

NHS North of England assurance return letter

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To: Cluster PCT Chief Executives, North of England
Directors of Public Health
Cc: Corresponding Local Authority Chief Executives,
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From: Paul Johnstone, DPH NoE

Ann Hoskins, RDPH NW (for NW)

10 February 2012

Dear Colleagues

Feedback on draft plans for Public Health Transition

Further to our letter of 22nd December outlining the NHS planning requirements for public health transition, we'd like to thank you for submitting your draft public health transition plans on January 20th. As you know, a 'checklist' was included in national planning guidance to support the development of local plans and we'd like to offer you some more detailed feedback based on this and confirm how the process goes forward from here.

Plans and processes for public health transition are generally developing well. We expect these to be strengthened significantly in the next phase of your work with the publication and completion of several key elements of work including:

- Publication of financial allocations for public health in 2012/13 (February 2012);
- Further national guidance on the emergency planning process (February 2012);
- Completion of local contracts mapping exercises by PCT Clusters – to include public health;

- Completion of local functions mapping work by PCT Clusters;

We'd also expect to see more detail on how you plan to manage the governance processes for public health transition in the period Oct 2012 onwards. This will be a critical time – particularly as it coincides with the start of NHS winter planning and flu and other viral outbreaks can be more common. Governance and operational mechanisms therefore need to be prioritised in the final version of your plans.

In terms of further detail, using the checklist we have put together an analysis of your current plans and this is attached with a 'Red/Amber/Green' rating for each of the questions. Some further comments are also included below as part of the feedback.

East Cheshire - Overall RAG rating AMBER

Good progress is being made in developing the local transition plan but there are a number of areas where further more detailed work is required. These are:

- A clear plan for the transfer of staff (including handover of PH contracts) and public health functions including Commissioning arrangements to PHE and NHS Commissioning Boards
- A clear plan for the delivery of NHS Health check and sexual health services
- Emergency planning
- Putting a plan in place for handover of legacy documents
- Resolution of facility, estates and assets issues
- Communications and Engagement

The overall picture formed from the results of the assurance process and the risks identified will also be discussed with partner organisations at the next meeting of the Public Health Transition Oversight Group and Directors of Public Health.

As outlined in the earlier letter we expect PCT Clusters to manage the Public Health Transition at the local level in partnership with local government. In practice, we expect Directors of Public Health to be leading this work with their local authority and be working closely with local government colleagues to develop clear and credible plans.

In line with the planning guidance we are expecting final versions of plans to be jointly developed and signed off by local government as well as NHS processes. We recognise that local government timelines are specific to local areas but for the final submission in March we will need confirmation and details (dates) of the local processes you are using to sign off these plans.

Timetable

To remind you, the key dates for the next 14 months are as follows:

- By 26th March 2012, all PCT clusters should have an integrated plan which includes public health transition. The plans should be agreed with Local Authorities. The SHA expects Clusters to append the local public health transition plans to their Cluster submission document in line with this timetable. A summary of the plans will be submitted to the DH on 5th April.
- By the end October 2012 we expect the substantial majority of PCTs with local authority agreement to have transferred public health duties to local authorities with robust governance in place for the remainder of 2012/13. E.g. Service level agreement or memorandum of agreement.
- By end December 2012 all remaining duties will be transferred.
- By end March 2013 all PCTs must have completed the formal handover of public health responsibilities to Local Authorities.

Finally, as you may know, Allison Cooke has recently taken up post as Public Health Transition Director for the North. Allison and colleagues in the SHA and regional Public Health teams are available to help you to work through this process. Should you wish to contact Allison she can be contact on:

allison.cooke1@nhs.net

Yours sincerely



Paul Johnstone
Cluster DPH NoE



RDPH NW