

# The Better Care Fund

National Consistent Assurance Review  
Process

20 August 2014

# Introduction

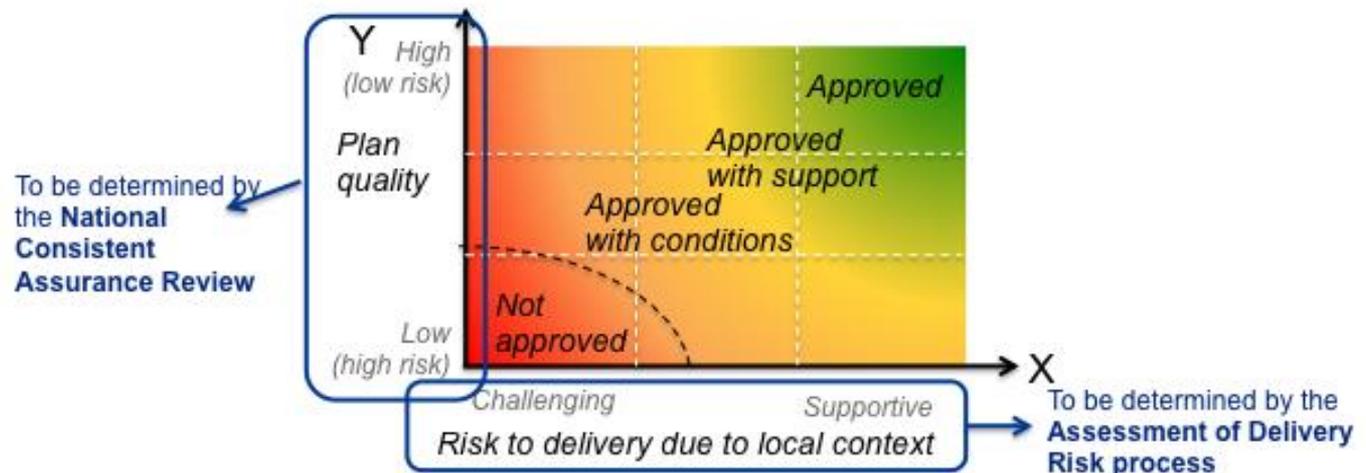
- The **Better Care Fund** is a catalyst to achieving better outcomes and experiences for local people through joining up health and care services
- Success depends on the people who are leading it to make it happen locally – and many areas are already innovating with new models of working collaboratively
- We are committed to ensuring that this transformation remains locally driven, led by **health and wellbeing boards** (HWBs) and local system leaders in clinical commissioning groups, local authorities, and service providers and commissioners.
- The commitment from central government remains undiminished and in order to ensure that local areas are successful, we have developed an **assurance process** which will capture local areas' ambitions for their local populations
- The process includes using transparent, consistent criteria against which HWBs' ambitions and plans will be stress tested. These in summary are:
  - National conditions: protection of social care spending; seven day services to support discharge; data sharing; and joint assessment and accountable lead professional for high-risk populations
  - BCF planning criteria: a clear analytically driven understanding of where care can be improved by integration; a clear and evidence-based plan of action, developed with all local stakeholders; a coherent and believable delivery chain with clear local management and accountability arrangements; and a credible way of tracking the impact of interventions and taking remedial action as necessary

# Introduction to the assurance process

- This **assurance review template** accompanying these slides forms one element of the process, tailored to the narrative elements of the planning template, and will be complemented by data analysis of financial and performance content, which will be extracted automatically from the data templates provided.
- The assurance process has **several layers** and seeks to ensure that local areas remain in the driving seat:
  - Following submission and initial assessment, the pre-arranged meeting with HWB representatives will provide an opportunity for HWBs to demonstrate their vision and plan of action, and resolve any clarifications or issues raised by the reviewing team
  - This validation step will be followed by a conversation with NHS local area teams and local government regional peers to triangulate initial views on each HWB's ambition and plans. It is expected that this step will focus on resolving any concerns about deliverability or achievability, and calibrating the overall judgement
  - The national review team will complete the process, building on these regional assessments to deliver confidence that the process has been consistently and fairly applied, and that the BCF will be able to deliver the ambitions HWBs have for their local populations
- This **slide pack** describes the national review process in more detail

## Purpose of the assurance review

- The **National Consistent Assurance Review** and the results of the **assurance checkpoints** will together be used to establish whether to approve each plan
- The outcome of the review will mean that all BCF plans fall into one of four categories:
  1. *Approved*
  2. *Approved with support*
  3. *Approved with conditions*
  4. *Not approved*
- This assessment will be determined by:
  - a. The National Consistent Assurance Review of the **quality of the plans**
  - b. The assurance checkpoints' assessment of the **risk to delivery due to the local context** facing each local health economy



