

## HTA Board meeting, 4 December 2025

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Paper Title (+Reference)	<b>4.1 – Feedback from the Learning Event and next steps</b>
Information / Decision	Information
Decision Making	N/A
Recommendation	Board is asked to note and comment by exception on the outcomes from the Learning Event
Strategic Risks	Risk 2: Reputational
Strategic Theme	Trust and Confidence
Core Operations / Change Activities	Core Operations
Business Plan Item	Communications – informing stakeholders, promoting our mission, and showcasing our positive impact, using a mix of channels to effectively reach our target audiences, and developing a relationship management model
Board / Committee Oversight	Board only
Finance / Resource Implications	N/A
Timescales	N/A
Communication(s) (Internal / External)	Elements of both internal and external
Legislative Implications	N/A

## Feedback from the Learning Event and next steps

### Issue

1. To provide an update and summary of feedback from the Learning Event.
2. The 2025 HTA Learning Event was successful, achieving a 4.5/5 satisfaction rating from respondents to the post event survey. This was the same rating as the previous event and is reflected in the overall positive comments received, a selection of which are at **Annex A**. It also indicates the desire to have engagement directly with regulations teams.

### Ask

3. The Board is asked to **note**:
  - a) the positive outcomes, the evolving approach and endorse continued stakeholder engagement.
  - b) the immediate next steps and longer-term activity.

### Summary

4. There was positive engagement on the day from the 150 external delegates. This was a significant increase compared to 54 attendees at the 2024 event.
5. Through the post event survey, attendees fed back what they particularly valued:
  - Meeting a selection of the HTA staff in person, putting "faces to names", and experiencing open and honest conversations with HTA regulation managers.
  - The most mentioned positive aspect which delegates valued was facilitated conversations with peers from their sectors and direct access to HTA senior leadership at tables.
  - Feedback highlighted the event was "slick, well organised and engaging", "well executed", with appropriate timing and structure.
  - Board members observed strong engagement, with delegates expressing appreciation for the work HTA does.
  - Internal feedback noted "I haven't heard so much positive feedback in a long time."
6. Alongside the positives, delegates provided constructive suggestions for how HTA can continue to support them. They shared that they value HTA's helpful

and engaging approach, the effectiveness of tools like HTARI (HTA Reportable Incidents) flowcharts, constructive inspection feedback, flexibility in scheduling, and the expertise brought to regulation management roles.

7. Stakeholders also made suggestions about how HTA could improve. This included the following:
  - More best practice examples, case studies, flowcharts and decision-making templates
  - DI forums, roundtables, and opportunities to share experiences with sector colleagues
  - Website improvements, with suggestions to improve where and how information can be accessed
  - Clearer distinction between mandatory requirements and best practice recommendations
  - Preference for telephone contact alongside digital channels, and more sector-specific content in newsletters
8. The feedback shared at the event was consistent with what was shared at the 2024 event and through the stakeholder survey in early 2025. The Learning Event had been purposefully designed with that feedback in mind, so it included a section with DIs (Designated Individuals) and also provided more time for table discussions and networking over lunch. A summary of the themes and frequency is provided at **Annex B**.

### **Stakeholder requests for improved guidance and resources**

9. The feedback showed a consistent ask for more practical support material to help establishments navigate requirements. Stakeholders specifically mentioned additional best practice examples, case studies, flow charts and decision making templates that could clarify expectations and demonstrate compliance approaches. This echoes findings from both the 2024 conference and the 2025 stakeholder survey. The HTARI flow charts were given as an example of a practical tool that supports decision making. There is an opportunity for the HTA to provide support that explains the differences between mandatory requirements and best practice as some reported confusion when material is blended in current documents.

### **Website Usability and Information Architecture**

10. Website navigation emerged as the fourth most frequently mentioned issue during table discussions, with stakeholders reporting notable difficulties in finding relevant guidance. Some attendees described information as being

spread across multiple documents, making it harder to locate sector-specific requirements efficiently. The feedback suggests that whilst the content itself is valued, the user experience of accessing it needs improvement. Some noted that the codes are lengthy and detailed, suggesting that restructuring content with more visual aids could be helpful.

## **Networking and Peer Learning Opportunities**

11. The table discussions revealed strong appetite for structured opportunities to connect with peers and share experiences across the sectors HTA regulates. Six separate mentions were made of DI forums, networks, events or roundtable discussions. Feedback showed there was support for the networking opportunity provided at the learning event itself, particularly the chance to discuss common challenges with others facing similar regulatory requirements. Several stakeholders noted that existing DI networks in some sectors, such as the Post-Mortem sector, have proven beneficial and there is interest in similar arrangements being facilitated or signposted for other sectors.

