

May 2011

Dear colleague

On 6 April, the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Health announced that they would pause, listen, reflect and improve on plans for reforming the NHS, as set out in the current Health Bill.

As part of this, the Government has established the NHS Future Forum – a group of 45 health professionals, patient and public representatives and others who have a stake in getting the health reforms right. Broadly speaking, our remit is to take some of the principles underlying the need for reform – such as clinically led commissioning – and review how effectively the Health Bill puts them into practice. We have been asked to report back to Government by the end of May.

As Chair of the Forum, I am writing to you to let you know how you and your organisation can get involved and make your views known.

As you may appreciate, this involves a very high level of complexity – with thousands of different views and opinions. At national level we have already arranged well over 100 meetings, events and visits. However, we are very much aware of the need to listen to front line staff, patients and the public, and are working on local and regional events to do so.

There are three main ways to get involved:

- First, if you are a national representative organisation wondering whether or how you will be involved, we are almost certainly already factoring you into a programme of national level discussions. We are working hard to speak to as many of you as possible and we would like thank those of you who have allowed us to join your meetings and events.
- Secondly, if you are a Trust, a PCT, a Consortium or a different part of the NHS we would encourage you either to organise an event for your staff and public where possible to ask them how they feel about the reforms, or to use existing events such as LINK meetings or staff briefings to do so. We can provide support in the form of presentations, feedback forms and other material to support you.
- Finally, anyone can make their views known to us by using the Department of Health web portal: <http://healthandcare.dh.gov.uk/>

The NHS Future Forum is a group of clinicians, patient representatives voluntary sector representatives and others from the health field, including frontline staff, that will oversee the NHS listening exercise.

Inevitably, there is a degree of cynicism about what we are doing. But I would urge you to get involved, have your say and make a contribution. This is a complex exercise involving thousands of different perspectives. Only by bringing them together can we make our case to Government.

Thank you

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Field". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Professor Steve Field
Chairman
NHS Future Forum