By 2004 at least 7 per cent of senior managers should be from ethnic minorities

NHS guide warns patients of zero tolerance on racism

By Nick Liley

PATIENTS ARE to be warned that racism and racially motivated complaints against health service staff will not be tolerated.

An NHS guide, due to be published by the end of the year, will also spell out that harassing staff in any way will be unacceptable.

Chief nursing officer for England Sarah Mullally told a conference on strengthening nursing leadership through diversity: 'We will not tolerate harassment and we will not tolerate complaints that are racially motivated.'

The guide aims to set out the responsibilities of patients receiving NHS treatment. It is likely to be published in the wake of government survey results, due out next month, showing that little has changed since the mid-1990s, when an estimated two thirds of black and Asian staff faced racial harassment from patients.

Ms Mullally hopes this and other initiatives will inspire younger people from black and ethnic minority backgrounds to join the nursing profession. Speaking at the Birmingham conference, organised by leadership consultants Beacon Organisational Development and Training, she said less than 8 per cent of the NHS workforce is from an ethnic minority background and almost a quarter of these nurses are aged over 55.

Ms Mullally said that education providers should review how well their courses engage applicants from black and ethnic minority backgrounds. She said there was a question over why the increasing numbers of applicants was not being converted into more students.

On the issue of leadership, she said only 3 per cent of NHS managers and less than 1 per cent of nurse directors are from black and ethnic minority backgrounds. Meanwhile, the health department is preparing to launch a performance framework for health authorities and trusts to reinforce recruitment targets laid out in April. They specify that by 2004 at least 7 per cent of all senior managers at executive board level should be from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Nursing award winners named

THE WINNERS of this year's Nursing Standard Nurse 2000 awards have been announced. They will receive their awards on November 29 at a ceremony in central London, when the overall Nurse 2000 winner will be revealed.

Medical nursing: Winner - Norma Ross, Erne Healthcare Services, County Fermanagh, Northern Ireland. Commended - Debra Farn, King's Mill Centre for Healthcare Services, Nottinghamshire.


Wound care: Winner - Christine Moffatt, Thames Valley University. Highly commended - June Jones, Chuchtown Community Clinic, Lancashire.


Child health: Winner - Vanessa Martin, City Hospital NHS Trust, Nottingham. Very highly commended - Debra Farn, King's Mill Centre for Healthcare Services, Nottinghamshire.

Midwifery award: Winner - Jackie Rotheram, Liverpool Women's Hospital. Commended - Mary Steen, St James Hospital, Leeds.


Nursing older people: Winner - Sarah Capp, Bognor Regis Health Centre. Commended - Sue Benfield, St John Street Health Centre, Mansfield.

Cancer nursing: Winner - Garth Godsell, University Hospital Nottingham. Commended - Claire Mackay, Derriford Hospital, Plymouth.

Robert Tiffany International Award: Winner - Maureen Gill, independent specialist tutor, Buckinghamshire. The awards in the student nursing, nursing leadership and in the media categories will be announced at the awards ceremony.