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| **Newsletter of the National Commissioning Board (NCB)** |
| **August 2016** |

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| **Welcome to the first newsletter of the National Commissioning Board (NCB)** |
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| This is the first newsletter describing the work of the National Commissioning Board. It describes the purpose of the NCB; its membership and its program of work. We will be providing brief quarterly updates. If you require any further information, please contact Steve Vaughan (steve.vaughan@wlga.gov.uk).  |
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| We are the National Commissioning Board **(NCB)** and not the sadly long deceased National Coal Board (NCB) so we will not be accepting orders for coal. Given that this is the first newsletter it will be longer than the updates that will follow.  |

**Introduction to the National Commissioning Board**

**Purpose**

Broadly the purpose of the National Commissioning Board (NCB) is to improve the quality of commissioning in Wales and to develop effective practice in relation to integrated commissioning between local authorities and local health boards. As we work to become a more integrated board there will be further changes to the membership and to our terms of reference but at present our aims are:

* To play a central role in building vision and setting a national direction for the commissioning of social care and wellbeing
* To work with partners to provide a coherent approach to improving commissioning and procurement practice and share good practice across the regions.
* To promote the effective integration of commissioning between local authorities and health boards with robust governance arrangements where this will improve outcomes for individuals and make more effective use of resources.
* To create a conducive climate, with appropriate mechanisms for constructive engagement between commissioners and providers in order to secure the most effective services to respond to needs of vulnerable people.
* To advise key stakeholders on the resources required to deliver effective commissioning for sustainable care services, including up-skilling the workforce
* To support the delivery of the Local Government and Health Board Implementation Plans.
* To support the continued development of new and sustainable infrastructure for wide-ranging regional commissioning, ensuring that opportunities for collaboration are acted upon
* To work towards the development of a market intelligence facility for Wales.
* To improve the skills of commissioners in Wales

Commissioning involves both planning and procurement. It applies to both internal and external services. Commissioning involves the analysis of needs, the capability, capacity and fitness for purpose of existing services to respond to these needs and the design of a range of appropriate solutions. It means being clear about what services we want to maintain and develop to respond to the needs and outcomes important to individuals / families in need of care and support.

Commissioning is often subject to criticism but these criticisms arise because on many occasions the front end of the commissioning cycle in terms of achieving clarity about the needs and outcomes we are trying to meet and the design of appropriate services / solutions has been overlooked and too often commissioners have moved into the procurement part of the commissioning cycle all too quickly. We want to promote good practice throughout the commissioning cycle including both planning and procurement.

Above all we want to work with partners to develop a ‘whole systems approach’ to service development and integrated performance management so that we understand both the impact of services in achieving outcomes for individuals as well as their impact upon other services.

The NCB has no executive authority and will need to work with the regions and national organizations both to identify and share good practice in commissioning but more importantly to identify solutions to common challenges.

**Membership**

The National Commissioning Board was originally established as part of the local government response towards the implementation of ‘Sustainable Social Services: A Framework for Action’. The NCB is chaired by Dave Street the ADSS Cymru lead for commissioning (Director of Social Services for Caerphilly County Borough Council) and co-chaired by Morwena Edwards (Director of Social Services for Gwynedd County Council).

ADSSC is providing some administrative support which is supplemented by further support from the Social Services Improvement Agency for Wales (SSIA). Work has been undertaken to strengthen the NCB in providing additional capacity by seconding Steve Vaughan from Welsh Government to take up the position of manager of the NCB.

Further work has also been undertaken to ensure that the NCB becomes an integrated national commissioning board between the NHS and Local Government. We are delighted that Carol Shillabeer, Chief Executive of Powys Teaching Health Board has agreed to co-chair the NCB and we will be looking to strengthen the contribution of the NHS.

We have also strengthened the representation of the regions and all seven regional coordinators are now members of the NCB or will delegate this responsibility to another regional lead if appropriate. It is important to emphasize that whatever their professional backgrounds these regional representatives represent their regions and are the NCB link with the regions. The NCB will largely work through these coordinators to communicate and coordinate work with the regional partnership boards and other regional mechanisms or will agree effective communication channels for specific projects.

