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PCT Chief Executives
Chief Executives of Providers of commissioned Specialised
Services

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Dear Colleague,

Agreements between Specialised Services Commissioning groups and Providers

You may be aware that your local SCG has been undertaking a review of the clinical services contracts they hold. The review will inform the decisions that will need to be taken as part of the transition to the new commissioning arrangements as part of the passage of the Health and social Care Bill through Parliament.

The case for change for moving from separate and disparate contracting arrangements for specialised commissioning has been well made and is generally supported by patient groups and the service alike.

Over the next few months the SCGs will be having discussions with PCT colleagues and their providers to start to separate out the SCG commissioned services into their own contracts which will run along side the original joint PCT/SCG contracts.

A significant amount of preparatory work has already been undertaken with some SCGs already taking action to ensure that they will be able to enter into direct contracts with providers from April 2012.

The move to national standardisation for access to services and standardisation of policies and specifications will in the immediate short term allows resources to be released to focus on the quality and effectiveness of commissioned services and the impact of this on treatment outcomes.

Specific areas of consistency which are to be achieved include:

- National convergence of commissioning from 1st April 2012;
- Clustering Specialised Commissioning Group arrangements into the SHA Cluster footprint to support the move towards one operating model for specialised services;
- Operating as a national team through the SHA Cluster footprints, focusing on convergence of contracts, policies and service specifications.

If you have specific queries about the changes to the contracting arrangements please do not hesitate to contact Kate Caston Specialised Services Transition Lead (kate.caston@dh.gsi.gov.uk) or Karen Helliwell (karen.helliwell@wmsh.nhs.uk) who is leading of SCG contract issues

Yours sincerely



Bob Ricketts CBE
Director of Provider Policy