

HARROW STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD
Update on the Public Health System Reform
12th July 2011



Introduction
<p>The Health and Wellbeing Group met on the 21st June to discuss the recommendations made by NHS Future Forum on the future Public Health System Reform and to consider the potential implications for its transition to a shadow Health and Wellbeing Board.</p> <p>The Forum made 16 core recommendations, which were widely welcomed by major health bodies and commentators. Some, such as greater powers for health and wellbeing boards and co-terminosity with local authority boundaries are particularly positive for local areas.</p> <p>This report provides a summary of the key health reform recommendations, which will need to be considered by the partnership and a progress update from the Health and Wellbeing Group.</p>
Proposed Action
<p>Note the proposed changes to the public health system.</p>
What are you asking the Partnership Board to do
<p>To note the report</p>

Summary

The Forum's report made a number of recommendations to strengthen and improve the effectiveness of the reforms. Subject to passage of the Health and Social Care Bill, the future direction of policy announced by Ministers includes:

Public health involvement in commissioning – The Government has agreed that commissioning requires input from a wide range of professionals, including public health. Health and Wellbeing Boards will have a stronger role in promoting joint commissioning and integrating care across the NHS, public health and social care. Health and Wellbeing Boards will discharge executive functions of local authorities, and should operate as equivalent executive bodies do in local government. It will be for local authorities to determine the precise number of elected members on a Health and Wellbeing Board, and they will be free to insist upon having a majority of elected councillors.

Clinical advice and leadership: - Local clinical senates (hosted by the NHS Commissioning Board) will be set up to bring together a range of healthcare professionals, including public health, to give clinical leadership and expert advice for commissioning.

Independent public health advice: - At the national level, the Future Forum endorsed the importance of building a strong, integrated public health service. They emphasised, however, the

critical importance of staff in the new body being able to give independent scientific advice and to enjoy the trust and confidence of the public. The Government has therefore announced its intention that, subject to the usual approvals procedures for creating new bodies, Public Health England will be established as an executive agency of the Department of Health. Work will also continue to look at how directors of public health continue their level of independence

Timetable

The new timetable for the reforms includes phasing, which is intended to allow the new system to be built over time.

The date for local authorities to assume their new public health responsibilities remains unchanged, as April 2013, following the abolition of PCTs. Public Health England and the other new national bodies will now also take up their full accountability and financial responsibilities from April 2013.

Clinical commissioning groups will not be authorised to take on any part of the commissioning budget in their local area until they are ready and willing to do so. By April 2013, GP practices will be members of either an authorised clinical commissioning group, or a 'shadow' commissioning group. Where a clinical commissioning group is not able to take on some or all aspects of commissioning, the local arms of the NHS Commissioning Board will commission on its behalf, and in this role, will be subject to the same duties of transparency and engagement.

Health and Wellbeing Group Update

On the 21st June the Health and Wellbeing group discussed the future role and structure of the group and also the transition steps required to move towards a shadow Health and Wellbeing Board. A paper which set out options for possible models of the group and shadow Board were discussed, which will be considered at the next meeting in September, alongside the outcomes of the Health and Wellbeing Engagement Event on the 5th July and the anticipated updated guidance on Health and Wellbeing Boards.

The group also discussed the London Health and Wellbeing Board programme which is offering £15,000 to each developing Health and Wellbeing Board in London. The group has agreed to utilise this funding to support member development, engagement of public and stakeholders and the development of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Finally the group was updated by the delivery leads on progress against the three priority delivery areas of, Health and Worklessness, Frail Elderly and Commissioning and the Top 100 Families project.