We are delighted that the integrated commissioning project for younger adults with mental health & learning disabilities will be represented by Julian Baker / Shane Mills. Although the governance arrangements rest elsewhere the NCB wants to support this work and examine how the benefits of this approach could be applied to other areas.

We also have representation from the improvement agencies (SSIA and Public Health Wales). The Welsh Government is also represented alongside the Care Council for Wales and the Care & Social Services Inspectorate for Wales (CSSIW).

Representatives of providers of health and social services are members of the NCB. These include Care Forum Wales and UKHCA. The Wales Council for Voluntary Action also has two representatives. We also have a national provider forum in place chaired by Peter Randall UKHCA.

We would also want to include appropriate representation from Housing

A full list of the membership of the NCB is included in the annex.

**Resources**

At present the NCB largely draws upon resources from the SSIA budget to fund its program of work. Although Person Centred Care, 1000 Lives Improvement Service, Public Health Wales contributed towards the cost of a pilot project in West Wales assessing the available skills and capacity for commissioning among the local health board and local authority partners. We anticipate that we will also be shortly taking forward projects directly funded by the Welsh Government.

Given that our work program involves integrated commissioning the NCB. Further work will be necessary to identify possible funding sources via the NHS

**Working in Partnership with the regions**

Our regions themselves are still in the process of developing their regional infrastructures both terms of commissioning and the wider integration and partnership agenda.

Further work will also be undertaken to identify the requirements of a national, regional and local commissioning infrastructure required to support effective commissioning and the development of services responsive to the requirements of the Act.

**The Program of the National Commissioning Board**

**The Projects can be summarized as follows:**

* Market analysis of Care Homes for Older People in Wales – initial pilot in North Wales – to be completed across Wales by Mid October 2016.
* Support the development of Market Position Statement for Care Homes in North Wales (using results of market analysis) and subject to resources develop opportunities for sharing learning from this exercise to the other regions.
* Develop model agreement (subject to agreement and resources from Welsh Government) for the development of a formal partnership and pooled fund for the integrated commissioning of services from care homes.
* Model terms & Conditions (Standards) for Care Homes & Home Care Services. This will be undertaken in partnership with Welsh Government Policy colleagues and CSSIW to ensure that this work aligns with the requirements of the Regulation & Inspection Act.
* Developing an outcomes focused approach to the commissioning of home care.
* Supporting the Care Council for Wales in the development of the national strategy for home care.
* Exploring the potential for the development of a toolkit for calculating fees for home care.
* Examining the options for securing services through procurement and non- procurement routes that promote person centred care together with a sustainable good quality workforce.
* Examining the Skills & Capacity of Commissioners.
* Learning Disabilities: Development of Integrated Commissioning Guidance for commissioning services for people with learning disabilities.
* Children with Complex Needs due to ill-health or disabilities.
* The development of a concordant to promote constructive working relationships between commissioners and providers designed to update and replace the former memorandum of understanding.

The projects are described in more detail below.

**Market Analysis of Care Homes for Older People in Wales**

The NCB is presently undertaking a market analysis of care homes for older people in Wales. This exercise is being undertaken at the request of the Care Homes Steering group chaired by Albert Heaney (Director of Social Services & Integration for Wales). The purpose of the exercise is to develop a baseline of information to inform the development of an appropriate range of services. The exercise can also be used to inform the development of pooled budgets.

Both health boards and local authorities have been asked to provide data on the placements they fund in care homes for older people both inside and outside of Wales. The exercise does not include care homes for younger adults but will encompass younger adults placed in care homes for older people.

The exercise will provide a profile of each home; care homes in each local authority and health board and for Wales. The names of individual homes will not feature in the final report and the identities of individual residents has been protected.

The profiles will include information in relation to the age profile of residents; use made by category of care (e.g. EMI nursing); type of care (e.g. long term placement, short term intermediate care, respite); funding stream (e.g. CHC), fees paid by the public sector in Wales; cases involving third party contribution, etc.

Providers have been asked to provide information in relation to number of self -funders; number of placements funded by public bodies outside of Wales; number of vacancies and number of people on their waiting list.

