

health scrutiny

champions' network

July 2005

Welcome

Welcome to this edition of our monthly bulletin for health scrutiny champions with a focus on strategic health scrutiny issues, practice from around the country and news from the health scrutiny support programme. If you are new to health scrutiny, previous editions of the bulletin are on the CfPS website at www.cfps.org.uk

We value your comments about this bulletin and if you have any comments, please contact Tim Gilling, Health Scrutiny Programme Manager at Tim.Gilling@cfps.org.uk. We intend to provide an opportunity for you to tell us formally what you think of it and how it might be developed. We have begun to refresh our database of health scrutiny champions to reflect changes following the local council elections to make sure that the bulletin continues to reach the right people. Please bear with us while we complete this process.

In order to develop the bulletin in the future, we are particularly looking for articles from champions about your experience of health scrutiny and how health scrutiny is being taken forward around the country. If you would like to highlight the work of your OSC or would like to write about any aspect of patient and public involvement in health, please e-mail your article to Tim Gilling at CfPS.

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A tribute to Jo Fletcher

We start this edition of the bulletin with sad news about the sudden death of one of our scrutiny colleagues at Bradford Council. Mike Lodge, Scrutiny Manager, pays tribute to Jo Fletcher:

“Many people involved in health scrutiny may have come across Jo Fletcher, who supported the health scrutiny function in Bradford. Sadly, Jo died suddenly on Saturday 16 July. Jo, who was 41, leaves a daughter Jessica.

Jo (who until recently was known as Jo Firth) was a dedicated and cheerful member of the overview and scrutiny support team in Bradford. She led on health scrutiny from its early beginnings and was instrumental in ensuring that it has been established in Bradford with no little success. Bradford was successful in gaining CfPS funding to undertake a review of how obesity is being tackled in the district and Jo played a major part in ensuring the success of the bid. She was first to suggest that the team manager (me!) should buy a bottle of champagne to celebrate. She took that work forward and we will struggle to replace her contribution. Jo was also responsible for supporting the Regeneration and Economy Improvement Committee.

We have lost a valued colleague and good friend. She will be missed immensely.”

News from the Health Scrutiny Support Programme

An **annual report** about the first year of the support programme was presented to the Health Minister, Rosie Winterton, on 30 June. A pdf version of the annual report is available from our website www.cfps.org.uk. A hard copy version will be published in August and circulated to health OSCs.

As part of the **national evaluation of health scrutiny**, the Manchester University Team are about to contact potential case study OSCs for further fieldwork to start in September. The aim is to have around 9 anonymous case studies that reflect a broad range of health scrutiny experience within local government and the NHS. The Manchester team and CfPS will publish a report about the first year of the research project in August, including the “baseline” position of health scrutiny, the analytical framework for selecting case studies and lessons from ‘round one’ action learning sites.

Our expert **Advisory Team** continues to gain momentum with a third of OSCs receiving free support from the Team. “Pooling” support around joint issues was covered in further guidance that was issued in March and is available on our website. Examples of the kinds of support being given by the team are contained in the support programme annual report that is on our website.

Early results of a survey of those OSCs that have not taken up the free support do not reveal any particular reasons, other than capacity issues, why support has not been taken up. To help with capacity, Advisors can now help you complete the health scrutiny toolkit. Please contact the Peer Clearing House if you need help to complete the toolkit.

We need to be able to judge by October what the future demand for this scheme will be so that we can decide whether to continue with this element of the programme. If your OSC has not yet contacted the Peer Clearing House, please make contact during August and September to ensure that you get your entitlement of five days free support.

A further round of nine **Action Learning Projects** has been announced. 20 bids from around the country were received and a selection panel representing CfPS, Local Government Association, Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health and NHS Confederation assessed them at the end of June. The winners were announced on 1 July:

- Essex County Council - Diet, Nutrition and Exercise
- Gloucestershire County Council - Supporting Drug Users
- Kent County Council - Preventing Disease Through Physical Activity
- London Borough of Merton - Community Leadership to Improve Health
- London Borough of Tower Hamlets - Delivering 'Choosing Health'
- Sheffield City Council - Child and Adolescent Mental Health
- South Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council - Engaging Communities to Improve Health
- Stockport Borough Council - Tackling Inequalities in a Deprived Ward
- Borough of Telford & Wrekin - Alcohol Prevention and Treatment

Further information about the bids is available from the 'news' section of the CfPS website. A special 'action learning' workshop for project leads will be held in Manchester in September. It is likely that CfPS will be commissioning a detailed write-up of all the 'round one' projects and will be hosting a further 'sharing the learning' event in the new year.

