

Meetings in Common of the Boards of NHS England and NHS Improvement

Meeting Date: Thursday 28 February 2019

Agenda item: 03

Report by: Simon Enright, National Director of Communications (Lead Director),
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Report on: **Establishment of The NHS Assembly**

Introduction

1. The NHS Assembly is a new forum that will bring together a range of individuals from across the health and care sectors at regular intervals to advise the Boards of NHS England and NHS Improvement on delivery of the NHS Long Term Plan.
2. The Assembly membership will bring broad stakeholder insight and frontline experience to discussions, serving as a “guiding coalition” on implementation of the improvements outlined in the plan.

Context

3. The minutes of the NHS England and NHS Improvement Board meetings in common from May 2018 establish that:

‘A new NHS Assembly (provisional title) will be created, drawn from – amongst others – national clinical, patient and staff organisations; the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector; the NHS Arm’s Length Bodies (ALBs); and frontline leaders from integrated care systems (ICSs), sustainability and transformation partnerships (STPs), trusts, CCGs and local authorities. It will become the forum where stakeholders discuss and oversee progress on the NHS Five Year Forward View and help co-design the proposed upcoming NHS 10 Year Plan and will build on the recommendations of NHS England’s Empowering People and Communities Task Force.’

4. The NHS Long Term Plan (7.17) confirms:

“We will build on the open and consultative process that this plan is built on, and strengthen the ability of patients, professionals and the public to contribute, by establishing an NHS Assembly in early 2019.”

5. During August and September 2018, an online survey was undertaken and engagement sessions were held to scope interest and perspectives from key stakeholders. Feedback indicated broad support for the establishment of a new NHS Assembly, with the majority in broad agreement about its proposed functions, size and ways of working.
6. The Assembly will have a membership of around 50 people and will be led by two independent Co-Chairs (one clinical and one non-clinical). Members will be appointed based on their individual knowledge, skills and experience. To ensure a variety of experience we will look to appoint a balanced and diverse membership drawing from across different stakeholder groups including, Royal Colleges, health system and organisational leaders, frontline staff and clinicians, patients, carer and public voice networks, Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector, Think Tanks and health research bodies.
7. Officers from NHS England and NHS Improvement and other health and social care system partners will participate in all sessions of the Group in attendance (in limited number).

Current position

8. Following a nationally advertised recruitment process, Dr Clare Gerada has been appointed as clinical Chair and Sir Chris Ham as non-clinical Chair. The Chairs will be responsible for providing leadership to the group, ensuring its effectiveness and promoting the work of the assembly within the NHS and among wider partners.
9. Submissions of expressions of interest in becoming a member of the Assembly close on 6 March 2019. Those expressions of interest will be reviewed to ensure the Assembly benefits from a diversity of backgrounds as well as knowledge/ experience of different parts of the health system. Appointment of the membership will be completed in early March.
10. Terms of reference for the Assembly (attached at annex A) have been published on the Assembly pages of the Long Term Plan microsite:
<https://www.longtermplan.nhs.uk/nhs-assembly/> .

Next steps

11. The inaugural meeting of the Assembly will take place in early April.

Recommendation

12. The Boards are invited to note the progress and appointments made.

Annex A

NHS Assembly - TERMS OF REFERENCE

Purpose

The NHS Assembly will bring together a range of individuals from across the health and care sectors at regular intervals to advise the Boards of NHS England and NHS Improvement on delivery of the NHS Long Term Plan.

The Assembly membership will bring broad stakeholder insight and frontline experience to discussions, serving as a “guiding coalition” on implementation of the improvements outlined in the plan.

The assembly will have an agreed programme of work to allow for tier two engagement activity to be conducted in advance of meetings to help bring wider insight to the membership as appropriate. The Assembly is not itself responsible for LTP implementation, nor does it cut across the current statutory accountabilities of NHS England and NHS Improvement.

Chairing

The Assembly will be led by two independent Co-Chairs – one with a clinical background and one from a non-clinical background.

The co-chairs will be appointed through a formal process, not be drawn from the Assembly membership.

The co-chairs will share equal leadership responsibility building and safeguarding the cohesion, reputation and effectiveness of the NHS Assembly.

The co-chairs have a role both at and between meetings in setting the Assembly’s agenda and ensuring that the Assembly is influential and impactful.

Membership

The Assembly will have a membership of around 50 people and should ensure a diversity of age, gender, background and experience of health services.

Members are appointed on an individual (not ex-officio) basis but will be drawn from a range of stakeholder groups (royal colleges, health system and organisational leaders, frontline staff and clinicians, patients and public, voluntary and community sector) to ensure a plurality of experience.

Principles of membership

Members must at all times:

1. Observe the highest standards of impartiality, integrity and objectivity in relation to the advice they provide.
2. Be accountable for their activities and for the standard of advice they provide to NHS England and NHS Improvement, acting in accordance with relevant NHS England policy on conflict of interests.
3. Follow the Seven Principles of Public Life set out by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (see Annex 1).
4. Act in accordance to the principles and values set out in the NHS Constitution for England.
5. Not misuse information gained in the course of their membership of the Assembly for personal gain or for political purpose, nor seek to use the opportunity of public service to promote their private interests or those of connected persons, firms, businesses or other organisations.
6. Not hold any paid or high-profile posts in a political party, and not engage in specific political activities on matters directly affecting the work of the Assembly. When engaging in other political activities, members should be conscious of their public role and exercise proper discretion.

In Attendance

Officers from NHS England and NHS Improvement and other health and social care system partners will participate in all sessions of the Group in attendance (in limited number). Experts may be invited to meetings or sessions of meetings on an ad-hoc basis to provide opinion, information and evidence on specific matters.

Declarations of interest

Upon appointment, all members of the Assembly will be formally required to complete a Declaration of Interest Form and a Register of Members Interests will be established and updated on an annual basis. It is the responsibility of members to declare any new interests as and when they arise and to ensure that the Register of Members Interests is kept up to date.

The Chairs will be responsible for managing declarations of interest and any conflicts of interest within the meeting and determine on what basis a member declaring a relevant interest can participate in discussion.

The process for managing declarations of interest will be reviewed in line with the publication of further guidance and policy from NHS England and NHS Improvement.

Frequency of meetings

Meetings of the full Assembly will be typically held three to five times per annum (most likely quarterly).

Reporting

Following each meeting, the Chair of the Assembly will write to the Boards of NHS England and NHS Improvement outlining the outcomes of the discussions.

Secretariat

The secretariat function will be provided by NHS England and NHS Improvement.

Review of the Assembly

There will be an annual review of the effectiveness of the group and terms of reference led by the Chairs.