# Categorising the y-axis – National Consistent Assurance Review

- The final categorisation of the BCF plans will be determined by the quality of the plan, its inherent level of risk and level of mitigations, and the applicability to the local context
- The National Consistent Assurance Review process will rate plans on a scale from High Quality / Low Risk to Low Quality / High Risk. The proposed definitions for these categories are:
  - **High Quality (Low Risk)** – *this is a high quality, coherent, comprehensive and credible plan. It is well written, and there are no issues with the financial or metric elements.*
  - **Medium-High Quality** – *this is a reasonably high quality plan. It is well written, and there are no major issues with the financial and/or metric elements. There are a small number of suggested actions which should be swift to resolve and are not considered to be material for the approval of this plan.*
  - **Medium Quality** – *this is a reasonable plan. It covers all major areas, although lacks depth in one or more area. There are some issues with the financial and/or metric elements. There are a number of suggested actions, a few of which are considered to be material for the approval of this plan.*
  - **Medium-Low Quality** – *this is a reasonably low quality plan. It lacks coherence and depth and it is not always clear how the plan will be delivered. There are major issues with the financial and/or metric elements. There are a large number of actions, most of which are considered to be material for the approval of this plan. This area is likely to require support to see the actions through.*
  - **Low Quality (High Risk)** – *this plan was not received, OR this is a low quality plan. It has no coherence or depth and it is not clear how the plan will be delivered. There are fundamental issues with the financial and/or metric elements. There are a large number of actions, all of which are considered to be material for the approval of this plan. This area will require extensive support to see the actions through.*
- In addition the review will identify actions that need to be taken for each plan to improve its quality / reduce its risk
- The definitions of the “x-axis” are being determined separately through the Assessment of Delivery Risk process (see next slide)

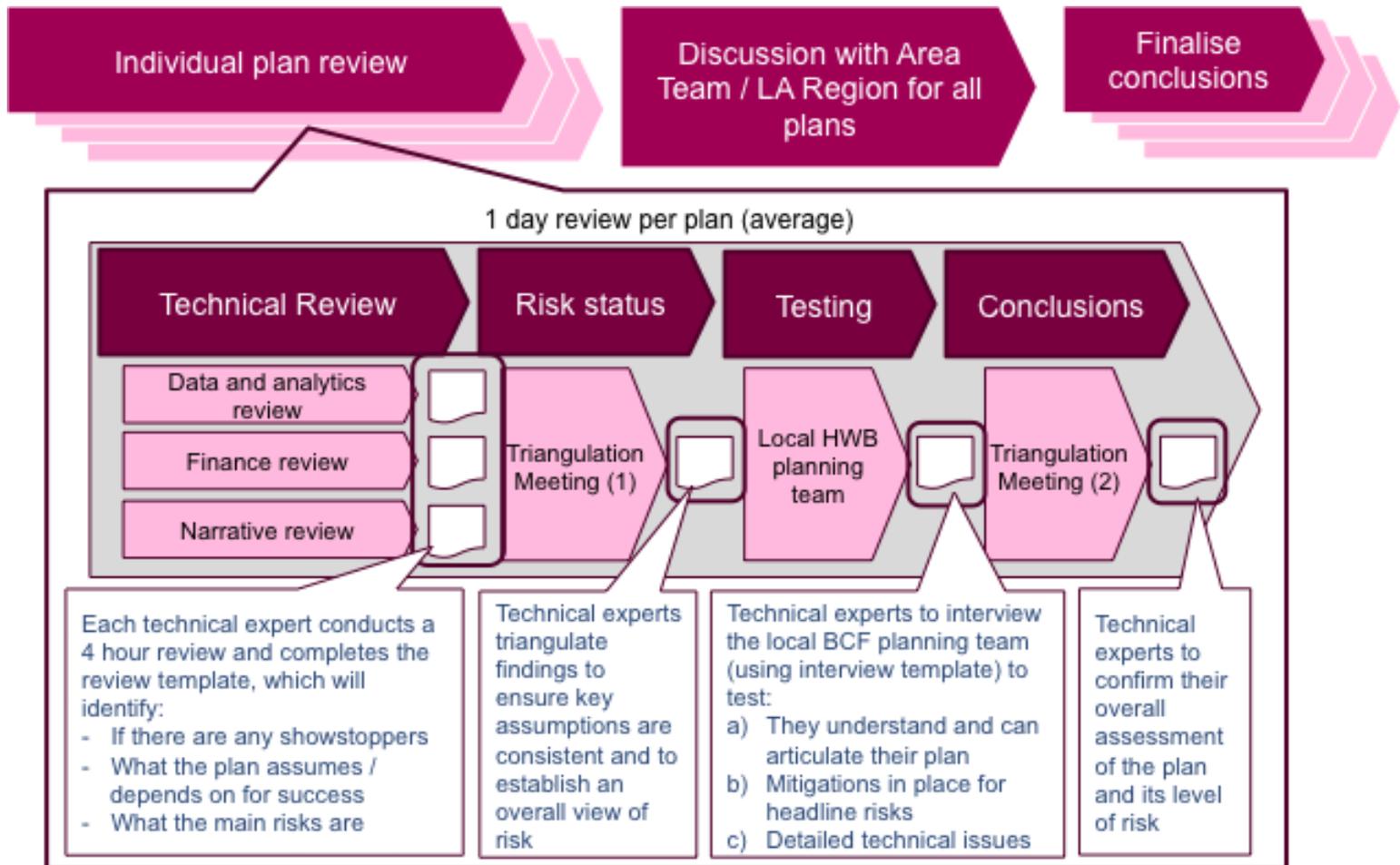
# Categorising the x-axis and categorising the BCF plans