Bidding guidance for the final round of projects will be published in early February 2006, with bids closing in April 2006. It is too early to tell which theme will be chosen for the last round. If you have any comments or suggestions, please send them to Tim Gilling at CfPS.

Following the success of regional events for **Chairs of Health OSCs**, CfPS has begun to plan a series of seminars in the autumn that will provide opportunities for Chairs to engage with policy makers and informed commentators on health service and public health issues. Chairs will be able to attend as many of the events as they wish. The events, likely to be run from 10.00am to 1.00pm, will probably be held in Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, London and Manchester. Potential topics are:

- Access to Services (Choice/Choose and Book/Connecting For Health)
- Payment by Results
- Practice-based Commissioning
- Ambulance Services
- Choosing Health

If you have other suggestions for the kinds of issues that Chairs would wish to cover in these sessions, please contact Tim Gilling at CfPS.

Following the Ministerial announcement in March about the future of **Patient and Public Involvement Forums**, CfPS has published a guide for OSCs and Forums. The guide contains information about the opportunity for OSCs and Forums to contribute to the new annual 'health check' for NHS bodies. CfPS has sent copies of the guide to each OSC and it is available to download from our website. Please note that the contact number for East Sussex Council (Roger Howarth) should start '01273' not '01274'

In terms of **practical support**, several health scrutiny networks have taken up the offer from Tim Gilling to talk about health scrutiny to new Chairs and members. Other colleagues are invited to contact Tim.Gilling@cfps.org.uk with potential dates for network meetings.

Publications during year 2 of the support programme are likely to include:

Major guides about:

- Substantial variations and developments
- Health scrutiny in two tier areas
- Lessons from action learning
- NHS Finance

'How to...' leaflets about:

- Healthcare Commission annual healthcheck
- NHS system reform
- Practice-based Commissioning
- 'Ten questions to ask if you're scrutinising.....'

If you have suggestions for other publications that health scrutineers would find useful, please contact Tim Gilling at CfPS.

Recent publications from the Department of Health

The Department of Health website (www.dh.gov.uk) contains information about a number of **consultations** currently taking place that may be of interest to health scrutineers:

Guidance on the role of the director of adult social services - This guidance has been developed to support local authorities to implement the changes to chief officer portfolios made by the Children Act 2004. Closing date: 28 July 2005

Independence, well-being and choice: Our vision for the future of social care for adults in England: Social Care Green Paper - This Green Paper sets out a vision for adult social care over the next 10 to 15 years and how this might be realised. It invites everyone to give their views on the vision and the ideas set out in the document, as well as to contribute new ideas to the debate. Closing date: 28 July 2005

NHS emergency planning guidance 2005 - This seeks comments on guidance for NHS organisations in developing their ability to respond to a major incident or incidents. Closing date: 8 September 2005

Action on health care associated infection (HCAI) in England - Closing date: 23 September 2005

A **consultation** has been launched around **smoke free public places**. In the White Paper *Choosing Health - Making healthy choices easier*, there is a commitment to consult widely on the process of drawing up the detailed legislation on smokefree public places. The consultation runs until 5 September. The key areas covered in the consultation, where comments and responses would be particularly welcomed, are:

- the definition of enclosed public place/workplace;
- the definition of prepare and serve food;
- exemptions in general;
- placing of signage;
- the offences, penalties and defences;
- enforcement; and
- timetable

OSCs are encouraged to respond to Departmental consultations using evidence gained from local scrutiny reviews to inform future policy. If health OSCs respond to consultations, please would they consider letting CfPS and the Local Government Association have a copy of the response.

Patricia Hewitt has announced plans for a major public engagement exercise to help shape the **future of care outside hospitals**. A listening exercise to involve public, patients and staff will start in September 2005. The exercise will collect the views of thousands of ordinary people in order to help shape the White Paper on 'Health outside Hospitals'. The public engagement exercise will seek to views from the public about the future of all NHS services provided outside hospitals including GP surgeries, walk-in centres and social and community care.

