



February 2014

## PSNC Briefing 004/14: The House of Care model for managing long term conditions

The house of care model is a metaphor for a proactive co-ordinated system of care and support for people with long-term conditions. In recent months it has been frequently cited in documents published by health policy organisations and NHS England. This PSNC Briefing provides a short description of the concept to assist LPC members and pharmacy contractors with understanding it and to allow them to engage in any local discussions on the topic.

### Policy background

The management of long-term conditions is the biggest challenge facing healthcare systems worldwide; they account for 70% of health and social care costs in England. The Department of Health estimates that the number of people with three or more long-term conditions will rise from 1.9 million in 2008 to 2.9 million in 2018, requiring about £5 billion additional NHS expenditure. This illustrates the challenge for the NHS and healthcare professionals in managing this increasing cohort of patients who require more support and who are likely to create a significant cost pressure. It is proposed that one way of tackling this challenge is for health systems to increase the integration of care provided to people with long term conditions.

Person-centred, integrated care is consequently the hot topic in health policy circles and it is what health commissioning organisations in England and across the world are trying to achieve. It is however not something that can be achieved at the flick of a switch and there is an extensive array of international literature accumulating on different approaches to achieving the aim, examining local developments in the UK and beyond.

### What is the House of Care model?

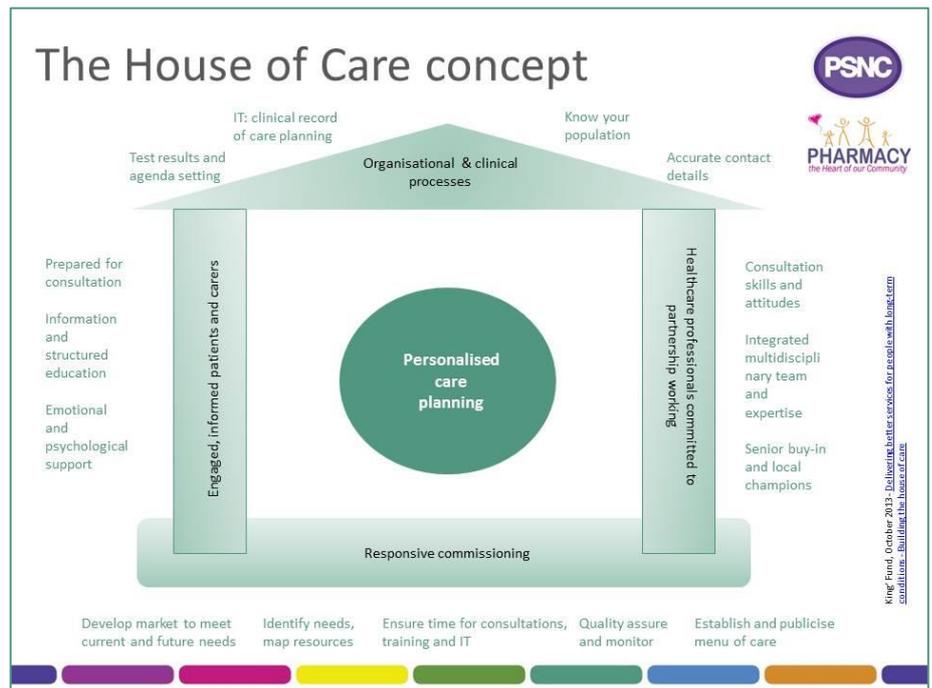
The house of care model is a metaphor for a proactive co-ordinated system of care and support for people with long-term conditions. It has been developed to help primary care professionals and service commissioners to reorganise services to provide better care and support for people with long term conditions. It shifts away from the focus taken by many professionals and commissioners on individual diseases towards a more generic approach in which patients' goals drive care delivery.

It is also the model which NHS England envisages commissioners will use when redesigning services and systems to improve the management of long term conditions.

The house of care metaphor explicitly places the patient at the heart of the delivery system. Its key elements are:

- People with long term conditions are central to the process. They are supported to express their own needs and decide on their own priorities;
- Self-management support and the development of collaborative relationships between patients and professionals are at the heart of service delivery. This shifts the focus onto the roles and responsibilities of patients as well as professionals, and the systems that are needed to support them to fulfil these roles;
- Tackling health inequalities is a central aim;

- Each individual should be involved in a unified, holistic care planning process with a single care plan;
- Quality assurance of the philosophy, core approach and skills required is essential;
- Care planning is the gateway to personalisation and/or personal health budgets.



## Where is it happening?

Each of the components of the model have been introduced in one of more areas across England, but few areas have yet succeeded in putting all the component parts together in one place. Some areas of the country have already implemented aspects of the House of Care model by using the [Year of Care programme](#) to support the management of diabetes.

## Want to learn more?

The following documents provide more detailed information on the House of Care concept:

[Delivering better services for people with long-term conditions - Building the house of care. King's Fund, October 2013](#)

[Supporting people with long-term conditions: what is the house of care? Angela Coulter, King's Fund blog, October 2013](#)

If you have queries on this PSNC Briefing or you require more information please contact [Alastair Buxton, Head of NHS Services](#).