This is the second newsletter describing the work of the National Commissioning Board.

The first newsletter of the National Commissioning Board described the purpose and functions of the NCB in more detail.

Both current and past editions of this newsletter can be viewed here.

This newsletter provides an update on the progress on projects being undertaken by the National Commissioning Board (NCB). If you require any further information, please contact:

Steve Vaughan
steve.vaughan@wlga.gov.uk

National Commissioning Board: Introduction

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. It is also committed to promoting effective working relationships between commissioners, providers, people in need of care and support and their families and representatives or advocates. The focus of the work of the NCB is to improve outcomes of individuals in need of care and support together with their families. The membership of the NCB and its working groups is under continuous review to ensure we secure both appropriate and effective engagement.

National Provider Forum

A National Provider Forum is now firmly established, thanks in part to the skills and hard work of Peter Randall (UKHCA) the original chair of the Forum. He has now handed over the role to Bruce McLernon who brings his usual energy and enthusiasm to the role. The NCB funded a development day for the Provider Forum earlier this year. The result of this was the development of a Briefing Paper identifying key issues/priorities for 2017/18. This is accessible here, open link

Resources

In the past the NCB has largely drawn upon resources from the Social Services Improvement Agency’s (SSIA) budget to fund its program of work. During 2016/17 this budget amounted to £69K with additional funding made available directly from Welsh Government to develop a model partnership agreement for the integrated commissioning of services from care homes for older people using pooled funds. The functions of the SSIA have now been transferred to Social Care Wales. The Welsh Government is now funding the work of the NCB through the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA). The budget for 2017/18 is likely to be around £75k. In addition, the Manager of the NCB is seconded on a fulltime basis from Welsh Government. This secondment has been extended until 1st April 2018.
The NCB can undertake a limited amount of work directly and subject to resources it can commission additional capacity and expertise externally. It also attempts to share learning across the regions. Clearly with one full-time member of staff and a limited budget the capacity of the NCB is limited. Similar considerations apply to the work of the National Provider Forum. Expectations of the National Commissioning Board and National Provider therefore have to be realistic.

Given these constraints the depth and breadth of work of the NCB over the last 18 months has been significant.

Working in partnership with the regions

In our first newsletter we acknowledged the fact that our regions themselves are still in the process of developing their regional infrastructures both in terms of commissioning and the wider integration and partnership agenda. Significant progress has been made, but there are still significant challenges in terms of skills, capacity and resources to develop integrated commissioning to achieve the service transformation required.

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 Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014, the Future Generations Act and the Regulation and Inspection Act.

The Program of the National Commissioning Board

- **Market analysis of Care Homes for Older People in Wales**
  - 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 for the development of a formal partnership and pooled fund for the integrated commissioning of services from care homes**

- **Model Terms and Conditions (Standards) for Care Homes and Home Care Services**

- **Developing an outcomes focused approach to the commissioning of home care**
  - Supporting Care Council for Wales (Social Care Wales) in the development of the national care at home strategy

- **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 and Capacity of Commissioners**

- **Learning Disabilities: Development of Integrated Commissioning Guidance for Commissioning Services for People with Learning Disabilities**

- **Development of Guidance for the Commissioning of Supported Living Services**

- **Children with Complex Needs due to ill-health or disabilities**
  - Development of a Practice Guide for Leading Integrated and Collaborative Commissioning
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 was asked to undertake a market analysis of care homes for older people in Wales by the Care Homes Steering Group. The purpose of the exercise is to develop a baseline of information to inform the development of an appropriate range of services.

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

Providers were asked to provide information in relation to the 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 was piloted in North Wales because the challenges of matching demand with appropriate placements is more acute in that area at present. It has since been rolled out across the rest of Wales. Information has been shared with each region at regional meetings.

An overview position statement has been drafted and a financial report has been made available to the Costs of Care Group established by Welsh Government to develop a transparent methodology for determining fee levels for care home placements that are sustainable and best value placements in care homes. It is refereed to as a position statement rather than a report because given the richness of the material it is subject to ongoing analysis. The position statement with annex can be found here, [open link](#).

The position statement contains several recommendations which are directed at regional partnership boards to pursue whilst the NCB will undertake further work in improving the quality of management information to improve commissioning and service provision; and to identify appropriate models of care. It will begin to identify the data that should be collected as a matter of routine so that we no longer need to mount a research exercise to access it. Most of the data used should be available as a matter of routine to inform decision making for both commissioners and providers. The analysis has also identified the need for the routine collection of other data. A workshop will be held in the Autumn to refine these data requirements. It is important that local authorities, health providers, CSSIW and providers are fully engaged in defining this information.