## **Communication Preferences**

12. Stakeholders expressed preferences for more varied communication channels beyond digital enquiries, with six mentions of wanting increased opportunity to speak on the phone rather than solely through written enquiry systems. This feedback suggests that whilst digital channels are important, some stakeholders continue to value the immediacy and nuance of telephone conversations, particularly when seeking clarification on complex regulatory matters. Additionally, some suggested more sector-specific content in newsletters rather than generic updates, indicating that targeted communications may be more effective than broad messaging.

## **Consistency in Regulatory Application and Inspection Approaches**

13. The feedback revealed stakeholder interest in greater consistency in how regulatory standards are interpreted and applied during inspections. The inspection processes were generally praised, with particularly positive feedback on unannounced inspections in the Post-Mortem sector. There was some interest in extending this approach to other sectors. Some stakeholders mentioned variance between regulation managers in their application of codes. Stakeholders requested that inspection reports include more recognition of good practice alongside identification of shortfalls, as positive feedback helps demonstrate value to senior leadership and supports business cases for investment. There was a suggestion to agree corrective actions

before leaving inspection sites, and to share common findings across sectors for collective learning through CAPA (Corrective & Preventative Action) plan summaries.

14. In addition, with anticipated consultations on Codes in 2026/27, HTA has an opportunity to consider within an overall engagement approach, and the finite resources available, a more targeted sector engagement and consultation alongside delivery of case studies, best practice and learning material through different channels.

### Consideration

15. The evaluation provided clear steer on practical improvements HTA can make to support stakeholders more effectively. HTA will work through the detail to determine a proportionate approach that balances stakeholder needs with organisational capacity and strategic priorities.

### Next Steps

16. The following activity will be progressed, whilst the broader approach is considered alongside the commitments in the 2026/27 business plan:
  - set up a user experience feedback session to help understand issues and consider content improvements that could be made to the website. This will provide additional context to the analytics data we use to optimise the website.
  - Update website content to signpost the existing DI forums across sectors, to help facilitate networking opportunities.
  - Ensure feedback is considered as part of the Codes of Practice project included in the business plan.
  - Develop a survey, which may become an annual or regular activity, to track satisfaction trends and inform continuous improvement.

### Recommendation

17. The Board is asked to note:
  - a) the positive outcomes, the evolving approach and endorse continued stakeholder engagement.
  - b) the immediate next steps and longer-term activity.

## Annex A

## Stakeholder feedback



## What aspect of the day did you like the most?

"I liked the engagement of the senior management team as this is so important for individuals carrying out and being responsible for implementing the standards and guidance within their organisations."

"The regulation managers I spoke to seemed genuinely interested in our opinions."

"Having a member of the HTA SLT at each table was a good idea as they were able to provide sound feedback as part of our discussions."

"I liked all of it - the introduction and update from Colin was very useful to understand the activities of the HTA; the discussions with people from the same sector was helpful and well facilitated by the person on our table, and I thoroughly enjoyed the panel conversation with the regulators and DIs."

"Networking with DIs and hearing first hand from regulators regarding future developments."

"I thought it was very well thought out and concise. No extra fluff to the event, which I appreciated as I could still go back to work for a bit."

## Stakeholder feedback



## What could be improved?

"There was an emphasis on how the HTA could improve, whereas I would have appreciated more opportunity to discuss how we as an institution could improve/ensure adherence to the regulations."

"The venue was cramped."

"The format of the breakout session, where the table I was sat on had DIs from various sectors. It felt like we spent a lot of time explaining how our sectors worked to those in other sectors instead of answering the questions fully."

"I found all aspects of the event interesting, although maybe could have had more time for networking?"

"It may be helpful to have a survey up front identifying the areas of concern/uncertainty so more targeted discussion can happen."

"If we had a better idea of the speakers, or the topics that they were going to discuss, it would have allowed us to think of some meaningful questions for them during their sessions."

## Annex B

Table discussion overall themes	Frequency of Mentions
More best practice examples and positive feedback	8
More DI forums, networks, events or roundtable discussions	6
More opportunity to speak on phone not just via enquiries	6
Training on codes, new DIs, quizzes for staff who are new to the role	5
Unannounced inspections – positive experience in PM and would be welcomed in other sectors	5
Usability of website – difficult to search and navigate	4
Clarity of guidance – what's mandatory and what's not?	4
More flowcharts/graphics to help decision making	3
Relationships with RMs – variance in application of codes. Most approachable but some not.	3
Update relevant material list	2
Relevance of newsletter content	2
Better use of portal for info sharing	2