



# Faculty of Public Health

Of the Royal Colleges of Physicians of the United Kingdom

Working to improve the public's health

## FPH initial response to *Equality and Excellence: Liberating the NHS*

### FPH welcomes:

- The Government's enthusiasm and support for public health
- The Government's commitment to the values of the NHS; a comprehensive service, available to all, free at point of use and based on clinical need.
- The focus on clinical outcomes and the quality standards that deliver them.

*FPH PHSKC is currently working on a set of outcomes-based public health quality standards with ADsPH and NICE.*

- The greater involvement of GPs in commissioning.

*FPH believes that GPs' understanding of local populations and experience can bring much to the commissioning process. FPH strongly recommends that public health specialists should work alongside GPs, using their experience in assessing health needs, reviewing evidence, analysing outcomes and reviewing and prioritising services to ensure that the population as a whole gets the best possible health with the available resources.*

- The emphasis on reduction of health inequalities
- The focus on evidence-based outcome measures and the removal of targets which have no clinical justification.
- The creation of a National Public Health Service
- The ring-fencing of the public health budget.

*FPH will be calling upon Government to safeguard the future of the public health specialist workforce and minimise any negative impact of the dissolution of PCTs and SHAs. FPH will also call for professional standards to be maintained and quality assured through a robust selection process (AAC process).*

*FPH believes that the integration of vaccination and screening programmes and public health emergencies into a public health service is positive but will be calling for a national holistic service encompassing the three domains of public health. FPH will also call upon DH England to consider the best of working models and reorganisation of public health across the other three countries of the United Kingdom.*

- The emphasis on the Director of Public Health as a key role.

*FPH is pleased that the white paper emphasises the vital role of the Director of Public Health and welcomes the joint appointment between the proposed Public Health Service and local authority in order to address local health needs. FPH will be calling upon Government to ensure that the DPH:*

- *Is a Director level post in the Local Authority*

- *Is required to make an independent report annually on the health needs of the local population and the extent to which these are met by the services available to them*
- *Has sufficient independence to be able to advocate effectively on their behalf. FPH will be calling upon the Government to ensure that the DPH is a Director of and for the Director of Public Health to be a Director level post.*
- The integration of social care with healthcare

*FPH will advocate that public health remain a vital part of healthcare and social care and will strongly recommend that the proposed Public Health Service support both sectors.*

**FPH expresses concern about:**

- The potential lack of defined responsibility for the health of geographically--defined populations and communities
- The size and scope of the ring-fenced public health budget
- The apparent omission of healthcare public health skills, knowledge and responsibilities from the Public Health Service
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- The potential for Foundation Trusts to disregard the views of many, relatively small, commissioning groups with regard to cost-effectiveness, service design and service configuration
- The lack of detail around the support that GP consortia will require and utilise to commission services
- The ability of a national body to commission local services such as dentistry, community pharmacy and primary ophthalmic services, as well as more high cost, low volume specialist services
- The potential loss of public health skills and expertise as a result of the reorganisation
- The potential loss of momentum in training the workforce to deliver.

**FPH will be seeking further information on many of these proposals including:**

- HealthWatch
- The nature of the links with local authorities
- Commitment to the future training of public health specialists
- The nature and scope of the Public Health Service (including the incorporation of all three domains of public health)
- The statutory responsibilities of the Director of Public Health.

FPH looks forward to an active engagement in discussions at the highest level on these important policies.