

TITLE OF REPORT: Quality Accounts 2021 - 22

REPORT OF: Sheena Ramsey, Chief Executive and Alice Wiseman, Director of Public Health

Summary

The OSC is invited to comment on the Quality Accounts for Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust, and Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust.

Background

High Quality Care for All, published in June 2008, proposed that all providers of NHS Care should produce Quality Accounts to provide the public with information on the quality of care they provide with a view to enhancing public accountability and ensuring a focus on improving quality.

Subsequently, the Department of Health produced legislation which places a legal duty on providers of NHS Services to publish Quality Accounts as part of a new Quality Framework which was brought into force in April 2010.

The accounts are to be published annually in June and they cover healthcare services for the previous financial year. The accounts outline:-

- what an organisation is doing well
- where improvements in service quality are required
- what an organisation's priorities for improvement are for the coming year
- what actions an organisation intends to take to secure these improvements
- how the organisation has involved people who use their services, staff and others with an interest in their organisation in determining their priorities for improvement

The requirement to produce Quality Accounts initially only applied to those NHS providers who deliver acute, mental health, learning disability and ambulance services. It did not apply to primary care services and community healthcare services. Providers of primary care and community services were brought into the process during 2011.

Commissioners are required to provide a corroborative statement in provider Quality Accounts as to whether or not they consider the document contains accurate information. The CCG is expected to check accuracy of data in so far as it relates to information supplied to it as part of its contractual obligations – but not any other data.

Role of OSCs and Healthwatch

As part of the Quality Accounts process, providers are required through regulations to send a draft of their Quality Account to the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Regulations currently specify that the “appropriate” Overview and Scrutiny Committee means the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the local authority in whose area the provider has its registered or principle office located.

Overview and Scrutiny Committees, along with Healthwatch, are invited, on a voluntary basis, to review the Quality Accounts of relevant providers and supply a statement commenting on the Account– based on the knowledge they have of the provider.

Draft Quality Accounts for Gateshead Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust are attached at Appendices 1 and 2.

Taking account of the OSC’s work during the previous year the OSC may wish to comment on the following for each respective account:-

- the Quality Account
- whether they believe that the Account is representative
- whether it gives comprehensive coverage of the provider services
- whether they believe that there are significant omissions of issues of concern that had previously been discussed with providers in relation to Quality Accounts.

Providers are required to include any statement supplied in their published Quality Account and any narrative provided should be published verbatim (subject to maximum word limits). Providers are required to give OSCs at least 30 working days to prepare their comments on the Quality Account and send back to the provider, prior to publication.

The OSC is asked to note that Northumberland Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust is currently only obliged statutorily to consult with Newcastle Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee as its head office is based in Newcastle. However, the Trust is adopting a partnership approach to this issue and has widened its consultation process to other local authority Overview and Scrutiny Committees in areas which receive the Trust’s services.

A representative of Healthwatch Gateshead has been invited to attend the meeting and provide verbal comments on the respective Quality Accounts.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to comment on the respective Quality accounts of Gateshead NHS Hospitals Trust and Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust.

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