The work has been piloted in North Wales because the challenges of matching demand with appropriate placements is more acute in that area at present.

The staff at both the health board and all six local authorities in North Wales have demonstrated a considerable commitment to pulling together all the data required to complete this exercise and both David Street who chairs NCB and myself would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their hard work. We would also like to thank all the providers who cooperated with this exercise. The project is being supported by the Welsh Local Authority Data Unit and we are indebted to its staff for the expertise and commitment they have demonstrated in supporting this project.

This data is presently being analyzed and reports should be available in early September. The NCB will be working with the North Wales Partnership to provide a narrative around the interpretation of the data. This data will be used alongside other local information to develop a market position statement or statements (MPS) for Care Homes for North Wales. The initial focus of the MPS will be on care homes but this can be broadened to examine the wider accommodation needs of older people in North Wales.

We are examining how we can more accurately assess these wider accommodation needs with colleagues in Welsh Government and the Welsh Housing Learning and Improvement Network.

This exercise is now being rolled out across Wales. We have agreed a census date of 1st August (the date on which we are measuring placements) with a six-week period for authorities to collect the data required (by 16th September). Clearly the analysis of the returns across this much broader area will take additional time to analyze but we anticipate having reports ready for mid-October or earlier if the regions complete their returns ahead of schedule.

Colleagues from health boards and local authorities have been involved in a briefing session and further opportunities for further discussion will be created.

At this stage this is a one off exercise. We need to put agreements in place to create integrated data base of publicly funded placements which can also serve contribute to quality assurance across health boards and local authorities. In the mean-time each partner can maintain their own data base of information. This will help partnerships prepare for the implementation of pooled funds in that it will help them to estimate their contrition to pooled funds.

**Market Position Statements (MPS) – Care Homes & Accommodation for Older People**

The Commissioning Board is providing support to North Wales in the development of their market position statement for North Wales. The Institute for Public Care (IPC) facilitated a two-day workshop in North Wales in June and will support the development of the MPS. The NCB will be exploring opportunities to extend the learning from this exercise to other regions.

**Model terms & Conditions (Standards) for Care Homes & Home Care**

We are undertaking this work in conjunction with policy colleagues (R&I Act), CSSIW and Care Council. We are planning to analyze existing contracts/ specifications & quality assurance arrangements over the late summer/ early autumn period for the purpose of drafting model terms & conditions and quality assurance arrangements in the late autumn. We will also base this work on good practice. This will inform discussions with the development of regulations and standards for the R&I Act. The purpose is not to duplicate the work. We have requested documentation from health boards and local authorities.

**Integrated Commissioning of services from care homes (Model Partnership agreement)**

In order to promote the integrated commissioning of services from care homes the NCB would like to work with a partnership to model this work.

A proposal has been drafted to develop a model partnership agreement and pooled fund arrangement with one partnership as a pilot allowing for regional workshops to assist the other partnerships. We are presently discussing this proposal with Welsh Government.

**Home Care**

The NCB is developing an integrated approach to the commissioning of outcomes focused care home services. It commissioned an initial paper (from John Bolton and Keith Moultrie) to examine the implications of moving from a task and finish to an outcomes focused approach.

<http://www.ssiacymru.org.uk/document.php?id=5783>

This was followed by a workshop in July. We are examining how we can build upon this work to develop a broader toolkit to facilitate the commissioning of an outcomes focused approach.

The NCB will be supporting the Care Council in the development of the strategy for home care.

**Home Care Fees**

A paper has been drafted by a colleague in North Wales and UKHCA on a model for determining fees for home care. Further information is being collected from other authorities and health boards prior to further discussion.

**Options for Securing Services**

A workshop was held on the 16th July with commissioners, providers, procurement officers together with Value Wales to examine the options for securing services including procurement and non-procurement approaches. These were discussed through the prism of home care and supported accommodation for people with learning disabilities.