Far more important is the need to undertake further work on identifying the models of care required of care homes in the future. We still use a broad range of categories of care and the variation in the number of people eligible for NHS Continuing Healthcare is quite considerable between individual homes. Further work will be undertaken to scope out this work in September.

**The NCB has been asked to undertake some work in developing a specification for step up / step down intermediate care.** Further discussions will take place with those responsible for the intermediate care benchmarking exercise.
Support for the development of Market Position Statements

The information from the analysis in North Wales has been used to inform the development of a market position statement for Care Homes for the area. The NCB provided some additional funds to secure the services of the Institute of Public Care to support the development of the market position statement (act as critical friend) and facilitate early discussions with providers.

An opportunity to share learning from the development of market position statements took place on 14th July 2017. The Regions had an opportunity to share learning at a NCB workshop. All draft market position statements were shared. They also had an opportunity to learn what providers require from Market Position Statements with an excellent presentation from Sanjiv Joshi, both a care home provider and member of Care Forum Wales, on what is required from a provider’s perspective.

Housing (Accommodation options for older people)

The development of a market position statement limited to care homes for older people can be criticized as being too restrictive in its scope. Ideally we would like to broaden this out to encompass wider accommodation options for older people.

In the mean time we have identified good practice in relation to a needs assessment of housing and care homes undertaken by Powys. We provided additional support via an analysis by a critical friend and towards its completion and publication so that we can share good practice across Wales and beyond. Currently being translated, prior to circulation.

Model Terms and Conditions (Standards) for Care Homes and Home Care

The Market Analysis has identified a need for clarifying the models of care required from care home providers. Future requirements are presently being scoped and a report will be provided to the Care Homes Steering Group in October. This should inform the development of future specifications.

Integrated Commissioning of services from care homes (Model Partnership Agreement)

Additional funding was secured from Welsh Government to provide consultant support to work with a pilot region to develop a model partnership and pooled fund agreement. Work was undertaken with the Aneurin Bevan / Gwent Region as the pilot. An initial workshop was held on 31st October 2016 to launch the project in Gwent with a further workshop held to brief the other regions on this project on 1st November 2016.

A model agreement was developed with input of colleagues in Gwent. It included a legal input from a local authority lawyer and a NHS lawyer. However, further work will be required to sign off an agreement in Gwent. The purpose was not to deliver the final agreement simply to get a model to share with the regions across Wales. Each region will need to secure its own legal input to finalise an agreement for their circumstances.

The model agreement was shared at a workshop held in each region. These workshops included discussions about the broader measures required in terms of commissioning to make formal partnerships and pooled
funds a reality. This included the development of an agreed regional approach to contracts, specifications, quality assurance arrangements, reporting arrangements, authorization of placements, methodologies for determining fees etc.

**Examining Options for Securing Services**

The purpose of this project is to ensure that our means of securing services complements the delivery of person centred care and support together with a sustainable workforce.

A workshop was held on 16th July 2016 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 centred whilst at the same time nurturing the development of a skilled and knowledgeable workforce.

A discussion paper based upon the discussions within the workshop has been drafted.

This draft will serve as informal interim guidance designed to provoke appropriate discussions concerning any decisions concerning commissioning.

In the medium term, subject to resources, the suggestion is that we develop more detailed guidance to replace the former procurement route planner. This would be accompanied by a formal training program open to commissioners, procurement and legal officers, together with some provider representatives. This will commence if resources become available.

The change in regulations opens up the scope for innovation and it will be important that we ensure that commissioners understand and are confident about working in this new environment. We will begin with two workshops this year.

**Developing at outcomes focused approach to commissioning Home Care Services**

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. Currently being translated, prior to circulation.

This was shared at a workshop in July 2016. The NCB has commissioned a development partner, the Institute of Public Care, Oxford Brookes University, to develop a toolkit designed to facilitate the development of a more outcomes focused approach to the commissioning and delivery of home care services.

A draft toolkit made up of 23 different tools has been developed and has been subject of discussion among a small working group. This draft toolkit can be viewed here, [open link](#)

The value of a toolkit is that tools can be updated or replaced and new tools can be added reasonably flexibly. The toolkit can at first appear daunting, but it is designed to help commissioners to identify the actions required to move to a more outcomes focused service. We are not operating on a green field site so some commissioners will be further ahead than others and may be more selective in what tools they chose.
to use. We would also like to add tools as and when appropriate. We also want to add examples of good practice.

There will be some overlap with our work in relation to procurement, but these workstreams will complement each other.

