

'Transparency, inclusiveness and accountability are vital to the success of GP Commissioning', say the Centre for Public Scrutiny and the NHS Alliance

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In a joint paper, *Towards transparent, inclusive and accountable GP Commissioning*, the NHS Alliance and the Centre for Public Scrutiny set out some broad principles that they believe should be embedded in any future commissioning regime, particularly when existing performance management regimes are being relaxed and structural and cultural reform is planned.

The paper, which builds on the previous policy work of both organisations, makes some practical suggestions to help commissioners become more responsive and accountable:

- develop metrics to enable responsive GP Consortia to be identified and rewarded, while less responsive groups can be supported and developed;
- a clear role for the CQC in monitoring the responsiveness of GP Consortia;
- a 'responsiveness premium' linked to judgements about quality;
- retain and assure a role for councillors to scrutinise their political leadership and the way that Consortia work at practice, neighbourhood and organisational level;
- the commissioning cycle and judgements about quality should be influenced by local HealthWatch;
- democratic legitimacy could be strengthened through:
 1. having councillors on the boards of GP Consortia
 2. having lay people on the boards of GP Consortia
 3. having 'patient governors' on the board of GP Consortia.

Tim Gilling, Deputy Executive Director of CfPS, says "we believe that by placing a duty on GP Consortia to follow principles of transparency, inclusiveness and accountability through a range of ways including local HealthWatch and councillors, patients and the public can have confidence that £80 billion is spent wisely in ways that meet their needs and aspirations for their health and for

health services.”

Brian Fisher, Lewisham GP and PPI Lead at the NHS Alliance says “As people begin to think about how things might look ‘on the ground’ if the plans for GP Commissioning are translated fully in to legislation, the NHS Alliance and CfPS want to offer some commentary and practical suggestions about how GP Commissioning could develop in a transparent, inclusive and accountable way.”

Ends.

Notes to editors:

1. *Towards transparent, inclusive and accountable GP Commissioning* can be found on the CfPS website (www.cfps.org.uk).
2. For more information call Dushana Pinfield on 020 7187 7363 or contact the NHS Alliance press office on 07772756674 or email pressoffice@nhsalliance.org.
3. The NHS Alliance is the only independent body that brings together primary care trusts’ chief executives and other senior managers, doctors and practice managers, nurses, pharmacists and allied health professionals, along with board chairs and members. We are a value-driven organisation, with no political affiliation, which works in partnership with various bodies associated with the NHS to create a progressive health service that is free from the traditional tribalism of single interest groups.
4. The Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) is a registered charity that helps those working across the public sector look at the effectiveness of public services. We promote the value of accountability and scrutiny, not only to hold executives to account but also to create a constructive dialogue between the public and its elected representatives to improve the quality of public services. The Centre supports scrutineers by sharing research and analysis of current and developing best practice through publications, seminars, consultancy and events. We also create online networks and forums for those with an interest in accountability and scrutiny. CfPS is the national leader for guidance, advice and support for councils, the NHS and other stakeholders about accountable healthcare, social care and health improvement.