



**Insight  
roundtable:  
Commissioning  
for outcomes**

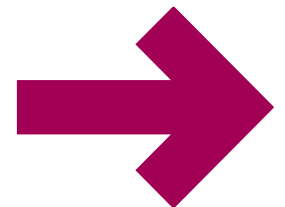
Summary report

June 2014

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# Introduction

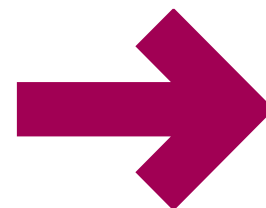
NHS England is hosting a series of insight roundtables which aim to bring together leading national thinkers from the commissioning system, industry, academia and think tanks to develop the thinking on what makes for excellent practice in clinical commissioning.

Commissioners across England now face huge challenges in terms of how to deliver better for less, how to protect the fundamental principle of universal health care, free at the point of delivery, and how to empower patients with more control over their own care.

Commissioning for improved outcomes means focusing less on what is done for patients and more on the results of what is done – enabling local populations to be as healthy and happy as they can be. The key principle behind commissioning for outcomes is a clear **focus on the actual results being achieved** and putting in place the most effective commissioning model to achieve those results.

However, while few would disagree with the principle of commissioning for outcomes, actually making it a reality – with the practicalities of shifting to new models of contracting and commissioning – is a real challenge. NHS England and CCGs are working together through the NHS Commissioning Assembly to bring together a number of pieces of work and support offers to help commissioners start their conversations. This includes the [narrative produced by the Quality Working Group](#), and further information is included at the end of this document.

This document is a summary report of the roundtable that took place on Commissioning for Outcomes on 17 June 2014.

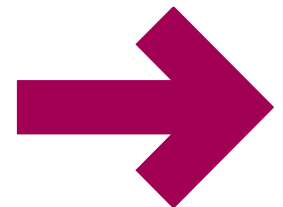


# Purpose of the roundtable

The aim of the Commissioning for Outcomes roundtable was to further understand, in relation to CCGs and the commissioning system:

- What does good outcome-based commissioning look like?
- What are the key enablers to help commissioners commission for improved outcomes?
- What are the practical actions needed to implement successful outcomes based commissioning models?

The insight roundtables are small events with the potential to have a high impact on the development of the commissioning system. The outputs of this event will form part of a suite of products being developed to help commissioners explore how to commission for better outcomes. There is more information on this at the end of the document. It will also contribute towards the development of future work and thinking for NHS England and the wider commissioning system.



# Methodology

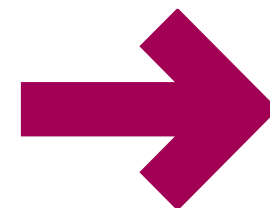
The roundtable sessions are structured in the form of a 'star chamber' or 'moral maze' event – a tried and tested way of generating creative insights into solving problems.

A panel of leading thinkers from the NHS and the wider commissioning system heard from three expert witnesses in turn, each of whom is recognized for their expertise in the area of outcome-based commissioning.

Each witness gave a 10 minute presentation about what they felt were the key enablers to help CCGs commission for outcomes, the conditions which will enable these outcomes to be achieved and opportunities for the future. A short video summary of each of the presentations can be found on the next page.

This was followed by 20 to 30 minutes of discussion between the panel and each witness where the themes were explored in greater detail. Once the panel had heard from all three witnesses they were asked to consider the content as a whole and reflect on key themes, opportunities and recommendations.

The views in this report represent the comments and thoughts of the panel members and are not necessarily reflective of the views of NHS England.



# Participants: Expert witnesses



**Dr Nicholas Hicks**  
Chief Executive, COBIC

[See Nick's video summary here](#)



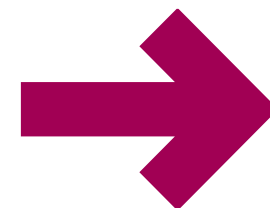
**Jacqueline Mallender**  
Director, Matrix Knowledge

[See Jacque's video summary here](#)



**Ben Jupp**  
Director, Social Finance

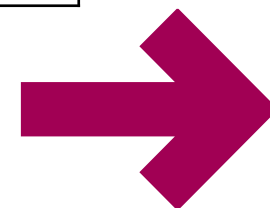
[See Ben's video summary here](#)



# Participants: Panellists

The panellists at the roundtable were:

Name	Role	Organisation
<b>Dr Robert Varnam (Chair)</b>	Head of General Practice Development	NHS England
<b>Felicity Cox</b>	Director	Wessex area team
<b>Joanna David</b>	Assistant Director Social Care Reform ADASS / LGA	Local Government Association
<b>Dr Sunil Gupta</b>	Clinical Accountable Officer	NHS Castlepoint and Rochford CCG
<b>Nicola King</b>	Head of Commissioning Skills	NHS England
<b>Adrian Robertson</b>	Programme Manager, Commissioning Academy	Cabinet Office
<b>Keith Wilson</b>	Assurance and Delivery Manager	West Yorkshire area team





