

30 November 2005

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SHA Chief Executives

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Dear Colleague

Commissioning a Patient-Led NHS: Assessment and Development Programme for PCTs

You will know that Commissioning a Patient Led NHS commits us to a two year development programme for PCTs to strengthen their commissioning capability. Proposals to take this forward were discussed at today's Commissioning a patient Led NHS Steering Group meeting.

It was agreed that it would be useful to have a stocktake of present and proposed development activities relating to the future role and functions of PCTs particularly where this involves the use of external contractors.

As you know when the Modernisation Agency was dissolved considerable financial resource was devolved to SHAs to strengthen capacity to deliver service improvement. It would be helpful to understand in broad terms how much of this resource you anticipate dedicating to PCT commissioning capability development over the next two years and by how much you have planned to supplement this with resource from your Workforce Development Directorate (if any).

It would also be helpful to understand if there are any pieces of work that you or your PCTs may have commissioned from external consultants in relation to the roles and functions of PCTs, the development of the commissioning arrangements in such areas as federal commissioning, shared services and payment systems and any local thinking that may be going on in relation to alternative models of provider services. I would like to know the consultants concerned, the broad terms of reference and the contract value and its status (ie has the contract been let). I am keen to bring a level of consistency to some of these pieces of work and ensure that we are not paying for the same product many times over.

I would be grateful if you could respond to Geraldine.reid@dh.gsi.gov.uk as soon as possible but not later than 9 December 2005.

Yours sincerely



John Bacon
Group Director
Health and Social Care Services Delivery