



## **Commissioning Board** *A special health authority*

20 June 2012

Dear Colleague

### **NHS COMMISSIONING BOARD LOCAL AREA TEAMS AND CLINICAL SENATES**

Following on from the letter sent at the beginning of June, we are now writing to update you on the outcome of the work to agree the geographies that the NHS Commissioning Board (NHS CB) local area teams will serve and also on the outcome of related work that has been going on to confirm the number and coverage of clinical senates.

#### **Local area teams**

We recognise that there is no single, ideal model or geographical footprint for a local area team. Since the NHS CB's four Regional Directors were appointed they have been working with colleagues locally and in the NHS Commissioning Board Authority (NHS CBA) to develop proposals which take account of related local geographies, service patterns and relationships to achieve a sustainable solution that will establish the definitive local presence of the NHS CB.

The proposals have considered a range of factors including the NHS CB's direct commissioning responsibilities; the number and nature of local relationships which will need to be maintained; the boundaries of clinical commissioning groups (CCGs); the interface with local government; and the relationship of local area teams to the pattern of other local footprints such as clinical networks and senates and Local Resilience Forums / Local Health Resilience Partnerships.

As a result of this work, proposals for 27 local area teams were put to the May meeting of the NHS CBA, and we wrote to you to confirm these arrangements and to indicate that the final details of the areas covered would be shared shortly. A full list of the teams will be published on the NHS CBA website, along with a map outlining the geographical boundaries for each. A background briefing pack containing these details is attached for you to share and cascade as appropriate.

#### **Arrangements in London**

In London there will be a more integrated structure with three area teams working as an essential part of the overall pan-London arrangements for direct commissioning and functions supporting the delivery of service innovation. These arrangements reflect both the distinct nature of the London Region and the need to ensure effective working with partners at both a Borough and London-wide level.

#### **Clinical Senates**

Clinical senates will help Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBs) and the NHS CB to make the best decisions about healthcare for the populations they represent by providing advice and leadership at a strategic level.

On our behalf, Dr Kathy McLean has led discussions with SHA Cluster Medical and Nursing Directors, local clinical leaders and the NHS CB's Regional Directors to determine the most appropriate number and coverage of clinical senates. As a result of this work it has now been confirmed that there will be a total of 12 senates. A map outlining their geographical boundaries is also available at the link above.

### **Geographical Alignment**

A key principle of the design work for both local area teams and clinical senates has been that there should be alignment of boundaries between structures wherever relationships are important.

The 27 local area teams have boundaries which are largely aligned within those of the clinical senates. There are only three areas where the senate boundaries cut across those of the local area teams. This has been necessary to ensure that the senate boundaries recognise the pattern of patient flows, particularly with tertiary centres.

For example, patient flows and clinical relationships for the north of Cumbria are primarily with the north east, whereas those for the south of the county are predominantly with north Lancashire. The clinical senate boundary reflects these differences, whereas the local area team includes the whole of Cumbria as well as Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, to provide the best alignment with CCGs and local government.

Similarly, close alignment has been sought between the NHS CB's specialised commissioning arrangements and the clinical senates. As a result, the boundaries of the 10 specialised commissioning hubs will be aligned entirely with the 12 senates.

### **Next steps**

Roles in the local area teams will be advertised to eligible candidates within the next few days so that the detailed design of the corporate team, regions and local area teams can now progress in earnest.

Please share this update with colleagues.

Thank you

Yours faithfully



**Ian Dalton CBE  
Chief Operating Officer  
and Deputy Chief Executive**



**Professor Sir Bruce Keogh  
National Medical Director**