

BOARD PAPER - NHS ENGLAND

Title: Transforming Primary Care Support Services

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Purpose of paper:

- To provide a summary of the principles already agreed for determining an approach to transform these services.
- To note that this process for achieving budgeted savings is already a number of months delayed.
- To acknowledge views of the staff representatives on the process we have followed.
- To explain what the Board will discuss in the private meeting.

Actions required by Board members:

To note.

TRANSFORMING PRIMARY CARE SUPPORT SERVICES

1. Primary Care Support (PCS) Services are currently delivered by approximately 1,800 staff currently working in 38 of our locations and a variety of third party supplier sites. The services cover a range of functions for patients and are currently provided by a mixture of in-house and outsourced providers.
2. The services were transferred to NHS England in April 2013 on the basis that, in line with all other functions, they would be subject to a 40% reduction in administrative costs by April 2014.

Key Principles

3. A number of key principle have been central to our process:
 - safe transfer of services to a new operating model;
 - a reduction in administrative costs in line with NHS England's overall reduction of 40%;
 - a national specification with consistent standards and approach;
 - delivery in line with our developing strategy for primary care;
 - supporting the business needs of stakeholders
 - maximising the use of technology; and,
 - consultation with the workforce and their representatives.

Engagement with staff and their representatives

4. There has been significant engagement with staff and their representatives. A formal consultation was launched with staff on 11 November 2013. Following a decision in January 2014 to include a potential out-sourcing option this was widened to include details of that proposal in early April. Consultation will continue until a final decision has been made on a preferred option. Based on the complexity and scale of the programme consultation has taken place at a national and regional level with trade unions, and in team briefings and individual meetings with staff.
5. In formulating feasible options, we have taken into account feedback from the consultation with staff, which has influenced the in-house option design.

Timetable

6. In its private meeting the Board will consider options to transform PCS services. Three principal options are:

- Full market testing with an open public procurement;
 - an in-house option in those areas where outsourcing is not currently in place. This option includes significant reduction in the number of staff employed as well as a reduction in the number of sites; or
 - an option to outsource all services to SSCL, a joint venture between Steria and the Cabinet office.
7. This analysis includes information that is commercially sensitive, the public disclosure of pricing information being likely to worsen the savings available for taxpayers. It is for this reason that the Board must review the material in private.
8. We expect to be able to finalise a decision in June.
9. The staff support and personal development programmes we have put in place for all staff over the past four months will continue with the emphasis on supporting our staff make decisions about their future, plan for retirement or apply for new posts.