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Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Bulletin No. 31 / 30 July 2010

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Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Information

Date of next HOSC meeting: Friday 3 September 2010, 9.30 am.

Location: Council Chamber, Sessions House.

Main Agenda Items:

- 1) Update on SECamb's Make Ready Depot Programme.
- 2) The Future of PCT Provider Services and the Use of Community Hospitals

Internal Meetings:

HOSC Agenda Planning Meeting: Wednesday 1 September 2010, 10:00 - 12:00

Location: Darent Room, Sessions House.

The pre-meeting for the HOSC Meeting on Friday 3 September will take place prior to the above Agenda Planning Meeting: Wednesday 1 September 2010, 9:00 - 10:00, Darent Room, Sessions House.

Visits:

HOSC Members' Visit to Disablement Service Centre, Gillingham: 20 October 9.30 - 12.00.

Health in Kent

NHS Eastern and Coastal

Senior representatives from NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent have begun meeting GPs to discuss the way forward following publication of the health White Paper which contains key proposals for transferring responsibility for commissioning health services from the PCT to GP consortia from 2013.

NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent has good relationships with GPs throughout the area and successful practice-based commissioning already takes place. This is seen as a good basis for a transition towards GP commissioning through consortia.

At a meeting last week attended by a number of GPs and PBC business managers as well as members of NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent's Executive Team the transition process was discussed.

See:

[More support for GPs as Government Health Plans take shape](#)

Headache clinic in Margate.

A leading headache clinic situated at Bethesda Medical Centre, Margate, is to be expanded to provide relief to more patients across East Kent. The clinic was launched by Dr Andrew Dowson, Director of Headache Services at King's College Hospital in London, in November 2007 and now means that patients who are suffering regularly from headaches can get care closer to home without being referred unnecessarily to neurology hospital departments.

See:

[Headache clinic to be expanded](#)

Department of Health

Consultation on three Department of Health social care grants

The Department for Health (DH) has released a consultation paper 'Consultation on changes to the allocation formulae for the Learning Disability Commissioning Transfer Grant, Preserved Rights Grant and AIDS Support Grant' which seeks views on options for distributing three DH social care grants from 1st April 2011.

This consultation does not prejudice the outcome of the Spending Review, which will be announced on 20 October 2010.

See

[Consultation on changes to the allocation formulae for the Learning Disability Commissioning Transfer Grant, Preserved Rights Grant and AIDS Support Grant](#)

Start date: 27 July 2010

Closing date; 6 October 2010.

NHS consultation 'Liberating the NHS: regulating healthcare providers'

The Department of Health has launched a consultation '[Liberating the NHS: regulating healthcare providers](#)' which as part of a public consultation on implementation of proposals in the White Paper and supporting papers, further outlines proposals on foundation trusts and the establishment of Monitor as an independent economic regulator for health and adult social care.

One of the key features of the patient centred NHS plan 'Liberating the NHS' is to free providers from political interference and to establish a stable, transparent regulatory environment. This document

sets out proposals to liberate providers from central Government controls and to develop Monitor as an independent economic regulator for health and adult social care.

See:

[Greater freedom for the NHS](#)

Open date: 26 Jul 2010

Closing date: 11 October 2010

DOH consultation 'Implementing Fulfilling and rewarding lives'

The Department of Health (DH) has released a consultation document '[Implementing Fulfilling and rewarding lives': consultation for statutory guidance for local authorities and NHS organisations to support implementation of the autism strategy](#)' which seeks views on the draft guidance to health and social care services, which has been drafted to support the implementation of the Autism Strategy 'Fulfilling and rewarding lives'.

The guidance focuses on the seven areas required by the *Autism Act 2009*, in each case identifying what health and social services bodies are already expected to do, and then setting out any additional requirements introduced by the strategy. The additional requirements are focused on achieving two key outcomes:

- improving the way health and social care services identify the needs of adults with autism.
- ensuring identified needs are met more effectively to improve the health and well-being of adults with autism.