Amendments are presently being undertaken to these tools prior to more formal engagement with stakeholders. Discussions will initially be held with Social Care Wales, which oversees the development of the Care at Home Strategy to explore how this work can be taken forward.

Skills and 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. The report can be found here, open link

The study has since been rolled out across the rest of Wales. One authority could not participate because of capacity issues, which provides an important message in itself. The report has identified serious deficits both in terms of the skills and capacity of commissioners. This will have serious implications for both the integration, transformation and quality of services.

The Chair and Manager of the NCB will seek a meeting with colleagues from Welsh Government and Social Care Wales to discuss the implications of the report together with follow up actions.

Learning Disabilities: Development of Integrated Commissioning Guidance

A workshop was held with stakeholders on 16th June 2016, which included members of the learning disability advisory group.

The NCB has commissioned work (as approved on its development day) to update commissioning guidance in relation to the integrated commissioning of services for people with learning disabilities to bring it up to date both in terms of legislation and policy. The guidance has been drafted and has been discussed with the Learning Disability Advisory Group and its subgroup leading on service transformation.

An amended version of the guidance was presented to a workshop involving members of the Learning Disability Advisory Group and representatives from the region on the 22nd June.

Subject to resources this will be supplemented by a suite of more detailed guidance in relation to specific services such as supported living arrangements; daytime occupation/day care; and specialist health services, etc. Work will hopefully start on supported living accommodation in October.

The Welsh Government has a cross department learning disability transformation programme in place which will review existing policies, frameworks and provision and develop proposals for action at local, regional and national level designed to strengthen service delivery and improve its sustainability. The review will look at health, social care, education, employment, skills and housing services for people with learning disabilities. It will also consider funding arrangements, commissioning and workforce themes and a detailed implementation framework will be produced. The Welsh Government lead on the transformation programme has been fully updated on the work of the NCB together with the draft guidance.
The Development of a Concordant to promote constructive working relationships between commissioners and providers

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 has worked with the National Provider Forum to develop a 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.

In December 2016 the NCB made the decision that the Concordant would encompass partnerships between commissioners, providers and advocates for citizens and communities.

The Concordant was launched by Rebecca Evans AM, Minister for Social Services and Public Health at the UKHCA Wales Provider Forum in Cardiff. It can be viewed here, open link

Development of Practice Guide to Integrated and Collaborative Commissioning

At a NCB development day held in November 2016 it was suggested that we produce a simple manual/tool to explain integrated commissioning. Partnerships can use this guide to evaluate how they are progressing towards integrated commissioning.

This has been completed and is available here, open link We already have a number of collaborative commissioning products in place.

Children with Complex Needs (due to disability or ill-health)

This is the last project identified in the original NCB work programme to get started. Discussions have been held with a number of stakeholders and a workshop has been held with Children with Disability Team Managers to help to scope the project on 23rd June 2017. The NCB is presently seeking advice on the make up of a project team with representatives from stakeholders to take this project forward in the Autumn.
Appendix 1

Membership of the NCB

Regional Leads
- Sian Nowell, Cwm Taf Region
- Rachel Jones, Cardiff and Vale Region
- Martyn Palfreman, West Wales
- Mark Saunders, Aneurin Bevan Region
- Sara Harvey, Western Bay
- Bethan Jones Edwards, North Wales Region
- Lee Anderson, Powys Region

National Provider Forum Representatives
- Bruce McLernon, Chair, National Provider Forum
- Mary Wimbury, Care Forum Wales
- Yvonne Apsitis, UKHCA

Wales Procurement Officers
- Liz Lucas

CSSIW
- David Francis

WLGA
- Richard Dooner

Improvement Agencies
- Wayne Jepson, Person Centred Care, 1000 Lives Improvement Service, Public Health Wales
- Maria Bell, Project Lead for Market Analysis, North Wales

Local Authority
- Dave Street, Chair, ADSS Lead Commissioning
- Awen Morwena Edwards, Director Rep, North Wales
- Karen Benjamin, 4Cs, Heads of Children’s Services rep
- Jacqueline Davies and Phil Gilroy, Heads of Adult Services rep

NHS
- Carol Shillabeer, Chief Executive, Powys Teaching Health Board
- Gaynor Williams, Director of Complex Care
- Val Attwood, Associate Director of Contracting, Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board
- Integrated Health and Social Care Commissioning Programme: Framework Agreement for younger adults (18-64) with mental health and learning disabilities in residential care and nursing homes
- Julian Baker, Director of National Collaborative Commissioning
- Shane Mills

Third Sector (WCVA)
- Adrian Roper
- Chris Bennett

Social Care Wales
- Stephanie Griffiths

Welsh Government
- Christopher Stevens