

Implications of White Paper ('Equity and excellence: liberating the NHS') for social care and local government

Reforming social care

- The White Paper emphasises the interdependence between the NHS and the adult social care system in securing better outcomes for people.
- DH will establish a Commission on the funding of long-term care and support, to report within a year. The Commission will consider a range of possible funding arrangements.
- DH is working with the Law Commission to reform and consolidate the law underpinning adult social care.
- There will be a White Paper on social care in 2011, bringing together the conclusions of the funding Commission and the Law Commission, plus the Government's vision for social care.
- There will be legislation in the 2011/12 session of Parliament to establish "a sustainable legal and financial framework for adult social care".

Improving public health – a new role for local authorities

- PCT responsibilities for local health improvement will transfer to local authorities. (PCTs will cease to exist from 2013.)
- A new Public Health Service will be created.
- Local authorities will employ the Director of Public Health in each area, jointly with the new Public Health Service.
- DH will create a ringfenced public health budget. Local Directors of Public Health will be responsible for allocating this to improve population-wide health and reduce health inequalities in their area.
- The Secretary of State, through the Public Health Service, will set national objectives for local authorities for improving population health outcomes.
- There will be a White Paper on public health later this year.

Integrating health and social care

- The Government's vision is for better cross-boundary working between NHS and local authorities.
- Local authorities will have a statutory function to join up the commissioning of local NHS services, social care and health improvement. 'Health and wellbeing boards' will enable local authorities to take a strategic approach and promote integration across health and adult social care, children's services and the wider local authority agenda.

- The Government intends to simplify and extend the use of powers that enable joint working between the NHS and local authorities. Councils will become responsible for:
 - Promoting integration and partnership working between the NHS, social care, public health, etc.
 - Leading joint strategic needs assessments.
 - Building partnerships for service changes and priorities.
 (These functions would replace the current statutory functions of Health Overview and Scrutiny Committees.)
- The White Paper says that it is essential for patient outcomes that health and social care services are better integrated at all levels.
- There will be wide consultation on options for ensuring health and social care work seamlessly together.
- Consortia of GP practice will commission the majority of NHS services. They will have a duty to work in partnership with local authorities – eg in relation to adult social care, early years services, public health, safeguarding, and the wellbeing of local populations.
- The NHS Commissioning Board will be a new statutory body to provide leadership for quality improvement through commissioning. It will take over the current CQC responsibility of assessing NHS commissioners.
- Quality standards will be developed for commissioners covering health and social care.
 - These will be developed by NICE, which will rapidly expand its existing work programme to create a set of standards for all the main pathways of care (eg dementia, stroke, etc).
 - NICE is expected to produce 150 standards within the next five years.
 - Each standard is a set of 5-10 specific, concise quality statements – based on the best evidence and produced collaboratively with the NHS and social care professionals.
 - Standards will extend beyond the NHS, informing the work of local authorities and the Public Health Service.
 - The role of NICE will be extended to include social care. (The White Paper does not mention SCIE.)

Increasing choice and control

- The White Paper focuses on increasing choice and control in the NHS.
- It says that people want choice, and that evidence at home and abroad shows that choice improves quality.
- Choice will be introduced in care for long-term conditions as part of personalised care planning.

- A coherent 24/7 urgent care service will be developed in every area of England to help people make choices about their care – there will be a single telephone number for every kind of urgent and social care.
- There will be further pilots of personal health budgets as part of personalised care planning, as a means of improving outcomes, putting patients in control and enabling integration across health and social care.

Changing the role of Department of Health

- The NHS role of DH will be much reduced and more strategic.
- DH will focus on improving public health, tackling health inequalities and reforming adult social care.
- DH will continue to work closely with the Department for Education on services for children.
- DH is committed to evidence-based policy-making and a culture of evaluation and learning.

Voice for patients and service users

- A new independent consumer champion will be established called HealthWatch England and based within CQC.
- Local involvement networks (LINKs) will become the local HealthWatch. These organisations will ensure that the views and feedback of patients and carers “are an integral part of local commissioning across health and social care”.
- Local authorities will have an enhanced role in promoting choice and complaints advocacy – they can commission HealthWatch to provide advocacy and support, including support for people who lack the means or capacity to make choices.
- Local HealthWatch will be funded by and accountable to local authorities.

Future of regulation

- The Government wants to move to a system of control based on quality and economic regulation, commissioning and payment-by-results, rather than national and regional management.
- Monitor will take on responsibility for economic regulation of both health and social care providers.
- CQC will have a stronger role as a quality inspectorate, with a clearer focus on safety and quality.
- Monitor and CQC will operate a joint licensing regime.
- There will be a wide-ranging review of regulation across the health and social care sectors, with the aim of reducing the ‘burden of regulation’.

Finances/efficiency

- NHS spending will increase in real terms each year of this Parliament, but local NHS organisations will need to achieve unprecedented efficiency savings.
- The NHS's management costs will be cut by more than 45%.
- The White Paper recognises that the NHS will only be able to increase quality through implementing best practice and increasing productivity.
- There will be no bail-outs for organisations that over-spend public budgets.

Next steps

- The implementation of all these reforms will be subject to broad consultation with external organisations, local government and the public.
- Many policy details still need to be worked out. DH will seek the help and expertise of external organisations in developing proposals that work in practice.
- DH will shortly publish more detailed documents seeking views on a wide range of issues raised in the White Paper.

Summary of proposed reforms in Health Bill later this year

- Creating a Public Health Service
- Transferring local health improvement functions to local authorities
- Placing the Health and Social Care Information Centre on a firmer statutory footing
- Making improvement in health care outcomes the central purpose of the NHS
- Making NICE a non-departmental public body
- Establishing the independent NHS Commissioning Board
- Giving local authorities new functions to support integration and partnership working
- Establishing a statutory framework for GP consortia
- Establishing HealthWatch as a statutory part of CQC and turning LINKs into local HealthWatch
- Reforming the foundation trust model
- Strengthening the role of CQC as an effective quality inspectorate
- Developing Monitor into the economic regulator for both health and social care

Proposed timetable of key developments

Consultation documents on transition, outcomes, commissioning, integration, regulation	July 2010
Report of arms' length bodies review	Summer 2010
Health Bill introduced in Parliament	Autumn 2010
Publication of vision for adult social care	By end of 2010
Public Health White Paper	Late 2010
White Paper on social care reform	2011