Specific questions on the draft guidance are raised within the consultation document

The consultation wants to hear from:-

- adults with autism, their families and carers.
- health and social care bodies responsible for the planning, commissioning and provision of services for adults with autism and their families.
- representative local and national organisations.
- health and social care professionals, and any other party with an interest in improving the health and social care provided to adults with autism and their families and carers.

See:

[Implementing 'Fulfilling and rewarding lives': consultation for statutory guidance for local authorities and NHS organisations to support implementation of the autism strategy](#)

Start date: 29 July 2010

Finish date|: 22 October 2010-07-29

New fund allows cancer patients greater access to drugs

Secretary of State for Health Andrew Lansley has announced that as the result of a new fund, cancer patients are to get greater access to cancer drugs recommended by their doctors.

Publishing a report by National Cancer Director Professor Sir Mike Richards on international variations in drug usage that shows the UK's uptake of new drugs falls behind other European countries, the Health Secretary said that from October, an extra £50 million will be available to help patients get access to innovative new cancer drugs.

See:

[£50M additional funding for cancer drugs](#)

New leaflet to make people aware of the changes to the NHS

The Department of Health (DH) has released an electronic leaflet 'Improving your NHS' which explains the changes being made to the NHS and invites comment.

See:

[Improving your NHS; what can you expect?](#)

Service reconfiguration

A letter from NHS Chief Executive Sir David Nicholson outlines the criteria for existing and future NHS reconfigurations as set out in the revised Operating Framework for 2010-11.

See:

[NHS reconfiguration guidance](#)

Information relating to Responsible Officers

The Department of Health (DH) has released information on the new role of responsible officer, which is being developed to ensure that systems within designated organisations support doctors in delivering quality care that is constantly improving.

Responsible officers will be senior doctors with local responsibility for overseeing the evaluation of fitness to practise, and monitoring the conduct and performance of doctors.

The designation of organisations that are required to nominate or appoint a responsible officer ensures that the vast majority of doctors, and particularly those whose work affects the safety of patients, will relate to a responsible officer.

For all the documents and guidance relating to the role of responsible officer.

See:

[Responsible Officers](#)

Report of a study looking at implementing personal health budgets

The report of an in depth study '[Early experiences of implementing personal health budgets](#)' is based on interviews with the project leads and highlights some of the challenges the pilot faces, and how such challenges are beginning to be overcome.

The study, conducted by a partnership and led by the Personal Social Services Research Unit (PSSRU) at Kent University, involved twenty pilot sites which were selected from the personal health budgets pilot to comprise an in-depth study, as part of a wider evaluation exploring the potential of personal health budgets to benefit different groups of people.

Department of Health (DH) letter regarding possible risk associated with influenza vaccine

The Department of Health (DH) has sent a letter to GPs and Primary Care Trust immunisation coordinators alerting them of a possible increased risk of febrile convulsions in children under five years of age associated with the use of influenza vaccine marketed by Pfizer Vaccines for the 2010/11 influenza season, including Enzira® and the CSL Biotherapies generic influenza vaccine.

See:

[Risk of febrile convulsions in children aged under five years and seasonal influenza vaccines marketed by Pfizer Vaccines \(Enzira® and CSL Biotherapies generic influenza vaccine\)](#)

Government

Independent review of the Work Capability Assessment

The Department for Work and Pensions has commissioned Professor Malcolm Harrington to undertake an independent review of the Work Capability Assessment, as required by *section 10* of the *Welfare Reform Act 2007*. This call for evidence will be one of several methods used to gather information. Evidence submitted will be used to create a final independent report, which will be laid before Parliament.

The call for evidence is aimed at organisations and individuals who have information that is relevant to how the Work Capability Assessment (WCA) is operating. This includes evaluating how the WCA assesses limited capability for work and limited capability for work-related activity.

The evidence will be used to inform the view of the independent reviewer. The independent reviewer will then make recommendations to the Secretary of State, which will be laid before Parliament in the form of a report. As an independent review, the Secretary of State is not required to enact any or all of the recommendations, and any recommendations may be subject to further assessment by DWP.

See:

[The Work Capability Assessment: call for evidence](#)

Start date: 28 July 2010

Closing date: 10 September 2010.

