

Other Business Report

Decisions

1. *Members are asked to:*
 - *Note updates on the Health Commission, CWB Board 'Away Day', Older People's Day, the Health and Social Care Bill, Transforming Community Equipment and the National Dementia Strategy.*
 - *Receive update on the EU and from the IDeA.*
 - *Feed back from meetings attended since the last Board meeting*

Actions Required

2. *Secretariat to take necessary action.*

Action by: *Secretariat*

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Other Business Report

Summary

1. *This report provides a summary of other business relevant to the Board and also deals with issues relating Community Well-being Board representation on LGA groups. Members are also asked to feedback on meetings attended since the last Community Well-being Board meeting.*

Other Business

1. LGA Health Commission

The LGA established its cross party Health Commission to examine accountability for health in the context of a new consensus in support of a more localist approach to public services.

The Health Commission focused on accountability in commissioning and providing health services, and in public health. Witnesses attending meetings included the NHS Confederation, the Ficker Institute, Sir Ian Kennedy, Chairman of the Healthcare Commission, the UK Faculty of Public Health, representatives of NHS Foundation Trusts and GPs. In addition, a call for evidence was placed on the LGA's website, inviting people to respond to a questionnaire, outlining the main issues addressed by the Commission. A special seminar was also held in Sheffield, attended by representatives of health agencies, local authorities and voluntary organisations, at which participants discussed the 'call for evidence' questions.

A survey was carried out amongst a nationally representative sample of adults aged 16 and over. This covered interviewees' awareness of, and knowledge about, local councils and health agencies, and their views on issues relating to funding and accountability in health.

Findings from the call for evidence, seminar and survey were considered by the Commission, as it wrote its final report, which was launched on 17 June, and presented at the LGA annual conference, in July. The Commission's final report, witness papers and an account of responses to the call for evidence, can be found on the Commission's web pages at: <http://healthcommission.lga.gov.uk/lga/core/page.do?pageld=1>

2. Community Well-being Board 'Away Day'

The Board's Office Holders have agreed to hold an 'away day' for all board members on Monday 8 September 2008, replacing the scheduled board meeting. The event will be held at Local Government House with the timing extended from 10.30 am – 3.30 pm. This day will provide an opportunity for horizon scanning and for the board to set its priorities for the year ahead. It will also provide a good opportunity to introduce any new members to the work of the Board.

The early part of the day will follow the usual board format with a briefing for the Office Holders at 10am and all other members arriving at 10.30 am for their political group meetings. David Behan, Director General of Social Care at the Department of Health, will start the day off with an outline of key areas of work in health and social care. The rest of the day will be structured into 3 panel sessions, each involving three expert speakers. It is likely that the first session will provide some context and outline demographic issues, the second will consider the transformation of social care, and the final session will focus on the social care green paper. Confirmed speakers at this stage include Carole Cochrane, Chief Executive of the Princess Royal Trust for Carers; Gordon Lishman, Director General of Age Concern and Dr. Frank Atherton, the Vice President of the Association of Directors of Public Health.

We are aiming to send out a final agenda and background papers by the end of July, but at this stage, please ensure that the date is reserved in your diary.

3. Older People's day

Older People's day, to take place on 1 October, will have an intergenerational theme. The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), the government department leading on the day, will be developing a range of resources which local authorities and their partners can use. Initial information can be found at www.dwp.gov.uk/opportunity_age/fulloflife/

Nationally, events and activity in the run-up to Older People's Day will be branded under a Full of Life heading, with the aim to celebrate the contribution older people make to society. Local authorities may choose to use this heading or, of course, develop their own.

Board members can contact emma.jenkins@lga.gov.uk if their authorities have any previous or future Older People's Day activities or initiatives they wish to share as the LGA would like to provide examples of events to DWP to inform their work on the Day.

4. Transforming the quality of dementia care: consultation on a National Dementia Strategy

The Department of Health is currently consulting on its proposed national strategy for dementia services. The aim of the final strategy will be to provide a strategic framework within which local services can deliver quality improvements, in particular to awareness; early diagnosis and intervention; and high-quality care and support. It will advise SHAs, local authorities, hospitals and PCTs on the planning, development and monitoring of services; whilst recognising that commissioning decisions will depend on local analyses and priorities.

