

**ADULT SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
10 JANUARY 2011**

**TRANSPARENCY IN OUTCOMES: A FRAMEWORK FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE
(Director of Adult Social Care and Health)**

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to brief members of the Panel on a major publication launched by the Department of Health called *Transparency in Outcomes: A Framework for Adult Social Care*. The publication sets out a consultation on proposals for a new outcome framework to begin implementation next year 2011/12. These proposals will replace the current performance framework in which CQC delivers an annual judgement.

2 SUGGESTED ACTION

- 2.1 **The Department will be preparing a response to the consultation and will be working to ensure local strategies and plans are aligned to the new proposals. The Panel are asked to note this and to contribute any comments to assist this work.**

3 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Transparency in Outcomes: A Framework for Adult Social Care

- 3.1.1 The government published the above consultation paper on November 16th and they are requesting that councils respond to the document no later than February 9th, and more specifically to the consultation questions in the document. These are set out in Annexe A to this report. What is being proposed is an enabling framework, not a directive one. The document can be found at:-
http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/documents/digitalasset/dh_122037.pdf
- 3.1.2 Changes which have been announced by government so far include an end to top down performance targets, a focus on local accountability to citizens and a new responsibility for the social care sector to lead its own improvement.
- 3.1.3 There are three key themes underpinning the consultation; these are **Outcomes** (putting what matters to people at the heart of social care), **Quality** (meaning the effectiveness, safety and efficiency of services and the experience of people who use them), and **Transparency** (defined as empowering local citizens to hold services to account through sharing of information, publication of reports and a greater voice for users and carers).
- 3.1.4 The document states that this is a very broad agenda, covering elements of performance, regulation, information and improvement. The consultation proposals cover five areas; building the evidence base, demonstrating progress, support transparency, reward and incentivise, and secure the foundations.

- 3.1.5 **Build the Evidence Base:** In order to build a transparent framework around quality and outcomes, the government have said that we need to be clear about what the evidence tells them 'high quality' looks like in Adult Social Care, and the type of outcomes that people may be able to achieve. Therefore, an evidence-based picture of what high quality looks like is necessary to improve service provision, inform commissioning and promote choice. The role of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) will be expanded to cover adult social care from 2012/13. NICE will develop and publish 'Quality Standards' on best practice in social care. Quality Standards are guidance documents which describe high quality, cost-effective care for particular circumstances, conditions or pathways. They use accredited evidence and are developed collaboratively with care professionals.
- 3.1.6 **Demonstrate Progress:** there should be clear, consistent and comparable information which is the bedrock for both public accountability and sector-led benchmarking. This is not about performance management or central direction – there are no targets or priorities. There are two key areas of proposal here the first of which is a single data set which captures all council information on social care, shared routinely between areas in one place, informed by a "zero-based review" of data collection that will reduce burdens. The second is a set of outcome measures, derived from these data, which help councils and people judge outcomes and compare progress fairly.
- 3.1.7 The single data set will bring all routine social care collections into one place, making data freely accessible and cutting out duplication between organisations. It will also significantly reduce reporting burdens on councils, through a fundamental 'zero-based' review of social care data being led by ADASS and the Information Centre.
- 3.1.8 The outcome measures are for consistent interpretation of the best available data, and helping people understand the results for those using services. They are published with the data because the social care sector and service users agree they are useful and are not a management tool – no targets; no annual performance assessment.
- 3.1.9 **Support Transparency:** Public accountability is the key to Adult Social Care and councils should be reporting to local people on their priorities and the outcomes they have achieved. Citizens should be able to exercise their role in accountability effectively. The key proposals include councils publishing 'local accounts' on quality and outcomes in adult social care, as a means of reporting locally. This replaces the annual performance assessment of councils by CQC. Also, a new role exists for sector-led peer review and the challenge is to lead on quality improvement in social care. There is a potential challenge role for HealthWatch, and whether user and carer-led assessments of councils could encourage a stronger local voice.
- 3.1.10 **Reward and Incentivise:** Success in embedding and improving quality and outcomes will be contingent upon the right support. This part of the consultation asks what role there could be in the future for additional systems of incentives which promote quality improvement for service providers and commissioners. There are already different incentives built into the strategy through transparent publication and reporting proposals. Some further proposals in this area are quality ratings for providers where work is underway to develop a new measure of 'excellence' in service provision to incentivise providers and inform individual choice. The question of whether payment-by-results or other national schemes for local financial incentives could have a role to play.

- 3.1.11 **Secure the Foundations:** The government states that a focus on high quality, best practice and best outcomes should never detract from commitment to the basics. The role of the Quality Care Commission will be strengthened with the aim that all needing care and support may have full confidence in the support they receive, and be empowered and supported to challenge services when the quality falls short of what should be expected. Although annual assessments of councils will end with immediate effect, there will be a re-focused role on registration of social care providers, a more proportionate triggered inspection system and a new sector-led approach to improvement in which local government itself takes on peer review, challenge and assurance.
- 3.1.12 **Next Steps:** The consultation on this agenda closes on 9 February 2011. During that time, the government have said they want to work with the local government and social care sectors to co-produce a joint response, which sets out the next steps, roles and responsibilities of partners – including agreed outcome measures for local use in 2011/12. The formal consultation response will be published in March 2011. Some elements would come into effect from April 2011 (as set out in the consultation response). Further proposals for the approach will be included in the planned Social Care White Paper in late 2011.
- 3.1.13 **Work Stream at Bracknell Forest:** The work stream to respond to the consultation at Bracknell Forest is already underway. The consultation proposal document has been summarised and key members of Adult Social Care have engaged with the national events programme by attending government events on 19th November and 1st December. The Director chairs the Association of Directors of Adults Social Services (ADASS) South East Regional Performance Network and key staff have exchanged information and views. There will be a regional response from this group.

Background Papers

Transparency in Outcomes: A Framework for Adult Social Care

http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/documents/digitalasset/dh_122037.pdf

Contacts for further information

Mark Gittins

Performance Manager for Adult Social Care and Health

01344 351433

mark.gittins@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Glyn Jones

Director of Adult Social Care and Health

01344 351458

glyn.jones@bracknell-forest.gov.uk