The procedure outlines the Trust’s approach to the prompt payment of its suppliers.

The Trust Monitors the implementation of and compliance with this policy in the following ways:

- Performance against Better Payments Practice Code (BPPC)
- Internal Audit

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<th>Services</th>
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The Director responsible for monitoring and reviewing this policy is Executive Chief Finance & Resources Officer.
1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 NHS Foundation Trusts are not bound by the Better Payment Practice Code (BPPC) but in the course of good practice the Trust will:

a) Monitor performance against the better payments practice code.

b) Set out in the annual reports, the payment procedures and publish measure of performance; and

c) Publicise their arrangements for handling complaints about failure to pay on time.

1.2 These measures are in addition to the requirement for prompt payment set out in the Government Accounting Regulations, which requires that all bills are paid within thirty (30) days of the receipt of goods or a valid invoice, whichever is the later.

1.3 As a result of the above the Trust will:

a) Undertake to pay all non-NHS creditors within 30 days of the receipt of goods or a valid invoice, whichever is the later, in the absence of any other agreed payment terms, wherever practicably possible.

b) Ensure payment terms agreed at the outset of a contract are adhered to.

c) Ensure payment terms are not altered without prior agreement with the supplier.

d) Have in place procedures for handling complaints on failure to pay on time (see Trust’s Complaint Policy)

e) Have in place processes to allow for the monitoring of compliance to the Better Payments Practice Code.

1.4 For avoidance of doubt, this procedure refers to a number of key staff within the Finance Department for a completion of a range of tasks. In the absence of these key members of staff, the task will be undertaken by the covering member of staff. In the event there are no suitable staff to cover the identified task, the decision will be referred to either the Deputy Chief Finance Officer or the Head of Financial Accounts / Financial Management.
2.0 SCOPE OF PROCEDURE

2.1 The procedure covers all payments made by the Trust to non-NHS Trade Creditors, both revenue and capital. The procedure is binding on all employees dealing with non-NHS suppliers.

3.0 PROCEDURE FOR PAYMENT OF INVOICES

3.1 The payment of invoices is covered by the Trust's Requisitioning of Goods and Services Procedure (FP01/03).

4.0 PROCEDURE FOR NOTIFYING SUPPLIERS OF TRUST'S PAYMENT PROCEDURE

4.1 It is the responsibility of the Head of Purchasing to ensure that all orders generated by the Trust's Purchasing Department include an overview of the Trust's Payment Procedure.

5.0 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

5.1 Any member of the Trust's staff receiving a complaint regarding non payment of an invoice within the 30 day period, should follow the Trust's Complaints Procedural Guidelines for dealing with the complaints.

5.2 The Deputy Head of Financial Accounts has overall responsibility for dealing with complaints relating to the payment of invoices. Each complaint should be reviewed by the Deputy Head of Financial Accounts and the Financial Services Manager. In the absence of the Deputy Head of Financial Accounts, the Head of Financial Accounts will be responsible for complaints handling.

END