

click for >
further
detail

1. The Operating Framework

Published this week

2. Chief Medical Officer update

Sir Liam Donaldson to step down

3. Swine flu

Figures and vaccine update

Policy news

1. National Patient Choice Survey 2010
2. GP Patient Survey – results for quarters 1 and 2

Consultations and evaluations

3. *Strengthening National Commissioning*
4. Payment by Results 2010-11 road-testing

Publications

5. *Consumption of alcohol by children and young people*
6. Increase in Out of Hours Capacity for GP Registrars
7. Cancer commissioning guidance update
8. Code of Practice for healthcare associated infections
9. H1N1 pandemic and primary ophthalmic services
10. *Achieving Excellence in Kidney Care*
11. Fourth DH annual *Simplification Plan*
12. Revised guidance on eligibility for social care
13. Children's walking levels boosted by a fifth
14. Practice based commissioning survey results
15. Learning disability commissioning transfer – final returns

Conferences and events

i what's new

No news this week

ii places still available

No news this week

Patient safety alerts

16. MEDICAL DEVICE ALERT – MDA/2009/80
17. MEDICAL DEVICE ALERT – MDA/2009/81
18. MEDICAL DEVICE ALERT – MDA/2009/82

The Prime Minister has written a Christmas Message to all NHS Staff.
[Read the message here.](#)

^ click above
links for
further detail

select a section...

Published every Thursday, **the week** provides need-to-know news, consultations and events for chief executives and their teams. It provides links to more information and resources, highlighting areas for action.

> On the agenda
> Policy news

> Consultations
and evaluations

> Publications
> Conferences and events

> Patient safety alerts
> Need help?

On the agenda

1. The Operating Framework

The Operating Framework for the NHS in England for 2010/11 has been published and, for the third year in a row, the national priorities for the NHS remain consistent but regional variation in performance must be tackled. This will provide important stability in helping the NHS achieve the vision set out in *NHS 2010-15: from good to great. Preventative, people-centred, productive*, launched last week.

2010/11 is a pivotal year. The NHS still has significant growth in that year, averaging 5.5 percent. As such, in 2010/11 growth must be used to put into effect the changes that will deliver the most benefits to patients in the future. The Operating Framework provides a set of enablers and tools for the NHS to drive the transformation that will be required.

Read the Operating Framework:
www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_110107

Read David Nicholson's letter:
www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Lettersandcirculars/Dearcolleagueletters/DH_110109

2. Sir Liam Donaldson to step down

It was announced this week that England's Chief Medical Officer, Sir Liam Donaldson, will step down in May 2010 after 12 years of service.

Sir Liam is the 15th person to take up the independent role since the first Chief Medical Officer was appointed in 1855, as a response to the cholera epidemics that swept Victorian England. Since 1998, Sir Liam has been at the forefront of reforms to the NHS and major improvements to the country's public health. Andy Burnham said: 'Sir Liam has fulfilled his duties in this important public office with great distinction, wisdom and good humour. He has brought courage and foresight to the role of improving the nation's health.'

Read the full press release at:
www.dh.gov.uk/en/News/Recentstories/DH_110102

3. Swine flu

The number of cases of swine flu has continued to decrease, with an estimated 9,000 new cases in the week ending 13 December. The number of people in hospital with swine flu has also decreased.

Professor David Salisbury, Director of Immunisation, has written to all medical directors and regional directors of public health to update them on the change in dosage for children receiving the Pandemrix vaccine.

Materials to support phase two of the vaccination programme have been made available to all NHS communications teams for local use.

All the latest clinical information and guidance is available at:
www.dh.gov.uk/swineflu

Read David Salisbury's letter:
www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Lettersandcirculars/Dearcolleagueletters/DH_110182

select a section...

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> On the agenda
> Policy news

> Consultations
and evaluations

> Publications
> Conferences and events

> Patient safety alerts
> Need help?

Policy news

1. National Patient Choice Survey 2010 (Gateway reference number: 13163)

This letter from Bob Ricketts explains that, in line with the patient's rights outlined in the NHS Constitution, the DH has commissioned Ipsos MORI to run a national patient choice survey in February 2010. Results will be available from May and published in July.

Link:

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Lettersandcirculars/Dearcolleagueletters/DH_110111

Action:

- NHS chief executives will wish to consider how they can support the implementation of this survey locally.

2. GP Patient Survey – results for quarters 1 and 2 (Gateway reference number: 13148)

Results from the GP Patient Survey for the first two quarters of 2009 have been published. These form one half of the data for the annual GP Patient Survey. The results are not provided for payment purposes but to provide a picture of how patients view their GP services at national, local and practice level.

Links:

<http://results.gp-patient.co.uk/report/main.aspx>

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/PublishedSurvey/GPpatientsurvey2007/index.htm

Action:

- PCT chief executives will wish to note the results of the first two quarters data, enabling them to make in-year changes to services where necessary.

select a section...