The workshop explored how we can respond to the challenges of commissioning services which are both person centered whilst at the same time nurturing the development of a skilled and knowledgeable workforce. We have seen services which have frequently been the subject of retendering which has caused disruption to care and support arrangements. These are not examples of person centered services. At the workshop we also heard of examples where staff have been subject to TUPE arrangements on numerous occasions which raises questions about how individual staff are valued.

A discussion paper based upon the discussions within the workshop has been drafted and the group will be reconvened in September to amend / improve as appropriate. <http://www.ssiacymru.org.uk/document.php?id=5780>

**Skills & Capacity of Commissioners**

A pilot exercise to examine the skills and capacity of commissioners has been undertaken with the West Wales partnership and a report has been produced. This involved identifying all staff in health and social services with commissioning responsibilities and examining skills and capacity issues. This has yet to be discussed by the NCB but a small working group will meet to discuss next steps in terms of extending the exercise to other partnerships and examining different ways of doing this. We will also need to priorities training requirements and design appropriate training programs. We are grateful to the West Wales partnership for the commitment demonstrated to this project.

<http://www.ssiacymru.org.uk/document.php?id=5782>

<http://www.ssiacymru.org.uk/document.php?id=5781>

**Learning Disabilities: Development of Integrated Commissioning Guidance**

A workshop was held with stakeholders on 16th June including members of the learning disability advisory group.

The Welsh Government is giving consideration to the development of an overarching policy statement. The NCB is giving consideration to the development of guidance for integrated commissioning of services for people with learning disabilities supplemented by a suite of more detailed guidance in relation to specific services such as supported living arrangements; daytime occupation/ day care; specialist health services, etc. .

**Draft Concordant between National Commissioning Board, the National Provider Forum & the Wales Council of Voluntary Action to replace the former Memorandum of Understanding.** The Vision is of a Wales in which constructive engagement between commissioners, providers and advocates for citizens and communities, results in high quality, sustainable services in line with the aspirations of the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014, and the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The NCB will develop the concordant to promote, guide and influence national policy, and regional and local activities, in order to improve commissioning and to coordinate ongoing and constructive working partnerships between commissioners and providers and advocates for citizens and communities.

**Children with Complex Needs due to ill-health or disabilities**

A meeting has taken place with representatives of heads of Children’s Services and further meetings are planned with network of team managers for disability services together with other colleagues in health and the third sector to develop a project designed to promote an integrated approach to the development of an integrated approach to developing services to children and young people with complex needs.

**Appendix 1 - Membership of the NCB**

**Local authority**

Dave Street Chair, ADSS Lead Commissioning

Awen Morwena Edwards, Director Rep North Wales

Anwen Hughes, Heads of Children’s Services rep

Jacqueline. Davies Heads of Adult Services rep

**NHS**

Carol Shillabeer, Chief Executive, Powys Teaching Health Board

Gaynor Williams, Director of Complex Care

Susan Davies Assistant Director to Chief Operating Officer Aneurin Bevan Health Board.

Val Attwood, Associate Director of Contracting; Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board.

Integrated Health & Social Care Commissioning Programme: Framework Agreement for younger adults (18-64) with mental health & learning disabilities in residential care and nursing homes.

Julian Baker

Shane Mills

**Regional Leads**

Sian Nowell, Cwm Taf Region

Rachel Jones, Cardiff & Vale Region

Martyn Palfreman, West Wales

Mark Saunders, Aneurin Bevan Region

Sara Harvey Western Bay

Bethan Jones Edwards, North Wales Region

Dylan Owen, Powys Region

**Provider representatives**

Mary Wimberry, Care Forum Wales

Yvonne Apsitis, UKHCA

Peter Randall

**Third Sector (WCVA)**

Adrian Roper

Chris Bennett

**CSSIW**

David Francis

**Care Council for Wales**

Stephanie Griffiths

**Welsh Government**

Lisa Dunsford

Christopher Stevens

**Wales Procurement Officers**

Liz Lucas

**WLGA**

Richard Dooner

**Improvement Agencies**

Andrew Bell, Social Services Improvement Agency (SSIA)

Wayne Jepson Person Centred Care, 1000 Lives Improvement Service, Public Health Wales

Maria Bell, Project Lead for Market analysis North Wales