

Gateway Ref: 01798

NHS 111 National Team
Quarry House
Leeds
LS2 7UE
Rob.bacon@nhs.net

To: CCG Clinical Leads
cc: CCG Accountable Officers
CSU Managing Directors
Area Teams

July 2014

Dear colleague,

Re: NHS 111 Update

Firstly, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the new Programme Director for NHS 111. I am delighted to be in the role and look forward to working with you all over the coming months to continue to develop and enhance NHS 111 as a high quality service.

In our last letter dated 20th February we committed to write again to share a further update on the next phase of development of NHS 111. In this letter I will update you on:

- Telephony re-procurement
- Commissioning Standards
- Procurement of NHS 111 services
- Quality and Safety Report
- Testing aspects of NHS 111
- NHS England's website

I want to thank you for your contributions and involvement in the NHS 111 events and task and finish groups. We have listened very carefully to what you have had to say and your advice has directly influenced the work we are doing and informed the development work we are doing. Your views were very varied, so we have not been able to accommodate all views.

We will continue to work with commissioners, providers, healthcare professionals and the public, to better understand how we can turn NHS 111 into a more personalised service, which can offer more access to clinicians, and more appropriate appointment booking.

Telephony Re-Procurement

The contract for the current national telephony routing infrastructure expires in March 2015. As you are aware for NHS 111 to work this infrastructure can only be procured nationally to support local delivery. The Outline Business Case has been approved and the advert was published in May 2014. The process is on track and we expect to be able to award a new contract later in the year.

There has been some confusion between the national procurement process for telephony routing infrastructure which is being delivered by NHS England and local procurement for the NHS 111 service which is being led by CCGs. I think this is a very clear distinction, but your support with explaining this would be helpful.

NHS 111 Commissioning Standards

The Standards are available on the NHS England website, NHS Networks and the NHS Commissioning Assembly website.

Links

- <http://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/pe/nhs-111/resources/>
- <http://www.networks.nhs.uk/nhs-networks/nhs-111-service-development>
- http://www.commissioningassembly.nhs.uk/pg/cv_blog/content/view/124471/network?cindex=0&cview=66830&ctype=blog&cnetwork=1&container=65600

The Commissioning Standards for the NHS 111 service in England have been jointly developed between CCGs and NHS England. The standards describe the core requirements and quality metrics for NHS 111 services. The intent is not to prescribe how commissioners deliver these requirements but to ensure that patients can depend upon receiving the same high quality service wherever they live or access NHS 111 services in England. They are intended to be used to support your local plans to improve your local urgent and emergency care services.

It also provides commissioners with an outline of developments and further improvements to the service offering that are highlighted as an *explanatory note* within the document. Commissioners should take account of these when commissioning local services.

We welcome your feedback on the Standards. If there are any improvements you feel we should make please do let us know.

Procurement of NHS 111 services

There are a number of you who are ready to start procurement as your existing contracts expire during the first part of 2015. To manage this process and to reduce the potential risk of too many contracts changing at the same time, it would be very helpful if you could work in partnership to manage this risk. I am aware that a number of you are already working on extending current contracts to mitigate this risk and avoid changes during periods of peak demand, over Easter and Christmas.

We have established a procurement *task and finish* group that is developing, with the South London CSU a series of procurement resources including model contracts, specifications and evaluation schematics.

This group has commenced the design of a series of gateway checkpoints to assure that procurement projects are managed safely and effectively. Also, importantly to make sure that the learning from the 2013 procurement activity is directly implemented. All CCGs will be expected to participate with this assurance process.

The supporting 'toolkit' and the checkpoint assurance process will be available in the near future and we will forward these to you once finalised.

NHS 111 Quality and Safety Report

Dr Mike Durkin, Director of Patient Safety in NHS England, with the support of many people involved with NHS 111 locally has developed a Quality and Safety Report. This report was commissioned to provide assurance on the quality (safety, effectiveness, and patient experience) of NHS 111 services to support effective decision-making following events over Easter 2013.

The review has provided a unique opportunity to listen to individuals and organisations about their experiences. It has shown examples of extremely good practice across the country, however this is not universal and it is our aspiration to raise standards across the whole service.

The local NHS 111 Clinical Leads have been working with me and Dr Ossie Rawstone, National NHS 111 Medical Advisor on implementing the recommendations. In terms of implementing these recommendations, these are well advanced. The report will be published to the NHS England website so that you can take account of these issues and include the advice as part of local plans, working with your local NHS 111 Clinical Leads.

Developing and enhancing NHS 111

We have embarked on a programme of exploring and formally evaluating different NHS 111 service models. Phase one of the programme has commenced and involves different systems and providers, testing different aspects of the models.

The outcomes of these pilots will be used to influence the next phase of the development of an enhanced NHS 111 service.

I am keen that we commence phase two of testing soon and we are in the process of defining what the next phase should involve. Current thinking includes the following areas:

- Learning and formally evaluating different models that have already been implemented
- Wider access to clinicians and specialist professionals - e.g. mental health professionals, pharmacists, community nurses

- Bespoke service improvements for specific groups – e.g. frail elderly, people with mental health needs, end of life and emergency dental pain
- Developing a digital NHS 111 service
- Exploring the value of real time biometric information
- Access to records

Once we have finalised the scale and scope of the next phase of testing, we will share the process for securing partners to help deliver both evaluation and test sites.

NHS England website

The NHS England website now includes a dedicated section for NHS 111 and our aim is to share information through this route going forward

<http://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/pe/nhs-111/>.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the team on england.nhs111@nhs.net.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Bacon', with a large, sweeping initial 'R'.

Rob Bacon
National Programme Director
NHS 111