Published every Thursday, **the week** provides need-to-know news, consultations and events for chief executives and their teams. It provides links to more information and resources, highlighting areas for action.

> On the agenda
> Policy news

> Consultations
and evaluations

> Publications
> Conferences and events

> Patient safety alerts
> Need help?

Consultations and evaluations

3. **Strengthening National Commissioning** (Gateway reference number: 13074)

This consultation, published on 11 December, seeks views from NHS, industry and other stakeholders on proposals for an incremental development of some of the arrangements proposed in the Carter Review, in particular reshaping the membership and the role of the National Commissioning Group.

Link:

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_109923

Action:

- NHS chief executives who wish to respond to the consultation are invited to submit comments by 19 February.

4. **Payment by Results** **2010-11 road-testing exercise** (Gateway reference number: 12964)

The road-test exercise provides an opportunity for the service to familiarise themselves with the new tariff, and supports the planning process. The main focus of the road test this year is to gather comments on the draft guidance, which has been substantially revised and expanded.

Link:

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_110106

Action:

- NHS chief executives who wish to submit comment are invited to do so by 22 January 2010.

select a section...

Published every Thursday, **the week** provides need-to-know news, consultations and events for chief executives and their teams. It provides links to more information and resources, highlighting areas for action.

> On the agenda
> Policy news

> Consultations
and evaluations

> Publications
> Conferences and events

> Patient safety alerts
> Need help?

Publications

5. *Consumption of alcohol by children and young people*

(Gateway reference number: 13224)

This guidance has been developed by the Chief Medical Officer to address concern about the impact and pattern of drinking among children and young people. It will be used to inform future campaigns and materials on children's alcohol consumption to reduce its consequences on health, crime, violence and anti-social behaviour.

Link:

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_110258

Action:

- NHS chief executives will wish to consider the implications and discuss with their public health leads.

6. *Increase in Out of Hours Capacity for GP Registrars*

(Gateway reference number: 13251)

This letter is to draw your attention to PCTs' responsibility to commission increased GP Out of Hours (OOH) training, to reflect the recent extension of training undertaken in GP practices from 12 to 18 months.

Link:

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Lettersandcirculars/Dearcolleagueletters/DH_110331

Action:

- PCT chief executives will wish to discuss with their local GP postgraduate deanery leads to ensure efficient training arrangements are in place for OOH services.

7. *Cancer commissioning guidance update*

(Gateway reference number: 12209)

The cancer commissioning guidance has been updated. It now includes information addressing cancer family history services covering triage patients based on genetic risk, managing patients from receipt of referral through to determining an individual care pathway following risk assessment. This guidance sits alongside the linked web-based cancer commissioning toolkit which provides a range of benchmarked information and data.

Link:

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_110115

Action:

- PCT and SHA chief executives should consider the implications of these publications for their organisations.

select a section...

Published every Thursday, **the week** provides need-to-know news, consultations and events for chief executives and their teams. It provides links to more information and resources, highlighting areas for action.

> On the agenda
> Policy news

> Consultations
and evaluations

> Publications
> Conferences and events

> Patient safety alerts
> Need help?

Publications

8. Code of Practice for healthcare associated infections (Gateway reference number: 13072)

The Health and Social Care Act 2008 Code of Practice for health and adult social care on the prevention and control of infections and related guidance will help registered providers of health and adult social care to plan and implement how they prevent and control infections. It sets out criteria that the Care Quality Commission will use to assess compliance with the registration requirement for cleanliness and infection control.

Link:

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_110288

Action:

- NHS and local authority chief executives will wish to ensure their organisations, as registered providers, will be able to demonstrate compliance with this Code of Practice.

9. H1N1 pandemic and primary ophthalmic Services (Gateway reference number: 13248)

This guidance provides advice on the implications of swine flu for primary ophthalmic services.

Link:

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_110247

Action:

- NHS chief executives will wish to be aware of this guidance and the implications for primary ophthalmic services.

Publications **continued** >

NHS Leadership Team

select a section...

Published every Thursday, **the week** provides need-to-know news, consultations and events for chief executives and their teams. It provides links to more information and resources, highlighting areas for action.

> On the agenda
> Policy news

> Consultations
and evaluations

> Publications
> Conferences and events

> Patient safety alerts
> Need help?

Publications

10. *Achieving Excellence in Kidney Care* (Gateway reference number: 12797)

This report documents progress in improving kidney care since the National Service Framework (NSF) was issued five years ago. Areas of the kidney care pathway where good progress has been made, and areas where there is still need for improvement, are highlighted. The report also celebrates the first year of operation of the improvement organisation, NHS Kidney Care.

Link:

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_109978

Action:

- NHS chief executives will wish to consider the current position of their organisations in relation to implementation of the NSF.

Action:

- This will be of interest to NHS and local authority chief executives as it details the work which is underway to reduce the regulatory burden.