A joint white paper, designed to deliver **integrated health and social care systems**, was announced by Care Services Minister Liam Byrne on 21 July. It will bring together proposals for both adult social care and all care received outside of hospitals.

The Minister also announced that:

- The Care Services Improvement Partnership (CSIP) and the Local Government Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) will develop a joined-up **national improvement strategy for adult social care**. This strategy will offer practical support through a range of regionally tailored methods and approaches. It will be developed in collaboration with SCIE, LGA and the ADSS to ensure future work programmes are based on local need.
- A new taskforce, linked to the existing National Strategic Partnership Forum, will identify the **obstacles** the sector experiences in delivering services in partnership with health.
- A joint review with the DfES will identify further workforce development options, which will be known as **Options for Excellence**. This will include recruitment and retention, education and development, leadership and expanding professional regulation.

In a detailed press release, the Minister also outlined work he would be undertaking in other areas of his portfolio.

- *In the home*

£140m investment in social care projects designed to **help vulnerable people live independently**. This is just one programme backed by a combined total of almost a quarter of a billion pounds of investment in research and development. This comes in advance of the 2007 spending review and will help shape the delivery of social care in the future.

On 19 July he launched guidance to local authorities on how to invest £80m from the 2004 spending review on **telecare projects**. In November he will announce which

areas will be asked to take forward the £60m Partnerships for Older People pilots, which aim to reduce **emergency admissions to hospital**.

- *In care*

The Minister confirmed he would accelerate work on introducing a national set of eligibility criteria for **NHS continuing care** to tackle the risk of post-code lotteries. He also indicated he would give new weight to those who suffer from 'stable conditions' or whose care needs change in the latter stages of their disease. He indicated this was included in his response to the Health Select Committee which he laid before the House on 21 July.

- *In hospital*

The Minister will be working with the Chief Nursing Officer on a programme of measures entitled '**Caring in Confidence**' to help ensure that dignity and care are of the highest standard for older people. Originally to be piloted at four NHS hospitals, it will accelerate the spread of best practice across the NHS.

In addition, pilots on individual budgets and how they work with **older people and people with learning or physical difficulties** will be up and running from the end of 2005. Individual budgets are designed to bring together a number of income streams to enable a person to make real choices about how they will design and manage their care or support in a way which best suits their own needs.

The Minister also renewed his manifesto pledge on **end of life care for children and adults**, and pledged to work with Ministerial colleague Rosie Winterton on increasing the choice for patients with cancer and doubling the investment going into palliative care services, giving more people the choice to be treated at home.

- *Partnership with the voluntary sector*

The Minister confirmed his commitment to working with the voluntary sector on health matters by establishing a taskforce to identify the **obstacles that stand in the way of effective partnership between the voluntary sector and health**. The Taskforce's programme aims to identify and address the specific barriers to a strong commercial relationship between the voluntary and public sectors. It will pay specific attention to how administration costs for voluntary and community service providers can be reduced. It will report by November 2005.

- *Effective leadership*

The Minister is to set up a 'virtual' social care **information initiative** to look at information sources and ensure that it can be readily available to support policy development, practice improvement and performance management.

As the June bulletin 'went to press', the Department published **A Guide to Promote a Shared Understanding of Managed Local Networks Services**. This tool promotes and encourages the development of managed local networks. Aimed at commissioners, planners, providers of health, social care, education, the voluntary sector and the criminal justice system, its purpose is to help people understand the advantages of working and planning services in managed networks. The NSF for Children, Young People and Maternity Services strongly advocates the introduction of managed local networks, leaving their nature and extent to the discretion of decision-makers locally. Health scrutineers looking at cross-cutting themes may be interested in this guide. Available from the Department of Health website.

Also at the end of June, **Taking healthcare to the patient: Transforming NHS ambulance services** was published. In May 2004, the Department of Health invited Peter Bradley CBE, Chief Executive of London Ambulance Service NHS Trust, to become National Ambulance Adviser and to lead a strategic review of NHS ambulance services in England. This major report sets out the review's conclusions and will be of interest to all health OSCs.

Public Health Minister Caroline Flint has announced a further £15m to help transform **sexual health services** across the country. The funding, to be added to the £130m already committed for genitor-urinary medicine (GUM) services in the Public Health White Paper, will be made available immediately for use over the next year - allowing sexual health clinics to improve their buildings, expand their services, increase capacity and reduce waiting times. One of the main aims of the sexual health strategy is to relieve the burden on traditional services by providing screening and testing in a range of different settings such as pharmacies and GP surgeries.

