

MEETING:	OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE:	27 SEPTEMBER 2010
TITLE OF REPORT:	EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE: LIBERATING THE NHS- HEREFORDSHIRE'S RESPONSE
REPORT BY:	HEAD OF POLICY AND PERFORMANCE

CLASSIFICATION: Open

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To note the arrangements in place in Herefordshire for responding to the White Paper and associated consultation documents, and to comment on the proposed response.

Recommendation(s)

THAT the Committee:

- a) notes the arrangements in place to respond to the White Paper and associated consultation documents; and
- b) provides any further comments on the proposed response.

.Introduction and Background

- 1 The Government published the White Paper, Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS, and four supplementary consultation documents in July.
- 2 At the joint request of the Leader of the Council and NHS Herefordshire Chair, a partnership consultation event on the White Paper was hosted by this Committee on 9 September. This provided an opportunity to brief partners and other interested people on the White Paper, discuss the potential implications for Herefordshire and inform the development of the key elements of a response.

Key Considerations

- 3 The government is seeking responses to the White Paper proposals by 5th October, and to the four consultation documents by 11th October. Given these deadlines, and to enable the views of the stakeholders attending the consultation event on the 9th September, NHS Herefordshire Board members and relevant Cabinet colleagues to be brought together, a draft of the response will be tabled at the meeting for Committee members to note and add any

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Tony Geeson, Head of Policy and Performance on (01432) 261855

further comments.

Community Impact

- 4 The intention of the Government White Paper *Liberating the NHS* is to create an NHS which is much more responsive to patients and achieves better outcomes, with increased autonomy and increased accountability. The proposals represent the most fundamental changes to the NHS since its inception, but are, however, consistent with the vision and direction of travel that has been adopted in Herefordshire.
- 5 The consultation document, *Commissioning for Patients*, provides further detail on proposals to devolve commissioning responsibilities and budgets as far as possible to those who are best placed to act as patients' advocates and support them in their healthcare choices. GPs, practice nurses and other primary care professionals are already supporting patients in managing their health, promoting continuity and coordination of care, and making referrals to more specialist services. In empowering GP practices to come together in wider groupings, or 'consortia', to commission care on their patients' behalf and manage NHS resources, it is intended to build on these foundations.
- 6 The consultation document, *Local Democratic Legitimacy in Health*, provides further information on proposals for new local and national governance arrangements to increase local democratic involvement and accountability for health services. The paper proposes:
 - Strengthened patient and public involvement through the creation of a new local HealthWatch replacing the local LINKs and to act as a local consumer champion, to promote public and patient involvement, to perform a wider citizen's advice bureau role and to sign post patients and public to services
 - Improved integrated working delivering services designed around the needs of the patient and the public through the creation of a new Statutory Health and Wellbeing Board within the local authority to lead the local Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, to promote partnership and integration, to support joint commissioning and pooled budgets and to undertake the local health scrutiny function
 - Health improvement led locally by local authority by transferring responsibility and funding for local health improvement to the local authority and creating a new national Public Health Service to integrate existing health improvement and protection bodies
- 7 The consultation document, *Regulating Health Care Providers*, provides further information on proposals to free Foundation Trusts from constraints and create the world's largest and most vibrant social enterprise sector and to introduce of a system of independent economic regulation to sit alongside independent quality regulation.
- 8 The final consultation document, *Transparency in Outcomes*, proposes the establishment of an NHS Outcomes Framework that will be made up of a focussed set of national outcome goals which will give an indication of the overall performance of the NHS. These outcome goals will provide a means by which patients, the public and Parliament can hold the Secretary of State for Health to account for the overall performance of the NHS. They will also provide a mechanism by which the Secretary of State can hold the new NHS Commissioning Board to account for securing improved health outcomes for patients through the commissioning process. Beyond accountability, it is intended that the NHS Outcomes Framework will act as a catalyst for driving up quality across all NHS services.

Financial Implications

- 9 None at this national consultation stage

Legal Implications

10 None at this national consultation stage.

Risk Management

11 None at this national consultation stage

Consultees

12 Partners and a range of key stakeholders.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Draft Response – To be tabled.

Background Papers

White Paper and consultation documents