

Have Your Say: Government Consultation Papers

Four new consultation papers have been written by the government on the future of health services.

A consultation paper is one that asks people what they think about government ideas.

Here are some summaries of what the government has written in these consultation papers.

Outcomes consultation paper

There are 5 things that the government wants the NHS to get better at. These 5 areas are:

1. Stopping people from dying early

This includes helping people get better from health disease, strokes and cancer

2. Making sure people with long-term illnesses have a better life

This includes looking after people and asking them what they want, instead of seeing them as a series of injuries and diseases

3. Helping people to get better quickly

This includes treating people with illnesses quickly so they don't get worse and helping people get better fully so they don't have to go back to hospital again

4. Making sure people are happy being looked after by the NHS

This includes collecting and acting on the views of people who are using hospitals, GPs, mental health services, maternity and children's services and end of life care

5. Looking after people safely

This includes stopping people from getting sicker, being honest where things have gone wrong and learning from mistakes

This paper asks questions about how each of these 5 things can be improved. The government also wants to make sure these improvements are recorded to make it easier for people to check that the NHS is doing a good job. This consultation paper also asks questions about how such information should be recorded.

Democracy in health consultation paper

This paper is all about giving people more choice of how they are looked after. The government asks people how they think a new system of helping people make health choices will work. These questions include.

- Should local HealthWatch (which is replacing LINKs in 2012) have more power to make sure people are getting a good deal out of the local health services they choose and check out complaints when things go wrong?
- How should each council's new local health and wellbeing board make sure that health services are working together properly to give people choice in their area?

Commissioning for patients consultation paper

This paper is all about making sure local people get better local health choices. The government says it will help this happen by having GPs help people make these choices. It will make sure GPs are doing this properly through the new NHS Commissioning Board.

What this paper does is ask people questions about the best ways that GPs and the new NHS Commissioning Board can help people have their local health choices. The questions include:

- How groups of GPs (called GP consortia) will work with local people. How much freedom will they have to make choices for people and how checking will the NHS Commissioning Board do to make sure they are doing their jobs properly?
- How will these new GP consortia and NHS Commissioning Board be set up so that the work of the Primary Care Trusts, (PCTs) is not lost?

Healthcare providers consultation paper

The government is changing the role of a health organisation called Monitor, so that it now makes sure that:

- The prices people charge, who work for the NHS, are affordable,
- Different organisations can bid to give people good care at the best price

- People get good standard of care from all of these organisations.

What this paper does is ask people how health care organisations can work best with Monitor to make sure people get a good standard of care at the best price. It asks:

- Should foundation trusts (organisations that run hospitals) be able to change the way they work, and make a bigger profit from their services?
- How should Monitor check that money is being spent properly and check that health care organisations are doing a good job?

Arm's-length body review

There are a lot of organisations that work with the government to make sure that people get a good standard of healthcare at the best price. These organisations are paid for but not run by the government. Because of this they are called "arm's-length" bodies.

The government says that there are too many of these arm's-length bodies. Some of them do the same job and because we don't have a lot of money right now with the economic downturn, we should cut the number of them and change what some of them do to make them better.

The government says that there are 18 of these arm's-length bodies and it wants to cut that number to between 8 and 10. The bodies that it most wants to cut are:

- The Alcohol Education Research Council
- The Appointments Commission
- The National Patient Safety Agency
- NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement

Other bodies will be merged or their work transferred to cut that number down still further.

This is not a consultation document. The government will instead take these ideas to Parliament for them to talk about and vote on. This will happen between now and April 2013.

If you'd like to read any of the consultation documents, they can be downloaded by clicking on:

<http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations>

You can request copies by writing to

Consultation Responses
Quality and Outcomes Policy Team
Room 602A, Skipton House
80 London Road
London SE1 6LH

You need to tell them what you think by **11th October 2010**

