Response to NHS Chief Executive’s Open Call for Evidence and Ideas

Respondent ID: 83

Organisation name: The Royal College of Psychiatrists

Type of response: Letter
23rd August 2011,

Dear Sir Ian Carruthers,

**Re: Call for evidence- Innovation in the NHS**

Whilst innovation is best led and implemented by grass roots clinicians, provider management needs to create the environment in which change can proceed and commissioning needs to align change-activity with investment, financial incentive and quality review. In order to diseminate innovation across a large system such as the NHS, coordination and consistency of both managerial and commissioning practice and expectancy are therefore required.

The Royal College of Psychiatrists is developing an executive to implement a strategy for Management and Leadership. Part of its function will be to ensure the profession is kept abreast of innovations through managed networks of Medical and Clinical Directors in specialist mental health and community health settings. The executive will describe standards for medical management and leadership in MH settings and how Faculties and Divisions can contribute to the creation and implementation of innovation.

The Royal College of Psychiatrists has also teamed up with the Royal College of General Practitioners to create a "Joint Commissioning Panel for Mental Health - JCP-MH". This is the formal mental health arm of the Centre for Commissioning. The Panel is charged by the Department of Health mental health Division, through a contract held with the Mental Health Network of the NHS Confederation, to deliver a number of products over the next 10 months or so. These include service descriptors for broad models of care (eg Primary Mental Health Care, CMHTs, Acute MH Pathway, Liaison, LDs, Dementia, Addictions etc); a framework in which Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) can implement the descriptors; and commissioning guidance to assist CCGs procure Public Mental Health (PMH) in tandem with LAs (and Health and Wellbeing Boards). These products are being developed through a formal process of reference to expertise.

The process by which expert opinion is accessed includes reviewing existing expert documentation, evidence and previously published work, the establishment of a series of Expert Reference Groups to assist in the drafting of Guidance and the further dissemination of draft Guidance for comment by a wide group of stakeholders including people who use services and their carers. The Expert reference groups represent the composite views of not only clinicians but also patients, the public and a number of other stakeholders (providers, Directors of Adult Social Services, RCN and BPS) for example. Their content will reflect evidence of what works in service delivery, including innovations that have been sufficiently evaluated to warrant their inclusion in the descriptors.
One question that requires addressing is the degree of maturity an evaluation of an innovation must reach to justify industrialisation of the innovation through a nationally coordinated commissioning intent. A team of MH-themed CLAHRC Leads is working to describe the answer to this. The JCP's Commissioning Framework will make reference to this, such that, for mental health at least, an equivalent to Quality Standards for clinical practice and organisational process emerges - what might be referred to as 'Industry Standards' for service models. The JCP will try to enact and describe a worked example of how, post NSF, an innovation can be brought to fruition in this way.

A collegiate link between the Management/Leadership and the Commissioning initiatives will not only provide the infrastructure in which networked communication about innovation can proceed but will also reflect the opportunity for the Colleges to describe standards and good practice for clinical commissioning for both psychiatrists and GPs - including the generation, reception and implementation of innovation.

We would be pleased to keep you updated in respect of both the Management/Leadership and Commissioning initiatives and if you have any specific queries or wish to learn more about either please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours Sincerely,

Prof Helen Lester & Dr Neil Deuchar
Co-chairs of the Joint Commissioning Panel for Mental Health