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Advice Note

Primary Care Toolkit



LOC SUPPORT UNIT
ADVICE NOTE #4

Available on line at www.locsu.co.uk
Or call 020 7207 8156

Advice note

Primary Care Toolkit

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Purpose

This toolkit, which comes in the form of a booklet and accompanying CD, is designed to help LOCs and individual practitioners to prepare business cases for enhanced services in primary care. It points users towards a range of data sources via excel spreadsheets in the CD, including a generic business case and sample proposals for glaucoma and children's cycloplegia. The generic business case can be tailored towards any item of service, with the help of a proposal calculator. There is also a programme for helping you to calculate the fees you need to charge for providing the services you are proposing.

How to use it

You start by reading the information in the primary care toolkit booklet and then loading the CD to access the spreadsheets, calculators, generic business case, examples and presentations. There are instructions, which start with "Read This First", followed by a "Step by Step Guide". You fill in the boxes on the spreadsheet and the web links will help you to locate relevant data. The links may not provide you with all the information you need, so be prepared to obtain data locally. Also, be pragmatic; if you do not think that something adds to your case, do not include it. Equally, if compelling, local information is available, make sure it becomes part of your reasoning.

Key Drivers for Change

To be successful in supporting your business case, you will have to be able to demonstrate that there is a demand for the services you are proposing. If you can match your proposals to the key drivers for change in your area, you

will increase your chances of having your proposal accepted. Key drivers for change include:

- World class commissioning
- 18-Week Waiting List
- Shifting services from secondary to primary care
- Cost effectiveness and value for money
- Patient access / care closer to home
- Patient choice
- Integrated pathways
- Quality and safety
- Demand and capacity
- Reducing inequalities



Resist the urge to reinvent the wheel

Enthusiasm is a valuable thing, but don't waste it on efforts that have already been made by someone else. Before you go too far down your redesign and business case process, check with the LOC Support Unit or with other LOCs to see if anyone else has developed the service you are proposing.

Build up what you know

Wherever possible, undertake local audits to back up your proposal, remembering that they do not have to be complex. For example in relation to referral patterns, simply ask a number of local optometrists to record the reason for referral behind a sample of referrals made to the Hospital Eye Service (or via GPs). If you don't have the opportunity or resource to do this, the figures in the spreadsheet were derived in this way and can be quoted e.g. "other health systems have indicated the following break-down of referrals" or words to this effect. Be prepared to incorporate other

sources of information e.g. the NEHEM epidemiological database to help you make your business case.

Be prepared to learn

The toolkit contains a range of resources e.g. word documents, excel spreadsheets, power-point presentations and websites (accessed through web-links). Although it assumes a degree of computer and internet literacy, it also attempts to lead the user gently through the process so that each time you use it, it gets easier.

Department of Health commissioning toolkit for community based eye care services

In 2007, the Department of Health published a toolkit for community based eye care services, finally recognising, in formal terms, the importance of eye care and the increasing demand for eye care services from a burgeoning, older population. The Minister of State for Health Services launched the toolkit, saying that eye care services was an area where there was clear potential to develop a wider range of community based services, making better use of the skills and resources in primary care, growing capacity and increasing patient choice.

The toolkit provided a substantial amount of background about eye care services generally, including samples of the Department of Health's pilot schemes in glaucoma, AMD, low vision and cataract. It also offered practical advice for primary care trusts, boards and practice based commissioners on commissioning community based eye care services.

So be sure to refer to this toolkit in your proposals to PCTs and Health Boards, reminding them that the Department of Health wants commissioners to work in partnership with optometrists to improve local eye care services and general eye health. Remind commissioners that the toolkit issued by the Department of Health is an excellent starting point from which to build and develop the sort of eye care services that are tailored to what patients want and

need. Click on the following link to access a copy of the toolkit:

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_063978

Department of Health step by step guide to commissioning community eye care services

The Department of Health, in conjunction with NHS Primary Care Contracting, published a guide to commissioning community eye care services in 2007, following on from the launch of the commissioning toolkit. The purpose of the guide was to provide information and practical tools for PCTs and practice based commissioners interested in commissioning enhanced primary eye care services. One of the drivers for commissioning these services was the 18 week referral to treatment pathway. Click on the following link to the Primary Care Contracting website, to access the step by step commissioning guide:

<http://www.pcc.nhs.uk/337>

Act now!

There never was a better time to approach your PCTs and to remind them of this document and the commissioning toolkit – both issued by the Department of Health with the express intention of encouraging commissioners to develop eye care services locally. Use the Primary Care Toolkit, refer to the Department of Health documents on commissioning eye care and take advantage of the demographic changes which make the provision of quality eye care within the community an increasing necessity.

Contact the LOCSU

If you need a copy of the primary care toolkit or want advice or support on any aspect of its use, please contact the LOC Support Unit. We are here to help you.

