



Healthcare Commission- Assessment for Improvement consultation

RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 The Commission is asked consider and comment on the proposals by the Healthcare Commission for a new approach to assessing performance of organisations providing healthcare in the NHS and the independent sector.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Healthcare Commission is responsible for assessing the performance of the NHS health bodies annually and awarding performance ratings. The Commission has developed a new approach to the way it assesses the healthcare organisations and it intends to adopt this from April 2005. The new process aims to make the assessment less burdensome and target resources at those that need it. The key elements of the new approach are that it:
- Aims to address issues that matter to patients, the public, clinicians and healthcare managers
 - Emphasises improvement and better outcomes
 - Takes account of existing and new NHS targets and local targets
 - Focuses in 2005/2006 on whether organisations are getting the basics right, with more emphasis on development and improvement in future years
 - Uses information readily available to ensure a targeted and proportionate approach to assessment
 - Aims to make better use of information already in the public domain and coordinate work with other bodies carrying out inspection and regulation
 - requires Trusts to issue a public declaration on the extent to which they meet the core standards. The declaration will need to include the views of the partner organisations including overview and scrutiny committees
 - Aligns assessments of healthcare provided by the NHS with those of the independent sector and reports findings to the public in similar way
 - proposes to change the exiting star rating of zero, one, two three to:
 - Very good
 - Good
 - Satisfactory
 - Unsatisfactory
 - Serious concerns
- 2.2 The Healthcare Commission has produced a booklet detailing the new process. The document states that the health community has been involved in developing the new approach, including professional bodies and organisations representing patients. Key sections of the documents are attached to this report and the full document can

be accessed through the following web link -
<http://consultation.healthcarecommission.org.uk/site/index.php?view=assessment>

2.3 The Commission is invited to give its comments to the new assessment process by 21 February 2005. The Healthcare Commission has attached detailed questionnaire and would welcome views on all sections of the document, particularly seeks views on whether:

- They are assessing the right things
- They assess them in the right way

2.4 The Commission may wish to:

- thank the Healthcare Commission for offering the opportunity comment on their proposals
- welcome the opportunity for O&S committees to contribute in their annual assessment process
- comment on the areas for assessment and support the balanced approach to be taken in using existing data and only seeking additional information where necessary, to minimise the workload for the health bodies
- ask for clarification on how O&S Committees can be involved in setting local targets
- seek clarification on how the new assessment process relates to other inspection regimes such as the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) of local authorities by the Audit Commission and awarding Excellent, Good, Fair, Weak and Poor ratings and suggest their ratings systems adopts a similar terminology.

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Background papers:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 - Implications

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1.1 None for the Council.

Legal

2.1 Powers to scrutinise the NHS health services is contained in Health and Social Care Act 2001.

Personnel

3.1 None for the Council.

Equalities Impact

4.1 None.

Corporate Objectives and Priorities for Change

5.1 The report supports the Corporate Objectives of **protecting and supporting people.**

5.2 The report contributes to the Corporate Priority to **enhance the community leadership role of the Council both at strategic and neighbourhood level, through partnership working and listening to, and communicating, with the public.**