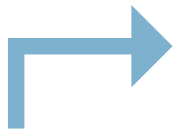


Summary of local public health intelligence



Upper tier and unitary local authorities in England¹ will soon have a new statutory duty to improve the health of their populations.

Subject to approval by Parliament, they will also have responsibilities to provide public health advice on healthcare services to NHS clinical commissioning groups and to provide information and advice with a view to ensuring that plans are in place to protect the health of their population from outbreaks of infection or environmental hazards.

Local authorities will need to use the best available health intelligence in order to fulfil these significant new public health functions.

This factsheet summarises these health intelligence requirements and describes issues that local authorities will need to address with their partners to establish effective health intelligence support, including:

- access to relevant health and social care data and evidence
- provision of specialist health intelligence skills and capacity
- governance of any confidential information used for health intelligence.

To maintain access to existing and future available health intelligence products and services, local teams will need to:

- have appropriate IT infrastructure and information governance arrangements in place, including N3 connections, NHSmail email accounts, and log-ins to relevant evidence repositories (eg 'Athens')
- ensure skilled health intelligence staff are based within the local authority and/or develop a business model for securing this input from partner organisations
- make arrangements with local NHS organisations for provision of relevant data and information from local NHS systems
- consider whether confidential personal data is required for specific purposes and identify the legal basis for access to, and controls around the use of, such data.

Public Health England will actively support this work by engaging with local authorities to develop an effective knowledge and intelligence service and by leading on or contributing to relevant national policy and delivery.





Public Health England will provide evidence and updates on how England measures up against the Public Health Outcomes Framework, and will provide standardised, benchmarked information that local authorities may choose to use in their joint strategic needs assessments and health and wellbeing strategies.

Access to NHS data for local authority staff is an essential part of the service clinical commissioning groups require from commissioning support groups and any costs incurred by the commissioning support groups in providing it need to be covered by the clinical commissioning groups, not the local authorities.

Public Health England will work closely with the NHS Commissioning Board to promote effective joint working at local level between local authorities, clinical commissioning groups and the new commissioning support units².

Public Health England will encourage sharing of information and practice across the local system, promoting uptake of new initiatives where these are found to be effective, and developing a repository of best practice for public health.

¹ In England, there are a mixture of single-tier (unitary) and two-tier authorities. In areas covered by two tiers, the upper tier will usually be known as the county or shire council and the lower tier as the district, borough or city council. Unitary authorities may have adopted any of these names (www.hmrc.gov.uk/manuals/ctmanual/ctm40860.htm). When we refer to local authorities in this document, we are referring to upper tier and unitary authorities only.

² Commissioning support units are currently being designed to offer support to clinical commissioning groups, including on service redesign, market management, procurement and contract negotiation. They will also offer information services in many cases including monitoring, analysis and risk stratification. (www.commissioningboard.nhs.uk/files/2012/09/fact-comm-support.pdf).

Actions

Throughout this series of factsheets you will find text boxes summarising the key actions arising from each section. These are intended to help local areas plan for and implement a successful transition.



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