The main health themes of the UK Presidency of the EU, which runs from July to December 2005, will be improving patient safety and tackling health inequalities. More information from the Department's website.

Securing Better Mental Health for Older Adults is a document that marks the start of a new initiative to combine forces across mental health and older people's services to ensure that older people with mental illness do not miss out on the improved services that younger adults or those without mental illness have seen. It provides a vision for how all mainstream health and social care services, with the support of specialist services, should work together to secure better mental health for older adults, and describes how the Department of Health is aiming to help deliver this.

New arrangements for the 'Essential Small Pharmacies' scheme are planned to come into effect on 1 April 2006. Health OSCs may wish to engage with PCTs about how they intend to respond to the new arrangements.

The Chief Medical Officer's Annual Report 2004 identifies major health challenges requiring immediate action, and describes progress in addressing issues featured in previous reports. The report highlights the need for tighter control on the movement of tobacco across international borders, as this seriously undermines attempts to reduce the prevalence of smoking. It also draws attention to the need to achieve faster compliance with patient safety alerts, and highlights the potential to improve the nation's health by influencing food purchasing in public bodies such as hospitals, school and prisons.

The Healthcare Commission

Health scrutineers need to be aware of the Commission's publication "**Measuring What Matters**" about how it will take forward the new NHS assessment process. It is vital that health OSCs are aware of this new process and the opportunity it presents for OSCs to hold local decision-makers to account. NHS Trust and PCT Boards will be expected to make a draft declaration on their performance in October 2005, with a final declaration in April 2006. This is an ideal opportunity for OSCs to engage with PCTs, NHS Trusts and Patient and Public Involvement Forums in their areas to assess the implications of the new system. From 2006 onwards, a single declaration will be made each year. Information about the healthcheck has been included in the CfPS guide for OSCs and Forums (see above).

The Commission organised a series of learning events for OSCs, Patient and Public Involvement Forums and the NHS during July to explain the new system and these were publicised in the June bulletin. An additional event for the north is to be held at the Hilton Garforth (Leeds) on 4 August. To register, contact the Commission's helpline or visit the website at www.healthcarecommission.org.uk. Councillor Mark Flewitt, Vice Chair of the Health OSC at Southend Council, shares his thoughts after attending an event in London on 15 July:

"I can imagine many Councillors fear that the healthcheck process will involve reams of paper! Having attended a training event in London recently I do also share these fears, but I recognise that what is all-important for health overview and scrutiny committees is the opportunity it presents to have an input into the assessment process and to question the performance of NHS bodies on behalf of our communities.

NHS bodies are currently collecting data about their performance (and that of their contractors) across a range of services that will provide evidence that they are meeting (or otherwise) the various standards in the assessment framework. The result will be a self-checked declaration (a public document) that all Directors of NHS Boards will be encouraged to sign. The declaration about performance will be submitted to the Healthcare Commission, together with commentaries from Strategic Health Authorities, OSCs and Patient Forums.

At the event in London, there was much discussion about what this process means for the NHS. Our essential task as Councillors is to see that the Declaration reflects the

experiences of our communities, having made a contribution to it and even exerted some influence (?) upon it.

The Healthcare Commission will want to validate all evidence of compliance offered by the NHS and cross checking against the experiences of patients and communities is a major part of this process. For example, if PCTs or NHS Trusts declare no outstanding issues, overview and scrutiny committees may well be able to demonstrate (from their scrutiny work) examples of service lapses or examples of where consultation has fallen short. A declaration will be acceptable to the Commission as long as lapses are “declared” and action plans provided (with evidence) as to steps taken to correct the lapse.

The Centre for Public Scrutiny will be looking to work with overview and scrutiny committees to encourage participation in the process and to show their particular PCTs and NHS Trusts that they want to be involved. I would encourage colleagues to begin planning for involvement now and to ask your local NHS bodies to talk through the structure of their draft declaration with your OSC.

At the London event, I was very encouraged by the opening comments of the Commission’s Head of London and South East Region that the healthcheck is not “just a managerial exercise”. Through the active participation of OSCs we can ensure that this is so.”

