

NHS co-commissioning

What do I need to know?

In a nutshell

Co-commissioning of medical services by Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) has been in development by NHS England since early 2014.

Co-commissioning is described as providing CCGs with the opportunity for an increased role in commissioning of primary care services in 2015. Previously NHS England commissioned all primary medical services directly in the same way that primary dental services contracts are currently commissioned. In this new environment, NHS England want CCGs to be able to take on more commissioning responsibility for directly commissioning medical and other primary care services that they previously have not commissioned.

In May 2014, CCGs were invited by NHS England to provide expressions of interest for this increased role. In November 2014 the next steps towards primary care co-commissioning document was published outlining what services would come under the scope of co-commissioning along with timescales.

New models of co-commissioning

There are three suggested models of co-commissioning; greater involvement in decision making, joint commissioning and delegated commissioning arrangements.

Greater involvement in decision-making

This is an invitation for closer collaboration between NHS England and CCGs to make sure commissioning decisions are aligned.

Joint commissioning

In this model, commissioning decisions are taken jointly between CCGs and NHS England area teams. For those CCGs who sought this model for 2015/16 there was an expectation that they would seek delegated commissioning arrangements for 2016/17.

Delegated commissioning arrangements

CCGs would be responsible for taking commissioning decisions on primary care.

When?

The three models of co-commissioning started on 1 April 2015 for the year 2015/16.

Does this include dentistry?

In 2015/16 CCGs will have the opportunity to discuss dental commissioning but will have no formal decision-making role, although this will be looked at again for 2016/17. To enable CCGs to discuss commissioning of all primary care services, NHS England have shared financial information on all local primary care services with CCGs.

Conflicts of interest

Because of the concerns around conflicts of interest for the doctors on the CCG, NHS England published guidance for CCGs on this in December. Whatever the level of co-commissioning a CCG is granted, NHS England will retain responsibility for medical performers' lists, appraisal and revalidation.

What is the BDA's view?

The General Dental Practice Committee is closely monitoring the situation and is concerned about it. Commissioning of primary and secondary care dentistry by NHS England was supported by the GDPC. Our current understanding is that for dental commissioning to be included, a change in the law may be required.

However the current direction of travel for the NHS (as set out in NHS England's *Five Year Forward View* and pooling health and social care responsibility as is being trialled in Manchester) is that there will be much closer integration of NHS services and co-commissioning fits in with this.

Please contact Nicola Hawkey (Nicola.hawkey@bda.org) if you would like further information on co-commissioning and dentistry.