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PSNC Briefing 007/14: Update on the Health and Care Landscape

This briefing is part of a series issued regularly by PSNC to inform pharmacy contractors and LPCs of developments in the wider health and care landscape beyond community pharmacy. It builds on the Health & Care Review articles which are published on the PSNC website every week.

Changes planned for locally agreed GP contracts

In early February NHS England announced changes to the way Personal Medical Services (PMS) contracts will be managed to ensure the most effective use of resources; PMS is a locally-agreed alternative to the General Medical Services (GMS) contract.

NHS England's Area Teams will be reviewing PMS contracts over the next two years to ensure that additional practice funding, over and above that provided to GMS practices, must reflect local strategic plans for primary care and secure services or outcomes that go beyond what is expected of core general practice. The GP press have reported that PMS practices could face losing up to £260m as a result of the review.

PHE release local authority adult obesity data

New [local authority excess weight data](#), published by Public Health England (PHE), confirmed that 64% of adults are overweight or obese. The new data also shows for the first time the considerable variation in the numbers of people who are overweight or obese in different parts of England, as well as the extent of the challenge many local authorities and the local NHS face.

Support for co-commissioning of general practice

In an interview with the *Health Service Journal*, Dr Maureen Baker, chair of the Royal College of GPs, has backed the idea of co-commissioning of general practice by NHS England and clinical commissioning groups (CCGs). Dr Baker's support for co-commissioning follows a similar call later last year from NHS Clinical Commissioners, which represents CCGs.

DH publish documents highlighting the importance of wellbeing

The Department of Health (DH) has published [documents](#) that provide a flavour of some of the important issues and relationships between wellbeing and health throughout someone's life. DH suggest that for health professionals, understanding the different parts of personal wellbeing may offer insights into how their own work fits into a wider context and how what they do can influence wellbeing.

Important findings set out in the documents are that wellbeing:

- adds years to life and improves recovery from illness;
- is associated with positive health behaviours in adults and children;
- is associated with broader positive results;
- influences the wellbeing and mental health of those close to us;
- affects how staff and health care providers work with implications for decisions for patient care practice and services, and treatment decisions and costs;
- affects decisions about local services; and

- may ultimately reduce the healthcare burden.

The Francis Report: One Year On

The [Nuffield Trust](#) has published a report which analyses the impact of the Francis Report on the NHS. Alongside that publication Jeremy Hunt, Secretary of State for Health, [highlighted figures](#) that suggest NHS care has changed for the better one year on from the Francis Inquiry. NHS England also highlighted a range of changes it has led over the past year including:

- Launching the Friends and Family Test;
- Rolling out a new plan for nursing, midwifery and care staff – the Compassion in Practice strategy;
- Reviewing the quality of care and treatment provided by 14 hospital trusts that are persistent outliers on mortality indicators;
- Approving the development of a network of Patient Safety Collaboratives;
- Publishing data on never events that occur in hospitals; and
- Putting in place Quality Surveillance Groups across NHS England’s 27 area teams and four regions.

The NHS is not meeting the “Nicholson Challenge” says Health Committee

Parliament’s Health Committee has published a report following its annual inquiry into public expenditure on health and social care. The MPs said the health and care system needs fundamental change if it is to meet the needs of patients. They note that while many of the straightforward savings have been made by the health and care system, the transformation of care on the scale which is needed to meet demand and improve care quality has not yet been seen.

The Committee also said that the economic situation is not helped by the current fragmented commissioning structures. The Committee’s view is that, as Health and Wellbeing Boards have been established to allow commissioners to look across a whole local health and care economy, their role should be developed to allow them to become effective commissioners of joined-up health and care services. The Committee also recommends that the current level of real terms funding for social care should be ring-fenced.

Hospital centralisation and chains

The Health Service Journal has reported that discussions have begun between NHS England, DH, Monitor and the NHS Trust Development Authority on a major engagement programme to seek a longer term vision for the hospital sector. This could include secondary care providers forming national chains of hospitals and services in order to improve efficiency, standards and leadership.

