

NHS QUALITY ACCOUNTS – ESTABLISHING A PROCESS FOR RESPONDING TO 2019-20 REQUESTS

To: Health Committee

Meeting Date: 25th June 2020

From Monitoring Officer

Electoral division(s): All

Forward Plan ref: Not applicable *Key Decision:* No

Outcome: For the Committee, as part of its Health Scrutiny function, to agree the process to respond to statements on the Quality Accounts provided by NHS Provider Trusts.

Recommendation: The Health Committee is asked to note the requirement for NHS Provider Trusts to request comment from Health Scrutiny committees and

- a) to note the improvements in the process introduced for responding to Quality Accounts in 2019 and feedback from the Trusts
- b) to consider if the Committee wishes to respond to Quality Accounts and if so prioritise which Quality Accounts the Committee will respond to. If so:-
 - i) to appoint representatives from the Health Committee to the Task and Finish Group.
 - ii) to receive and comment on statements from the task and finish group if response timescales allow.
 - iii) if response timescales do not allow full committee input then members are asked to delegate approval of the responses to the Quality Accounts to the Head of Public Health Business Programmes acting in consultation with the views of members of the Committee appointed to the cross party member led Task and Finish Group.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 NHS Healthcare providers are required under the Health Act 2009 to produce an annual Quality Account report. A Quality Account is a report about the quality of services by an NHS healthcare provider.
- 1.2 Quality Accounts are an important way for local NHS services to report on quality and show improvements in the services they deliver to local communities and stakeholders. The quality of the services is measured by looking at patient safety, the effectiveness of treatments that patients receive, and patient feedback about the care provided.
- 1.3 It is a requirement for NHS Healthcare providers to send to the Health Committee in its Overview and Scrutiny function a copy of their Quality Account for information and comment. Statements received from Healthwatch and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committees must be included in the published version. There is no statutory requirement for the Health Committee to respond to the Quality Accounts.
- 1.4 In previous years the deadlines for NHS Healthcare providers to submit their final Quality Accounts to NHS Improvement has not allowed adequate time for the Quality Accounts to be discussed at Health Committee meetings and scrutiny has been conducted through a member task and finish group. Due to the pressures presented by the covid-19 pandemic the deadlines for trusts to publish their 2019/20 Quality Accounts have been revised.
- 1.5 This paper outlines the proposed response to the Quality Accounts received by the Health Committee and the internal deadlines to respond to the NHS Trusts. This paper also reflects on the success of the processes introduced for responding to the Quality Accounts in 2018 and replicated in 2019.

2. MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 There is now no fixed deadline by which providers must publish their 2019/20 Quality Account. However, in light of pressures caused by COVID-19, NHS England and NHS Improvement recommend a deadline of 15 December 2020. To allow for scrutiny (as required by the Quality Account regulations) each trust should also agree an appropriate timescale to provide a draft Quality Account to stakeholders for comment; a date of 15 October 2020 is considered reasonable to do this.
- 2.3 Previously the timing of the Quality Account deadlines puts the Committee in a difficult position to provide an adequate response. So a new process was introduced in 2018 whereby the Health Committee appointed members of the committee to a task and finish group. This group reviewed the content of the Quality Accounts that they were in receipt of and feedback was provided to the Trust. The Head of Public Health Business Programmes was responsible for submitting final statements to each Trust. It is a legal requirement for the Trusts to publish these statements as part of their complete quality account.

3. PROCESS FOR RESPONDING TO NHS QUALITY ACCOUNTS

- 3.1 Under the committee system of governance, it is not possible to delegate decisions to individual elected members or groups of members, but scrutiny regulations require that scrutiny be carried out by elected members and not delegated to officers.
- 3.2 Due to time constraints identified in section 2, responses before 2018 were limited to details of where the Trust has attended the Health Committee for the purposes of health scrutiny. Any recommendations made by the committee were submitted within the statement. Feedback received from the Trusts noted that they had expected more of a reflection and comment on the content of the Quality Account rather than an overview of scrutiny actions.
- 3.3 As a result of this feedback, in 2018 a new process was introduced whereby the Committee appointed a task and finish group to review the Quality Accounts provided by trusts and provide a more detail critical analysis. Feedback from the Trusts was positive and table 1 (Section 5) indicates which Trusts responded to the feedback.

4.0 PROPOSED PROCESS FOR RESPONDING TO NHS QUALITY ACCOUNTS IN 2020

- 4.1 As outlined in section 2.1 there is now no fixed deadline by which providers must publish their 2019/20 Quality Account but a recommendation of 15th December 2020.
- 4.2 It is proposed that a member led task and finish group is established to review the Quality Accounts and draft a statement of response on behalf of the Health Committee. Where possible statements will be brought back to committee to approve the final submission. However if timelines do not allow this then the committee are asked to delegate approval of the responses to the Quality Accounts to the Head of Public Health Business Programmes acting in consultation with the views of members of the Committee appointed the cross party member led task and finish group
- 4.3 Last year the Committee established a task and finish working group that responded to the Quality Accounts to ensure the views of the committee were represented. However this did fall to one councillor taking on the bulk of the work. Therefore a working group with wider membership is suggested to take this on for 2020.
- 4.4 The Committee is asked to nominate members to the cross party member led task and finish working group.

5.0 SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Resource Implications

Officer time in preparing a paper for the Committee.

5.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

5.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

These are outlined in a paper on the Health Committee powers and duties, which was considered by the Committee on 29th May 2014.

5.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

There may be equality and diversity issues to be considered in relation to the quality accounts.

5.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

There may be engagement and consultation issues to be considered in relation to the quality accounts.

5.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

There may be relevant local issues in relation to the quality accounts.

5.7 Public Health Implications

The quality of services at local healthcare providers will impact on public health

Source Documents	Location
NHS Choices information on Quality Accounts	http://www.nhs.uk/aboutNHSChoices/professionals/healthandcareprofessionals/quality-accounts/Pages/about-quality-accounts.aspx
Reports to and minutes of Health Committee	https://cmis.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/ccclive/Committees/tabid/62/ctl/ViewCMIS_CommitteeDetails/mid/381/id/6/Default.aspx