

The Path to Excellence  
Public Consultation Stakeholder Advisory Group

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Path to Excellence Public Consultation Stakeholder Advisory Group (the group) is established as a sub group of the Programme Management Group, in accordance with the governance arrangements for the path to excellence programme and the South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Partnership.
- 1.2 Work being undertaken by the NHS South Tyneside and Sunderland Partnership in the Path to Excellence Programme will cover a sustained period of reform for hospital services over the next few years.

The partnership comprises of:

- NHS Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group
- NHS South Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group
- City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust
- South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust

- 1.3 These terms of reference set out the membership, role, scope and reporting arrangements of the group.

**2. Principle function**

- 2.1 The principle role of the advisory group is to offer advice, views, suggestions or opinions on matters related to the way in which the programme of public consultation and reform for the Path to Excellence should be conducted. The term public is in reference to all stakeholders.

**3. Accountability**

3.1 The group is a sub group of the Path to Excellence Programme Management Group.

#### **4. Membership**

4.1 Membership of the group will consist of representatives of communities of interest and place from South Tyneside and Sunderland.

4.2 The role is not an individual one, but rather to bring the views of the community they represent to the group and to share the thinking of the group with that community between meetings.

- NHS Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group - lay member
- NHS South Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group - lay member
- Health Watch Sunderland
- Health Watch South Tyneside
- Path to Excellence programme manager
- Path to Excellence communications and engagement lead
- Trusts communications lead
- City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust – governor representative
- South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust - governor representative
- Third sector reps drawn from HealthNet
- Elected member reps drawn from the Health and Wellbeing Board or council officers
- CCG management representatives from Sunderland and South Tyneside
- Trades union representatives including Unison and Royal Colleges as appropriate to the consultation programme

#### **5. Authority**

5.1 The Programme Management Group authorises the group to pursue appropriate activities to ensure effective delivery of its role and scope as set out in these terms of reference.

5.2 In undertaking its activities the group will comply with the governance arrangements as specified by the South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Partnership. A copy of the governance arrangements is available via the programme manager.

#### **6. Role and scope of the group**

6.1 The group will offer advice, views, suggestions or opinions on the path to excellence around:

- The formal guidelines for public consultation, including pre-engagement and formal consultation, should follow
- The plan of consultation activities to be undertaken including, for example, locations and format of public meetings
- The language, tone and style of public consultation materials including, for example, consultation documents and leaflets
- Review the equality impact reviews and which seldom-heard groups should be consulted and what forms of consultation would be most appropriate for these groups. People in seldom-heard groups face multiple barriers affecting access to public consultations. The term 'seldom-heard groups' refers to under-represented people who use, or might potentially use, health services and who may be less likely to be heard by decision-makers.
- Ensure any consultation communication is clear, concise and as easy to comprehend as possible
- Ensure any consultation documents intended specifically for the public are jargon free and written in plain language.
- Ensure the public consultation document is accessible
- Any advice, views, suggestions or opinions from the group will take full account of the following criteria:
  - NHS legal duties, NHS Constitution and case law in relation to public engagement and consultation for NHS service change
  - Be proportionate (i.e. neither excessive nor modest in scale).
  - Views expressed by the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

## **7. Administration**

7.1 NECS will provide support to the group and ensure appropriate administration of the meeting, including minutes and a supporting action log.

## **8. Declarations of interest**

8.1 The chair will ask members to make any declarations of interest at the beginning of each meeting and these will be recorded in the minutes.

8.2 The chair will remind members that should any declarations of interest arise during the course of the meeting, these should also be declared and recorded in the minutes.

## **9. Quorum**

- 9.1 The quorum shall be one third of the membership of the group and at least one lay member for PPI.
- 9.2 Where the meeting is not quorate, owing to the absence of certain members or conflicts of interest, the discussion will be deferred until such time as a quorum can be convened.
- 9.3 Where a quorum cannot be convened from the membership of the meeting, owing to the arrangements for managing conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interests, the chair of the meeting will decide an appropriate course of action to progress the item of business. These arrangements will also be recorded in the minutes.

## **10. Frequency of meetings**

- 10.1 Meetings will be held on a six weekly basis and members are expected to attend each meeting.
- 10.2 In exceptional circumstances and where agreed in advance by the chair, members of the group or others invited to attend may participate in meetings by telephone, by the use of video conferencing facilities and/or webcam where such facilities are available. Participation in a meeting in any of these manners shall be deemed to constitute presence in person at the meeting.

## **11. Reporting arrangements**

- 11.1 Minutes of the meetings shall be formally recorded and submitted to the Programme Management Group. These will be published on the path to excellence website and the actions of the group will be reported in public communications. This is to ensure transparency of the work being carried out.

## **12. Conduct and Confidentiality of the Group**

- 12.1 All members of the group will be expected with the standards of business conduct for NHS staff, the NHS code of conduct, the local government code of conduct and the Nolan principles.
- 12.2 When items are considered to be confidential, members will be asked to agree to a compact of confidentiality. This will be fully explained and members will have the opportunity to agree or decline. The intention would be that all confidential information will be time sensitive and will be made public as part of future consultation processes.

**13. Date of Review**

13.1 The group will review these terms of reference on a six monthly basis as a minimum or when the Path to excellence programme is concluded in order to consider the future of the group.

**Date agreed by group:**

**Date ratified by:**

DRAFT