Some of the recommendations being consulted on include:

- *Improved home care for people with dementia*
- *A joint commissioning strategy for dementia by local authorities, PCTs and others, based on a joint strategic needs assessment.*
- *PCTs and local authorities reviewing services to ensure that people with dementia have access to re-ablement home care and rehabilitation services, including intermediate care.*
- *Improved dementia care in care homes*
- *PCTs and local authorities to commission a trained and competent workforce, including jointly commissioning dementia care advisers*

The report looks at the economic case for investment in early diagnosis and treatment services. Reducing the number of people with dementia entering care homes should result in substantial public cost savings. For example, just a 6% reduction in the number of people with dementia entering care homes would translate into cost savings of around £25 million in year 4 for councils, increasing to around £75 million in year 10.

Transforming the quality of dementia care: consultation on a National Dementia Strategy has a closing date of 11 September. The LGA will be working with the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services on a joint response. The Vice President of ADASS, who is leading on the response, will be visiting ADASS Regions to get comments on the strategy, to ensure the response is well informed and comprehensive. Early views from Board Members on the recommendations of the strategy also would be very welcome.

More information on the consultation can be found at:

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_085569

5. Health and Social Care Bill

The Bill has finished debate in the House of Lords and now moves to Ping Pong, where the bill passes back and forth between the two Houses debating amendments to the bill. The House of Commons will now consider amendments made in the House of Lords. These include: regulatory objectives and a commitment to user involvement for the Care and Quality Commission (CQC), the dissolution of the Hearing Aid Council and others. The LGA did not support amendments to ensure that individuals were guaranteed the same care package when moving from area to area. The LGA viewed the concept of 'portable entitlement' as something that would pressure already over-stretched services and suggested that the idea be fed into discussion around the Green Paper on the future of adult social care. The amendments were not passed. As a result of LGA lobbying, the government committed to produce guidance for local authorities and JPs on new public health powers.

6. Transforming Community Equipment and Wheelchair Services

The Prime Minister launched the Transforming Community Equipment and Wheelchair Services programme (TCEWS) in June 2006. The TCEWS programme's remit was to work collaboratively with stakeholders to develop a radical new model for delivery of community equipment and wheelchair services in England, which has the interests of users and carers at its heart. The TCEWS programme was to look at how to make best use of the strengths of the third and private sector, be supported by an outline business case, and an indication of market appetite for change.

Having completed a comprehensive review of existing Community Equipment Services in England, the programme produced a collaborative outline business case in February 2007 that recommended a retail model to deliver low-level community equipment (aids to daily living). Ivan Lewis MP, Minister for Care Services gave approval to develop the new retail model design to an operating model.

Following the review an extensive consultation with all stakeholders was undertaken, the Department of Health then developed a conceptual retail model and published in May 2007. The main elements of this model are that:

- The free provision of equipment and services to people eligible for state support will continue
- Only prescribers employed by the state can prescribe equipment funded by the state
- A state funded individual will be issued with a prescription to exchange for agreed community equipment needs
- Assessment and therapeutic services for self funders are provided through Independent Assessors (Independent Assessors issue a list of recommended products for their clients)
- Users/carers/personal assistants can visit an approved retailer and/or order from a catalogue but the prescription will only be redeemed through a retailer - it will not be able to be redeemed on line at present.
- Retailers can be private sector or third sector (voluntary) organisations and are accredited by an independent accreditation body
- A prescription entitles the user/carer to free equipment but can be used in conjunction with a top-up payment to upgrade to a piece of equipment that they prefer in the functional range of equipment as the prescribed item
- Standard clear information will be produced and available across England to supplement particular localised information

Stakeholder engagement included LGA, together with other Local Authority representation (ADASS and SOLACE), some NHS representation and a number of voluntary/independent sector organisations and user groups. Concerns raised included potential to inflate costs for smaller items of equipment; potential costs associated with TUPE if existing services are effectively transferred out.

