



## Health Select Committee

10<sup>th</sup> April 2008

### Report from the Director of Policy & Regeneration

Wards Affected:

ALL

## Healthcare Commission Annual Health Check 2008

### 1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines the Healthcare Commission's Annual Health Check (AHC) process for 2008 and the "self declarations" made by each of the local NHS Trusts.

### 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the committee agree an appropriate response to the "self-declarations" forwarded by each of the local NHS Trusts under the Healthcare Commission's Annual Health Check Process 2007.

### 3.0 Detail

- 3.1 The Healthcare Commission's 'Annual Health Check' is a new system of assessment for all NHS trusts measuring trust performance against the Department of Health's twenty four core standards (introduced in July 2004).

- 3.2 All NHS trusts in England & Wales are required to:

- submit an annual performance self-assessment to the Healthcare Commission by 30<sup>th</sup> April 2008

- invite a range of third parties, including local authority scrutiny panels, to provide a statement for inclusion - verbatim - in their self-assessment declaration
- publish their self-assessment declarations, including the comments of the relevant scrutiny panels, by 16<sup>th</sup> May 2008

The Healthcare Commission will publish the final results of the Annual Health Check in October 2008.

- 3.3 NHS trusts are required to include unedited comments from Overview and Scrutiny committees in their final declarations to the Healthcare Commission. Overview and Scrutiny Committees, however, are not asked to 'sign off' a trust's declaration.
- 3.4 NHS Trusts then forward their draft declarations to the Healthcare Commission, who validate and review the comments. Declarations are then coded and translated to allow cross-checking with trust performance data.
- 3.5 Advice from the Healthcare Commission on preparing statements.

The Healthcare Commission's guidance 'Your part in the annual health check' is attached at appendix 1. Members may wish to note the following

The Healthcare Commission advises third parties to "try to plan and word your comments so that they include 'items of intelligence' (ie pieces of information) that can be extracted from the commentary and 'coded' against one or more standard, for a particular trust". These 'items of intelligence' should be based on "facts and examples" that back up the comments.

Last year, the Commission assessed each comment as being of 'high', 'medium' or 'low' value. 'High' meant that the comment "had a strong association with a particular standard, was closely aligned to the criteria in our inspection guides and provided clear information to support the opinions expressed". Significantly, only 6% of comments received last year were weighted as 'high', 43% were weighted as 'medium' and 51% as 'low'. This illustrates the scale of the challenge to provide comments that will have a real impact.

The Commission provides a list of tips on how to make a difference:

- think about what matters most to you and the people in your community – what are the most important points you want to get across?
- think about examples of good practice as well as problems and areas for improvement
- familiarise yourself with the 24 core standards and guidance relating to them. Aim to match the standards with the points you want to make

- try to find facts and examples to back up your comments. These may include notes of a meeting or visit to a trust, the results of a local survey, or personal stories from individuals with supporting dates and documents
- do not submit the supporting information with your comments, but be prepared in case we need to clarify some aspect of your comment

3.5 Further information and copies of last year's full assessment reports can be found at: <http://www.healthcarecommission.org.uk/yourlocalhealthservices> or are available by request.

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