# Topics discussed

A number of topics were covered during the discussion. These include:

**Understanding  
public value**

**Clarity of scope**

**Sharing learning**

**Competitive dialogue**

**Understanding of  
purpose**

**Culture and attitudes**

**Commissioner  
readiness**

**Innovation**

**Application**

**Governance**

**Integration**

**IT and informatics**

**Multi-year contracts**

**Political commitment**

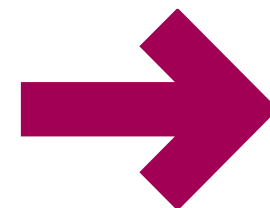
**Partnerships**

**Transparency**

**The commissioning  
cycle**

**Whole system  
transformation**

**Provider  
readiness**

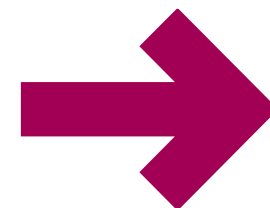


# Key themes

The key themes discussed during the day can be summarised as follows:

- ✓ In the new NHS all commissioning is about improving outcomes for the local population. The role of commissioners is to create collaborations across the health and care system, and to lead the transformation of the system in order to achieve improved health and wellbeing. Having clearly established this as their purpose, commissioners will regard outcomes based contracts as one of the means by which they achieve their goals.
- ✓ Outcomes based commissioning may have many different forms, and there is no single evidence-based model or a blueprint to follow. Commissioners will therefore need to experiment to find the best approach for any given situation. Their job is to have the confidence to create that innovative and transformational change.
- ✓ Innovation is a highly technical task with the need for continuous improvement, clear evaluation, open governance and the right culture and infrastructure. This is what we need to do well to deliver on the promise of these big picture ambitions for improving outcomes for our population.

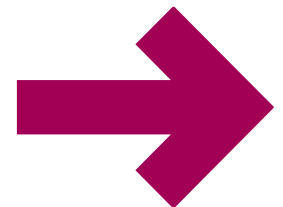
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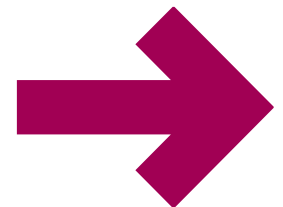
- ✓ If commissioners choose not to use the new or innovative contracting models, just the practice of having a meaningful dialogue with their provider organisations and local populations produces huge benefits. Building partnerships enables a shared vision of which outcomes are most valued.
- ✓ Commissioners need to be clear about their aims and objectives. Having a clearly defined scope and population is essential to being able to measure and achieve improved outcomes.
- ✓ Commissioners could build their confidence to move to outcome based commissioning by:
  - starting small;
  - understanding that innovative contracts take time and dialogue to perfect, so approaching it in an open way that enables learning;
  - being realistic about the time it will take for the benefits to be realised and for providers to build the capacity to become outcomes focussed.



# Next steps

This is only a high-level summary of the discussions that took place at the roundtable. A full report detailing the conclusions and recommendations made by the panel members, with a greater focus on key enablers and practical actions for commissioning for outcomes, will be made available later in the year. This will be published on the NHS England website.

The full report, together with further engagement with commissioners, will feed in to the future work plan for the Commissioning for Outcomes task and finish group (more information about the group is shown on the following page) in addition to contributing to the wider agenda of innovation, integration and whole system transformation.



# Further information and support

This roundtable report is just one of a number of support offers being made available to commissioners.

- ✓ The Commissioning for Outcomes task and finish group was established at the beginning of 2014 to look at the best ways of offering practical help to commissioners who want to explore innovative ways of contracting and commissioning. It is a sub-group of the NHS Commissioning Assembly's CCG Development Working Group and also forms part of NHS England's Commissioning System Development work programme.
- ✓ A [clinical commissioner narrative](#), developed by the Quality Working Group of the NHS Commissioning Assembly, which describes the challenges and opportunities offered by outcome-based commissioning.
- ✓ A scoping exercise to identify current CCG activity around outcome-based commissioning and innovative contracting. The first phase of this is about to be made available on the case studies Pinboard on the NHS England [Learning Environment](#).
- ✓ Discussions are also being held to look at developing a decision-making tool for commissioners to help identify possible commissioning models.

If you would like further information on any of these support offers, or would like to get involved in the task and finish group please contact [sarah.pudney@nhs.net](mailto:sarah.pudney@nhs.net).