If you wish to debate Mark’s analyses of the healthcheck process, why not visit the discussion forum on our website?

The Commission has published a guide for health OSCs about how to take part in the healthcheck and there is a link to the guide from the news section of the CfPS website. CfPS will be working with the Commission to take forward further events specifically for health OSCs and if you have any ideas about specific training needs, now is the time to send them to Tim Gilling at CfPS.

Also from the Healthcare Commission:

State of Healthcare report 2005

Published: 18 July 2005

Safeguarding children

Published: 14 July 2005

Acute Hospital Portfolio review: day surgery

Published: 11 July 2005

National survey of stroke patients 2005

Published: 7 July 2005

Review of NHS foundation trusts

Published: 5 July 2005

Association of Public Health Authorities

The Association is represented on the CfPS Health Scrutiny Practitioners Forum and we are keen to promote PHOs as a useful source of data and commentary for health OSCs. The Association's website www.apho.org.uk contains links to the following reports that health scrutineers may find of interest:

- Indicators of public health
- Progress and Prospects
- Violent Britain - People, Prevention and public health
- Sexual Health in England

Health scrutineers are reminded that each PHO takes a national lead in the following topics (links are available from the APHO website):

- East Midlands – teenage pregnancy
- East of England – primary care
- London – health inequalities, social exclusion, regeneration
- North East – mental health, prison health, children and young people
- North West – drug misuse, health protection
- South East – coronary heart disease, stroke
- South West – accidents and injuries, sexual health
- West Midlands – cancer, older people, environment
- Yorkshire and Humber – diabetes

Monitor - Independent Regulator of Foundation Trusts

Monitor has published its Annual Report for 2004/5 and this is available via Monitor's website at www.monitor-nhsft.gov.uk.

The Healthcare Commission has also published a report about Foundation Trusts (see above) and the Nuffield Trust has published a report called 'Governance of Foundation Trusts – Dilemmas of Diversity' available at www.nuffieldtrust.org.uk.

National Audit Office

The National Audit Office has published a report called 'Financial Management in the NHS - NHS Summarised Accounts 2003-2004'. This is available from the Audit Office website at www.nao.org.uk and provides a useful insight into the accounts of NHS bodies.

The King's Fund

The King's Fund is an independent charitable foundation that works to improve health and health care for all, with a special focus on London. Their goals are to help develop informed policy by undertaking original research and providing objective analysis; effective services by fostering innovation and helping put ideas into action; and skilled people by building understanding, capacity and leadership. The Fund has just launched a new website at www.kingsfund.org.uk that contains a wealth of information about health and healthcare that health scrutineers may find useful.

The Local Government Association - Health Scrutiny and Patient and Public Involvement

It is now over two years since the power of health scrutiny came into force. A lot has happened since then and now seems the right time to draw together the practical experiences and lessons learnt from around the country in a one-day event.

The LGA are hosting this conference, sponsored by CfPS, at Local Government House, Smith Square, London, SW1 on 19th September. The conference will also provide an opportunity to hear how the Centre for Public Scrutiny has assisted the development of health scrutiny in its 3 year support programme.

Meanwhile, the arrangements for supporting Patient and Public Involvement Forums are likely to change over the next 12 to 18 months. The Commission for PPIH will be abolished and a new PPI Resource Centre established. The number of PPIFs will be reduced to match PCT boundaries.

Delegates will get the chance to hear about their implications first-hand from the Department of Health (Health Minister Rosie Winterton has accepted an invitation to speak). Finally, the rise of public health up the political agenda will also be addressed at the conference by Fiona Adshead, Deputy Chief Medical Officer. A programme and booking form is available at www.lga.gov.uk

Developing a model for scrutiny of national services

Later this year there is likely to be a national consultation about burn care services. CfPS has recently been involved in discussions with the Department of Health, the National Burn Care Group and the Independent Reconfiguration Panel about developing a model for effective scrutiny of consultations about changes to services (such as burn care) that are delivered nationally. The Health Scrutiny Practitioners Forum has discussed potential models for tackling the forthcoming consultation about burn care services. Notes from the recent Forum meeting will appear on the CfPS website shortly and a communication from the National Burn Care Group will be sent to you soon. Further information about the suggested approach for responding to the consultation will be circulated to health OSCs in the autumn.