Salford Royal NHS Foundation Trust Chief Executive, Sir David Dalton, has been asked to undertake a review to look at how to end the isolation of failing hospitals from the best NHS management and practice – a key finding in the wake of the Mid-Staffs inquiry. Sir David will investigate how to enable the best-performing NHS organisations and most successful chief executives to establish national groups of hospitals or services as beacons of excellence. This could include non-geographical networks of hospitals under one leadership team where one NHS trust has hospitals around the country.

Meanwhile, in an article in the Daily Telegraph, Sir David Nicholson, Chief Executive of NHS England, has said that hospitals will have to close and services will need to be centralised in order to improve patient care. He called for a radical reorganisation of health services so a smaller number of larger hospitals offer most major surgery while smaller hospitals scale back the care they provide. Sir David also called on politicians from all parties to back these proposals and to avoid the issue being used to score party political points in the run up to the general election.

Could GPs and community services merge?

NHS England’s Deputy Medical Director, Dr Mike Bewick, speaking at the Londonwide LMCs’ recent conference on collaborative working, said there was a need to “revisit the organisational form of primary care”. He said that work by NHS England to develop primary care could include new contractual arrangements for GPs, co-commissioning with CCGs, and the merger of community and primary care services.

Better Care funding will be spent on health

In a joint interview with the Health Service Journal and the Local Government Chronicle, Norman Lamb and Brandon Lewis, respectively Ministers at the Department of Health and the Department for Communities and Local Government have sought to reassure health leaders that the Better Care Fund monies (previously known as the Integration Transformation Fund) will not be diverted by councils into non-health service provision. This concern had recently been verbalised by Sir Bruce Keogh, NHS England Medical Director, when giving evidence to Parliament's Health Committee.

Funding for NHSmail2 approved

HM Treasury has approved funding to transition the current NHSmail email service to a new improved service. The transition to the new service is expected to start in 2015.

Dental Call to Action launched

Following the Call to Actions on general practice and community pharmacy, NHS England has this month published a Call to Action on dental services. The NHS in England spends £3.4 billion per year on dental care, with over a million patient contacts with NHS dental services each week.

NHS England intends that the dental Call to Action will give them the opportunity to both improve outcomes for patients and benefit professionals by reforming the current contract system so it moves to a more preventative, outcome based approach.

Care.Data rollout delayed

In late February NHS England responded to public concern about the sharing of patient information via the care.data service by delaying its implementation. In a statement from Tim Kelsey, National Director for Patients and Information, the organisation said that it had heard from patients, many GPs, their professional organisations and, groups like Healthwatch that patients need more time to learn about information sharing, the benefits and their right to object. NHS England is therefore extending the public awareness campaign on care.data by an extra six months.

At the end of February the Health Service Journal reported that during discussions between NHS England and patient representatives, the suggestion that patients should opt-in rather than opt-out of sharing data from their GP records was made.

Former M&S boss to advise on NHS leadership

Jeremy Hunt, Secretary of State for Health has appointed Sir Stuart Rose, former CEO of Marks and Spencer to advise on how the NHS can attract and retain the very best leaders to help transform the culture in under-performing hospitals. Sir Stuart will also advise on how NHS trusts can improve organisational culture, through leaders being more visible and in touch with frontline patients, services and staff.

Mid Staffs Trust to be dissolved

Jeremy Hunt, Secretary of State for Health, has announced that the Mid Staffordshire Foundation Trust would be dissolved and its constituent hospitals would be taken over by nearby NHS Trusts. This decision is in line with the recommendation of the trust's special administrators, who were appointed following the Francis Inquiry into failings at the trust.

Ill-treatment or wilful neglect to become a criminal offence

As part of the response to the Francis Report, the Government accepted the recommendation of the National Advisory Group on the Safety of Patients in England to develop a new criminal offence of ill-treatment or wilful neglect. At the end of February the Department of Health published [a consultation document](#) which outlines the recommendation and the government's current position, and sets out their proposals for the details of the offence.

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