

NHS England Accountability Meeting

Tuesday 20 May 2014

16:30-17:30

MINUTES

Department of Health
Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP, Secretary of State for Health
Norman Lamb MP, Minister of State for Care and Support
Una O'Brien CB, Permanent Secretary
Richard Douglas CB, Director General, Finance and NHS
Ian Dodge, Director, NHS Group
Emily Frith, Special Adviser to the Minister of State for Care and Support
Kristen Macleod, Principal Private Secretary to the Secretary of State
Head of NHS England Sponsorship
Policy Manager, NHS England Sponsor Team (Secretary)
NHS England
Professor Sir Malcolm Grant, Chair
Simon Stevens, Chief Executive
Dame Barbara Hakin, National Director, Commissioning Operations
Paul Baumann, Chief Financial Officer
Tom Easterling, Office of the Chair and Chief Executive
System Alignment Team Member

Agenda item 1: matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting on 17 March 2014

1. There were no matters from the previous meeting requiring discussion.

Agenda item 2: Mandate assurance

2. The meeting discussed progress against the 24 Mandate objectives, and noted particular improvement with nine.
3. SIMON STEVENS pointed to progress on a number of mandate objectives but expressed disappointment about progress over the prior year against the objective linked to Winterbourne View and learning disabilities. Recently published figures showed that the number of adults with learning disabilities and behaviour that challenges transferring from in-patient to community care through the Transforming Care programme was much smaller than expected in the first year of the programme. NHS England now intended to adopt a different approach to ensure that patients had appropriate care for their needs and this approach envisaged a far greater role for the third sector.

4. DAME BARBARA HAKIN explained that a large proportion of those in in-patient settings remained there on the basis of clinical advice. THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CARE AND SUPPORT asked whether there was a need to ensure patients and their advocates could challenge the clinical opinion where desired. SIMON STEVENS agreed. THE SECRETARY OF STATE asked NHS England to put together an action plan to be published by the end of August. It was also agreed that the next meeting would take a more detailed look at the issue.

ACTION – NHS England to put together proposals in a paper for discussion at the next meeting.

5. The SECRETARY OF STATE raised concerns about progress with the objective to support children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) and disability. The next meeting was scheduled to discuss services for children and young people, and he asked that this covered what action NHS England was taking here. The MINISTER OF STATE FOR CARE AND SUPPORT also pointed to the need to improve tier 4 child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS).

ACTION – NHS England to put together a paper on services for children and young people (to include SEN and CAMHS) for discussion at the next meeting.

6. With regard to the objective on parity of esteem for mental health services, the MINISTER OF STATE FOR CARE AND SUPPORT reiterated his interest in seeing costed options for potential measures related to access and waiting times.

ACTION – NHS England to submit options by early July.

7. With regard to the objective on integrated care, the MINISTER OF STATE FOR CARE AND SUPPORT underlined the importance of robust evidence of what works.
8. The SECRETARY OF STATE thanked Simon Stevens for the rigour with which plans for reform of out of hospital care were being taken forward. The MINISTER OF STATE FOR CARE AND SUPPORT also welcomed the positive impact Simon Stevens had made since joining NHS England as Chief Executive.

Agenda item 3: Annual assessment

9. SIMON STEVENS outlined the basic process. NHS England would produce an annual report, which would include its assessment of progress against the Mandate objectives. The Secretary of State would respond to this with his own commentary.

Agenda item 4: Specialised commissioning

10. SIMON STEVENS outlined NHS England's plans to ensure spending was in line with planning, both for 2014/15 and over the longer term. NHS England had established a turnaround programme to tackle the key issues needed to control spend in the immediate and medium term, including more effective contract management and reviewing scope for efficiency. In the longer term, there may be some merit in reviewing whether the prescribed list of specialised services is right. NHS England

would consider the matter, consult stakeholders and, if helpful, put together some proposals for Ministers to consider.

11. The SECRETARY OF STATE asked whether there was scope to support efficiency at local level through greater stability of the tariff. PAUL BAUMANN explained that NHS England was already in discussion with Monitor over the possibility of multi-year tariffs, ahead of initial consultation with stakeholders over the summer.

ACTION – NHS England to report back on the decisions made.

Agenda item 5: Finance

12. The SECRETARY OF STATE reiterated his support for financial discipline, alongside safety. He recognised the challenge of managing the NHS budget and thanked NHS England for its contribution. He also reiterated his view that safe care was not an added extra when money was available; rather safe care saved money.
13. PAUL BAUMANN outlined the financial position at the end of the 2013/14 financial year. There had been an underspend of 0.3%, and a broadly stable position in the second part of the year. The big issues had been specialised commissioning, the varying financial positions faced by CCGs, and keeping QIPP delivery strong. NHS England was in the final stages of financial planning for 2014/15, and was continuing to work with CCGs on forward plans for 2015/16 and five year plans.
14. With regard to variability between CCGs, the MINISTER OF STATE FOR CARE AND SUPPORT highlighted the need to ensure allocations reflect need and pressures related to continuing healthcare. He also underlined the need to demonstrate that mental health spending by CCGs reflected the Mandate objective on parity of esteem for mental health services.
15. UNA O'BRIEN underlined the importance of getting consolidated accounts published on time to demonstrate NHS England's competence in managing the finances.

Agenda item 6: Any other business

Fraud

16. UNA O'BRIEN highlighted the need to take action to tackle fraud where NHS England was best placed to influence. PAUL BAUMANN underlined the commitment of NHS England's Audit Committee to doing so. NHS England had prioritised work to tackle prescription charge exemption fraud and dental contract fraud. There was a need for better data to demonstrate the financial case. There was also a role for the Government in supporting NHS England.

Organisational development

17. UNA O'BRIEN explained that some joint work was taking place on whether certain activities were a good fit with the role of NHS England. Ministers would receive a paper in due course.
18. SIMON STEVENS briefly outlined the requirement placed on NHS England to further reduce administrative costs in back office support functions. Options were being developed and tested.