Government looks at Science and Technology Committee report on the consideration of licensing of homeopathic products as medicines

The Government response to the Science and Technology Committee report '[Evidence Check 2: Homeopathy](#)'

In which the Government looked at the Committee's detailed consideration of the licensing of homeopathic products as medicines.

See:

[Evidence Check: Homeopathy \(Government Response\)](#)

Parliament

Tuesday 27 July 2010

Debates:

House of Commons debate regarding the outcomes of the Crown Prosecution Service's review of its violence against women strategy.

See:

[Violence against Women](#)

House of Commons debate regarding the assistance Crown Prosecution Service People gives to people with disabilities who are victims of rape.

See:

[People with Disabilities \(Victims of Rape\)](#)

Written statement:

Statement from Secretary of State for Health Andrew Lansley regarding a report which details causes of international variations in drug usage.

See:

[Cancer Drugs](#)

House of Commons Select Health Committee inquiry into Commissioning

The House of Commons Select Health Committee has issued an invitation to submit written evidence for its inquiry into Commissioning.

The last substantive report of the Health Committee in the last Parliament, published on 30th March 2010, reviewed the progress of commissioning in the NHS. Among its conclusions were the following:

- Weaknesses remain 20 years after the introduction of the purchaser/provider split.

- Weaknesses are due in large part to PCTs' lack of skills, notably poor analysis of data, lack of clinical knowledge and the poor quality of much PCT management. The situation has been made worse by the constant re-organisations and high turnover of staff.

See:

[Commissioning](#)

[Committee announces new inquiry into Commissioning](#)

The deadline for submitting written evidence is noon on Wednesday 6 October 2010.

Other Health Information

Mandatory warning on food containing colourings that affect activity and attention in children

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) are looking for views and comments regarding the 'Enforcement of the European Parliament and Council Regulation on Food Flavourings (England)' which enforces in England the new and revised EU legislation controlling the use of flavourings in food.

It will become mandatory across the EU from 20 July that food and drink containing any of the six colours, Tartrazine (E102), Quinoline Yellow (E104), Sunset Yellow (E110), Carmoisine (E122), Ponceau 4R (E124) and Allura Red (E129) which are thought to have effects on activity and attention in children, must be labelled with an EU wide health warning.

See:

Compulsory warnings on colours in food and drink Enforcement of the European Parliament and Council Regulation on Food Flavourings (England).

See:

[Compulsory warnings on colours in food and drink](#)

Responses are requested by: 14 October 201

NAO report on CAFCASS

The National Audit Office has issued a report on the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass) 'Cafcass's response to increased demand for its service' arguing that although Cafcass could not have predicted the sustained increase in care cases from November 2008, it could have responded more quickly and cost effectively to the large and sustained increase in care cases from local authorities.

For all the relevant documents:

See:

[Cafcass's response to increased demand for its services](#)

NICE Guidance on weight management before, during and after pregnancy

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) has published guidance on '[Weight management before, during and after pregnancy](#)'.

The guidance is for NHS and other commissioners, managers and professionals who have a direct or indirect role in, and responsibility for:

- women who are pregnant or who are planning a pregnancy.
- mothers who have had a baby in the last 2 years.

The guidance is particularly aimed at: GPs, obstetricians, midwives, health visitors, dietitians, community pharmacists and all those working in antenatal and postnatal services and children's centres.

For all the relevant documents:

See:

CSA Statistics June 2010

The Child Support Agency has published the 'Quarterly Summary of Statistics, June 2010'. Findings include:

In the quarter ending June 2010, 77% of all cases in which maintenance was due had either received maintenance via the CSA collection service, or had a maintenance direct arrangement in place.

- In the three months to June 2010, maintenance had been collected or arranged by the CSA via the statutory maintenance service on behalf of 849,100 children.
- In the quarter to June 2010, the CSA collected or arranged £284m in child maintenance (regular and arrears), of which £32m was arrears. In the year to June 2010, the CSA collected or arranged.

See:

[Child Support Agency Quarterly Summary of Statistics](#)

[Child Support Agency quarterly summary of statistics: first release](#)

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