Dear RCGP

NHS Clinical Commissioners ‘part b’- Nursing response to the RCGP’s into Patient Centred Care in the 21st Century (a call for evidence)

Further to our formal response to the RCGPs inquiry into Patient Centred Care in the 21st Century of 25th July please find below our ‘part b’ Nursing response. As the membership body of Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), we are developing a Nursing Network and welcome the opportunity to input into this independent inquiry specifically from the Nursing perspective. We welcome the direction of the inquiry with its focus on general practice in the context of the broader range of primary, community and social care and recognise that Nursing, Allied Health Professionals and social care services are critical to this.

1. How do models of care need to change?

We agree that current models of care need to change in order to deliver better patient outcomes. From a nursing perspective putting the person at the centre, empowering the individual to, where possible, manage their own health and well-being with the support of primary, community and social care services needs a ‘shift’ in role definition and function. A developing concept is that of ‘out of hospital’ nursing which considers all nurses working in the community. A more flexible ‘out of hospital’ nursing role is required to offer a holistic service with clear co-ordination as part of a multi-disciplinary, integrated team.

In developing new community focused models of care there are significant nursing workforce challenges for consideration. Development of innovative approaches to education and employment, such as joint appointments of staff working in hospital and community. Practice nursing capacity, competency and integrated working is an area for particular focus. There needs to be a cultural shift in managing public expectations of models of care to ensure that changes are understood and embraced by communities.

2. What does this mean for the way in which NHS resources are deployed?

As with the NHSCC response on 25th July from a nursing perspective we urge more join up of local resources across health economies. An area for joined up working is under and post graduate nurse education, developing a more generically skilled workforce competent to work in an integrated team. There is work underway led by NHS England and Health Education England to consider to consider the case for change, leadership, career structures and competencies.

We believe that in order to maximize the potential of general practice, every part of the commissioning system must be more aligned - NHS England, Local Authorities and CCGs need to work together and collaborate to strategically plan and jointly commission for populations. Progress with agreeing arrangements for ‘pooled budgets’ is essential to truly integrate and ensure care is person centred.
3. How can general practice be supported?

Through innovation and joined up working, bringing together practice nursing, community nursing, district nursing and Allied Health Professionals (AHP’s) to influence and challenge commissioning practice. Reduce the separation of ‘out of hospital’ nurses and AHP’s delivering care to the same population-more flexibility in what each nurse or AHP can offer and where.

CCG’s can support consistency to reduce the variation of standards which exist in practice nursing. Understanding local workforce issues and working together with Higher Education Institutes and Health Education England to develop new and creative models for education and on-going professional development. Increase the number student nurses going into General Practice for placements, Practice Nursing needs to be seen as a possible career option along with other ‘out of hospital’ services. Joint programmes of education delivering a professional skilled in nursing and social care. Align services with Public Health to support prevention and ensure that the Practice and Community Nursing role in terms of Public Health and Health Promotion is maintained.

There needs to be an integrated approach to education with a more action learning research approach. We must look at teams working across boundaries that are successful and build models of education based on learning from their successes. Develop integrated models of working in terms of multidisciplinary teams coming together around the person, focused on well-being and quality of life. Utilise the technology funding available to use different approaches to managing care.

NHSCC