11. *Fourth DH annual Simplification Plan* (Gateway reference number: 13145)

This report contains measures that demonstrate how the DH and its Arms Length Bodies are reducing the regulation burden on stakeholders, including the commitment to a 30 percent reduction in data burdens on the frontline.

Link:

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_109981

Publications **continued** >

select a section...

Published every Thursday, **the week** provides need-to-know news, consultations and events for chief executives and their teams. It provides links to more information and resources, highlighting areas for action.

> On the agenda
> Policy news

> Consultations
and evaluations

> Publications
> Conferences and events

> Patient safety alerts
> Need help?

Publications

12. Revised guidance on eligibility for social care (Gateway reference number: 13200)

This report summarises the responses received during the recent public consultation on revised guidance on eligibility for social care, which closed on 6 October 2009. The revised guidance will replace the 2003 *Fair Access to Care Services* guidance.

Link:

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Responsestoconsultations/DH_110137

Action:

- This will be of interest to local authority chief executives and directors of social care, as the revised guidance on eligibility for social care will need to be applied by local authorities from April 2010.

13. Children's walking levels boosted by a fifth (Gateway reference number: 13250)

A report has been released suggesting that the WoW (Walk Once a Week) scheme, part of the Walk to School campaign run by national charity Living Streets, raises walking levels in primary school children by 19 percent.

Link:

www.walktoschool.org.uk

Action:

- NHS and local authority chief executives will wish to familiarise themselves with the findings of the report and the impact it may have on work reducing childhood obesity.

Publications **continued** >

select a section...

Published every Thursday, **the week** provides need-to-know news, consultations and events for chief executives and their teams. It provides links to more information and resources, highlighting areas for action.

> On the agenda
> Policy news

> Consultations
and evaluations

> Publications
> Conferences and events

> Patient safety alerts
> Need help?

Publications

14. Practice based commissioning survey results

(Gateway reference number: 13265)

Results have been published from the first wave of research for the new practice based commissioning (PBC) survey, conducted between October and November 2009. The aims of the survey are to get feedback from practices on their perception of the support offered by their PCT and on the clinical and financial engagement of practices with PBC.

Link:

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_109768

Action:

- PCT chief executives should use this feedback to assess the support offered by PCTs to practices and the clinical and financial engagement of practices with PBC.

Letter to local commissioners:

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Lettersandcirculars/Dearcolleagueletters/DH_110322

Letter to SHAs:

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Lettersandcirculars/Dearcolleagueletters/DH_110329

15. Learning disability commissioning transfer – final returns

(Gateway reference number: 13168)

From April 2009, funding and commissioning of social care for adults with learning disabilities transferred from the NHS to local authorities. The attached letters to SHAs and DRDs and lead commissioners provide further guidance.

Action:

- NHS chief executives should note that final returns are completed by 15 January 2010.

select a section...

Published every Thursday, **the week** provides need-to-know news, consultations and events for chief executives and their teams. It provides links to more information and resources, highlighting areas for action.

> On the agenda
> Policy news

> Consultations
and evaluations

> Publications
> Conferences and events

> Patient safety alerts
> Need help?

Patient safety alerts

**16. MEDICAL DEVICE ALERT – MDA/2009/80
(Gateway reference number: 13261)
Device: Ultrasound transducer probes
with an internal lumen used for taking
transrectal prostate biopsies.**

All manufacturers. This Medical Device Alert was issued on 9 December 2009 to NHS trusts for action.

Further information can be found at:
www.mhra.gov.uk/Publications/Safetywarnings/MedicalDeviceAlerts/CON065536

**17. MEDICAL DEVICE ALERT – MDA/2009/81
(Gateway reference number: 13262)
Device: Rea Azalea wheelchairs
manufactured by Invacare Rea AB.**

This Medical Device Alert was issued on 14 December 2009 to NHS trusts for action.

Further information can be found at:
www.mhra.gov.uk/Publications/Safetywarnings/MedicalDeviceAlerts/CON065574

**18. MEDICAL DEVICE ALERT – MDA/2009/82
(Gateway reference number: 13263)
Device: Birdie mobile hoists manufactured
by Invacare.**

This Medical Device Alert was issued on 14 December 2009 to NHS trusts for action.

Further information can be found at:
www.mhra.gov.uk/Publications/Safetywarnings/MedicalDeviceAlerts/CON065577

select a section...

Published every Thursday, **the week** provides need-to-know news, consultations and events for chief executives and their teams. It provides links to more information and resources, highlighting areas for action.

> On the agenda
> Policy news

> Consultations
and evaluations

> Publications
> Conferences and events

> Patient safety alerts
> Need help?

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Please include name, full contact details and date of change.

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Ordering DH publications

All DH publications are free – if you wish to order hard copies of any publications mentioned in **the week**, go to www.orderline.dh.gov.uk