**Overall categorisation of the plans:** Based on the National Consistent Assurance Review, and Assessment of Delivery Risk, BCF plans will be categorised as follows:

- 1. Approved** – *This local area has a strong written plan, and is operating in low risk local environment. The local area has considered all the major risks and has appropriate mitigations in place. There is a high degree of confidence that the plan will be delivered. The local area has approval to go ahead and take full responsibility for the BCF budget.*
- 2. Approved with support** – *This local area has a reasonably strong written plan and/ or has some challenges to overcome in the local environment in which they are operating. There are a number of time-bound actions that will be set to give a high degree of confidence that the plan will be delivered, these will largely be delivered by the local area without extensive further support being required, but support will be made available where necessary. The local area has approval to go ahead and take full responsibility for the BCF budget. They will be required to confirm when the actions have been completed, and failure to complete the actions may result in a condition being imposed (see below).*
- 3. Approved with conditions** – *This local area has some fundamental problems with the written plan and/ or has some large challenges to overcome in the local environment in which they are operating. There are some considerable risks and the local area has not fully demonstrated that these have been appropriately mitigated. A number of time-bound conditions will be set that this local area will need to fulfil before they are given full responsibility for part or all of the BCF budget. If necessary, additional support will be provided to this local area in fulfilling the conditions. Conditions will be tailored to the needs of local areas and defined following completion of the National Consistent Assurance Review.*
- 4. Not approved** – *This local area did not submit a BCF plan, or has not signed off the plan locally at HWB level, or this local area has a weak written plan and has some large challenges to overcome in the local environment in which they are operating. There are some considerable risks and the local area has not demonstrated that these have been considered or that mitigating actions are in place. Intensive support will be provided to develop a cohesive and credible plan, and to facilitate discussions locally with partners and stakeholders. This local area is not given responsibility for the BCF budget.*

**Assessment of delivery risk** will be determined through a separate process. This will be coordinated and delivered by NHS England Regions and Local Government Regional Leads working with partners from TDA and Monitor to generate and agree a rating of low, medium or high delivery risk for each plan.

# The National Consistent Assurance Review Process



*\*The Review template will guide reviewers through this process\**

# How results are consolidated

The individual assessments will be consolidated and moderated to develop a consistent national picture

2 week process for reviewing plans



x151 plans (minus Fast Track)

Consolidation / Moderation

- Ensuring a consistent methodology in which all providers are trained in the same process will reduce the risk of variance in standards. However opportunities will be taken to moderate during the process through: a) a helpdesk function; b) sampling of the template review results at the end of week 1 with Cabinet Office reviewing c.20 plans, considering a selection of ratings from a selection of providers; and c) involvement in some of the local team calls to ensure consistency.
- Once the 2 week process has completed a further week of moderation will be conducted involving further sampling to establish if conclusions are valid and consistent.
- The central assurance team will also provide meta-analysis of the aggregate data from the BCF submissions. The outcome of this analysis is being agreed, but will include: the aggregate total and average Emergency admissions reduction target; what % of BCF money is being spent on what areas; where the plans are weakest and strongest; analysis of the strength of plans by geography.

Report /  
Recommendations

# How fast-track plans are addressed

Fast track plans will be submitted by 29<sup>th</sup> August. These will be subject to the same review process as other plans, however this will be conducted earlier.

This review will enable the methodology and reviewer templates to be tested and any small adjustments made if needed.

