

Public participation in primary care commissioning

I am writing in response to a consultation on two documents on public participation in primary care commissioning:

- “Framework for patient and public participation in primary care commissioning”
- “How do I get involved in primary care commissioning? Information for patients and the public”
(both 31st March 2016)

Purpose of commenting:

We believe that patient and public participation, in any aspect of health and social care commissioning, can only be fully effective if it is tied to the identification, understanding and addressing of health inequalities.

We are therefore interested to comment on the extent to which the above documents bring together the two statutory duties of patient and public participation and addressing health inequalities.

Our comments

- The first document does refer to “our legal duty to involve the public in commissioning”. There is also a reference, in the summary, to health inequalities: “primary care has the potential to reduce health inequalities in the population”. However, there is no reference in the framework to supporting commissioners to address their health inequalities duties.
- The document doesn’t explicitly provide a purpose or reason for patient and public participation - however the opening paragraph in the introduction does refer to the need to “involve patients and the public in the commissioning of primary care services”
- There is a section on “equality and health inequalities analysis” which talks about the importance of ensuring that people from all protected characteristics are included in engagement.
- Despite the references to health inequalities it is our view that the framework would be strengthened by a clearer link between the two legislative duties. In other words, we believe that patient and public participation in public health commissioning would be more effective if one of its purposes (or even its main purpose) was to identify, understand and address health inequality.
- Healthwatch Birmingham has developed, in partnership with NHS England West Midlands, a “Quality Standard for using patient and public insight, experience and involvement to reduce health inequality and drive improvement”. We believe that the basic approach of the Quality Standard - to use patient and public insight, experience and involvement to identify, understand and address health inequality, could be incorporated into a



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revised version of the Framework for patient and public participation in primary care commissioning. More information on this can be found [here](#) .

In line with the first document, the second document does not explicitly link the two duties on NHS bodies to involve patients and the public in commissioning and to address health inequalities.

Yours Sincerely,



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Policy Officer



Andy Cave

Chief Executive Officer



19/12/2016



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