HIAs for participation during January and determine the final evaluation framework in February, with the research commencing from the beginning of March. It is planned to complete the research in the financial year 2005-06. It is appreciated that HIAs take some time to negotiate and plan, so there may be some flexibility in the start dates for HIAs, as long as they are not too advanced to build in the evaluation process in a meaningful way.

Five HIAs will be selected for detailed study. It is intended that these would provide an insight into HIAs at local level (LSP or where several LSPs are affected by major projects). To capture a broad range of characteristics, the HIAs may cover any topic in any geographical area, can be either comprehensive or rapid appraisals, and include issues relating to health inequalities. They could also be part of other assessment processes such as Environmental Impact Assessment or Integrated Impact Assessment. In addition, a further sample of HIAs will be selected as part of a comparator group. Screening processes, which are increasingly being used and often incorporate other forms of impact assessment, are not being included in the evaluation.

The evaluation framework, once it has been tried out, will become a useful source for routinely evaluating HIAs. It is hoped that the experience of working with the research team will help practitioners and lead to the development of standards of good practice.

If you are aware of other colleagues who are also planning to undertake an HIA, then please forward their contact details to us so that we may contact them.

Following a competitive tendering exercise, the Department of Health has awarded a contract for the evaluation to York Health Economics Consortium. If you are in the process of negotiating or planning an HIA for 2005, or have recently started a HIA, do please contact Jacqueline O'Reilly at York Health Economics Consortium with your plans **BEFORE 31 JANUARY 2005**. The address is University of York, Market

Square, Vanburgh Way, Heslington, York YO10 5NH. Web address:  
[www.yhec.co.uk](http://www.yhec.co.uk) Tel: + 44 (0) 1904 433 627 (direct line) Fax: + 44 (0) 1904 433 628  
Email: [jmor1@york.ac.uk](mailto:jmor1@york.ac.uk)

If you have any other queries, please contact me at the Department of Health 020-7972-3723 or by email [colleen.williams@dh.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:colleen.williams@dh.gsi.gov.uk)

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Colleen Williams". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'C' and a trailing flourish.

Colleen Williams  
Project Manager Department of Health