This new development is not mandatory and is for local authorities and agencies to make their own decisions. LGA's view is that councils should be looking for more efficient ways of providing services, but need to consider all aspects of the service, including impacts on current and potential users and staff, before adopting this model. Does the Board agree?

7. EU Update

An overview of the EU's Renewed Social Agenda package

In July the European Commission launched its 'Renewed Social Agenda'. This is a comprehensive package of initiatives and reports in the areas of employment and social affairs, education and youth, health, information society and economic affairs. Of particular relevance to the CWB Board are proposals to reinforce the Open Method of Co-ordination for social protection and social inclusion and proposals for a new Directive on cross-border health care. More details of these are given below.

The Commission also confirmed several future actions which will be of relevance to the CWB board: A Communication on actions to meet the needs of an ageing population (autumn 2008), a Communication on health inequalities (2009) and a Green Paper on the EU health workforce which will consider the challenges posed by ageing, mobility and technological change (timing not stated).

Proposals to reinforce the Open Method of Co-ordination (OMC) for social protection and social inclusion

The OMC provides a framework for co-operation between Member States to co-ordinate national social protection and inclusion policies towards common EU objectives. This is undertaken through national benchmarking and peer reviews.

The Communication sets out proposals to improve the Social OMC. This includes strengthening the involvement of local government throughout all parts of the OMC cycle, not just in the planning phase.

These proposals are welcomed and respond to previous lobbying of the Commission which the LGA has undertaken together with its pan-European Association, the Council of European Municipalities and Regions.

For further information, please contact: Jennifer Crisp, LGA European and International Unit 00 32 2502 3680 jennifer.crisp@ga.gov.uk

Proposals for a new Directive on Cross-border healthcare

The proposed Directive clarifies patients' rights to receive healthcare in other EU countries and the rights and responsibilities of Member State health services. Some of the main issues include:

- Patients from abroad must be treated exactly the same as patients from the Member State in which they are seeking treatment – i.e. they must join the waiting list if it exists.
- National contact points will provide information to patients seeking treatment in other Member States – local and regional contact points can also be set up.
- The cost of healthcare provided in another Member State shall be reimbursed by the “home country” up to the level of costs that would have been spent on providing the treatment in the home country.
- Prior authorisation:
 - The proposals suggest that it is not necessary to establish or continue the need for prior authorisation for non hospital care.
 - For hospital care, the draft Directive proposes that Member States can use a system of prior authorisation for treatment in another country.

The proposals are keen to point out that the European Commission has no evidence that the system will undermine the planning, delivery and organisational ability of health services.

For further information, please contact: Lisa Bremner, LGA European and International Unit 020 7664 3121 lisa.bremner@ga.gov.uk

8. Update from the IDeA

The IDeA has launched its online "must knows" for Lead Members. They will be continuously revised as issues emerge. They have been developed and tested with councillors, and are proving very popular.

The IDeA/LGA National Network is meeting on 8th July in London, where members will be discussing the emerging performance framework for adult social care.

The "Health, Care and Well-being" Leadership Academy programme for senior councillors involved in adult social care and health is offering two programmes in 08-09 , including a weekend module in 2009. Contact grace.collins@idea.gov.uk for more details, or to book a place.

IDeA has been exploring the developmental and service delivery links between the place shaping role of local government as set out in The Local Government White Paper 'Strong and Prosperous Communities' (2006) and the health and wellbeing ambitions of 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say' (2006). A forthcoming publication will identify key issues for local authorities making the connections between engagement, Local Area Agreements (LAAs) and community strategies.

9. Feedback from meetings attended since the last Board meeting

Cllr Brian Hood was unable to attend a meeting of the Age Concern National Council during the first week of July, but reports that the Council was expected to agree a merger between Age Concern and Help the Aged. While this move should not have any disadvantages for local government, there will be some organisational complexities to resolve, due to the different structures and roles of the two organisations.

Cllr Dawn Cousins attended the South East Regional Lead Member and Directors Group for Adult Social Care held on the IOW and an LGA Seminar for Lead Councillors and PCT Board members.

Cllr Susan Woodward substituted for Sir Jeremy Beecham at a dinner on 18 June hosted by the Minister and Age Concern to discuss emerging issues around the debate on the Green Paper.