

Other Business Report

Summary

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

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- Note updates on the Health Bill, personal health budgets, an Audit Commission study on the financial implications of an ageing population and public health burials.
- Receive update from the IDeA.
- Feed back from meetings attended since the last Board meeting

Action

Secretariat to take necessary action.

Other Business Report

1. Health Bill

In response to the LGA briefing for the House of Lords Second Reading of the Health Bill Baroness Barker and Baroness Tonge agreed to table amendments relating to improving local accountability of health bodies and tobacco regulations.

The LGA amendment on Local Accountability proposed introducing a requirement on all NHS bodies to review and consult with their local government on their local accountability arrangements. The amendment was withdrawn by Baroness Barker after a discussion as to the adequacy of current arrangements for holding NHS bodies to account locally. A number spoke in support of the amendment, though Lord Darzi asserted that: "... *there is already an extensive system of local accountability in the NHS, and that the NHS is of course always working to improve the way in which it involves local populations and works with local authorities*" (Hansard, 23 February 2009, Column GC35). Baroness Barker expressed an interest in returning to this issue at a later date.

The Committee stage has not yet reached the tobacco sections of the Bill.

We are currently considering whether there is scope and support for us to return to these issues at Report Stage.

2. Personal Health Budgets

Though the idea of personal health budgets is not new, *High Quality Care For All*, the report of Lord Darzi's next stage review of the NHS, included renewed commitment to move forwards on this initiative. *Personal Health Budgets: First Steps*, published by the Department of Health on 28 January, sets out the principles and a framework for personal health budgets, building on early lessons from adult social care and invites expressions of interest from PCTs in the pilot programme.

The Health Bill will allow direct payments for healthcare to be piloted. Up to 36 PCTs, possibly in partnership with local authorities, will be selected as pilots to commence in summer/autumn 2009 and will be evaluated in summer 2012. There is no identified funding for the pilots though there is a commitment to 'co-funding to help meet some project and start-up costs'.

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Though personal health budgets may be a means of giving patients control and flexibility over healthcare, they pose a number of serious questions, including:

- how is the level of personal budget calculated?
- what can the budget be spent on?
- what happens if the personal budget is used but health needs remains?
- will patients be able to invest their health budget for later use? And if so, what happens if investments do not pay off?

For more information:

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Healthcare/OurNHSourfuture/DH_090018

3. Financial Implications of an Ageing Population

The Audit Commission is reviewing the financial implications of an ageing population for local authorities. A new study will focus on how local authorities can plan financially in the medium term so that local services can meet the changing needs of communities. *Don't Stop Me Now* recommended that local authorities should improve their awareness of local demographics, should be better informed about the needs and preferences of local older people, and should age-proof the full range of their local services.

This study will:

- provide a more robust evidence base for national and local policies - so they can be grounded in a better understanding of real impacts;
- identify good practice in financial planning for an ageing population – so councils can assess their own performance;
- review councils' use of demographic change data, service users' experience, and service costs – so councils can target resources, and manage services more effectively, for local people; and
- enable councils and their partners to maximise value for money in planning services for an ageing population and implementing the recommendations of *Don't Stop Me Now*.

The fieldwork for this study will take place between February and April 2009 and the report will be published in the autumn. Alongside the report there will be practical tools and good practice examples to support councils in understanding better the local implications of an ageing population. The Audit Commission is inviting councils to take part in the fieldwork. For further information contact: Louise Gitter, 0844 798 2462, l-gitter@audit-commission.gov.uk

4. Public Health Funerals

An LGA survey has found that the number of public health funerals rose by more than 10% between 2006/7 and 2007/8. A national snapshot based on information from 116 councils estimates that 4,900 funerals were carried out by local authorities in 2007/8. The average cost of a funeral in 2008-09 is expected

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to be £944. If numbers remain stable, councils are expected to face a £4.1m bill.

Under the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984, when a resident in the borough passes away and there is no one else willing to pay, councils make the necessary arrangements for a public health funeral

The survey of heads of environmental health in England and Wales found that more than half believed the number of public health funerals carried out by councils had increased in the last five years. Councils felt that the most likely reason for the increase was higher numbers of people dying without friends of family willing or able to pay funeral costs.

5. Update from the IDeA

IDeA recently hosted an event with LGA on Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) and Carers. The event considered how councils might "turn the curve" on outcomes relating to their Local Area Agreement priorities on carers. A write-up of the recent OBA and Older People event is now available at: <http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=9371243>

IDeA, and LGA in partnership with various government departments and third sector organisations, held two Valuing Employment Now! events, one in London on 28 November 2008, and one in York on 28 January 2009. The events were designed to support and encourage local areas to employ adults with learning disabilities (NI146). Both events attracted well over 100 delegates from councils, Local Strategic Partnerships and third sector organisations. Speakers included individuals who have successfully achieved positive changes, including Carmel McKeogh from Stockport Council and Maureen Cook from North Lanarkshire Council. Most importantly, delegates had the privilege of hearing directly from Ellen Goodey, an inspiring young actress who has a learning disability. Ellen has used her individual budget to support her acting career by hiring a job coach.

IDeA and LGA are in the process of developing support activity for councils on safeguarding adults.

6. Feedback from meetings attended

Cllr Jim Couchman attended a "No Secrets Review Consultation" on Safeguarding at Guildford on 8th January. This was jointly sponsored by ADASS and DH and was facilitated by Alison Blight, the Project Lead for "No Secrets" DH SE regional team. Oliver Mills, Managing Director for Adult Services, Kent CC spoke on "Issues and Challenges for Elected Members in Adult Safeguarding" and covered a wide spectrum of issues including the impact of Personalisation on Safeguarding. Lucy Bonnerjea, the DH Policy Lead for "No Secrets" took us through the Consultation paper on the Review of the "No

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Secrets” Guidance, discussing the options for progress on the important safeguarding issue and whether we need statutory back up for safeguarding adults similar to that which protects children. In the afternoon Dr. David Hunt, Clinical Lead for Safeguarding Older Adults at Worthing & Southlands Hospitals NHS Trust, concerned us all by telling us how little training doctors and nurses receive in regard to safeguarding and recognition of abuse/neglect. There were the usual break-out sessions. This was a useful day and it was a pity that it was not better attended, but it was not long after Christmas and there were plenty of viruses doing the rounds at that time!

Cllr Shireen Ritchie attended the launch of the British Association for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF) campaign on Private Fostering at the end of January.

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