

Adults Well-being and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee



23 June 2010

Comments on NHS Trust's Quality Accounts

Report of: Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive

Purpose of the Report

1. This report is for information only to advise Members of the responses made on behalf of this committee to NHS Trusts in relation to their Quality Accounts which they are required to seek scrutiny committee comments, and which they are to publish in June.

Background

2. From June 30th 2010 acute health services providers – NHS Trusts – are required to produce Quality Accounts and in 2011 this requirement also applies to primary and community healthcare services including GPs. Quality Accounts are an annual report to the public on the quality of the health services that are delivered by providers. They aim to improve public accountability and ensure a focus on improving quality and include comments from Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Local Involvement Networks (LINKs).
3. In order to help facilitate scrutiny input and comments on Quality Accounts NHS County Durham and Darlington hosted a Quality Accounts Briefing in May to which all members of the Adults Well-being and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee were invited, as well as Darlington Borough Council's Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee and both the LINKs in Durham and Darlington. The briefing provided an overview of the process and role of the commissioning PCT, and provided an opportunity for the two key acute NHS providers in County Durham - County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust (CDDFT) and Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys (TEWV) NHS Foundation Trust – to explain their approach, and also provided an opportunity for discussion.

Commenting on providers Quality Accounts

4. The Department of Health guidance advises providers that they should:
 - Provide OSCs and LINKs the opportunity, on a voluntary basis, to review and supply a statement, for inclusion in a provider's Quality Account. [It should be noted that in relation to the statement for inclusion - the guidance suggests that this should be the OSC in the local authority area in which the provider's principal office is located. Neither of the Trust's principal office is located in County Durham however CDDFT have agreed that a statement from this committee would be included].

- Discuss with OSCs and LINKs at an early stage, the proposed content of their Quality Account to ensure that the report covers areas of importance to the local community. To ensure that the local relevance of the Quality Account is maintained, a year-round dialogue between OSCs and providers, and LINKs and providers is envisaged.
5. Views expressed during the Quality Accounts Briefing, along with evidence gathered during reviews undertaken by this committee, have informed the comments provided and these are included as Appendices 2 and 3. The chairman approved the comments prior to submission.
 6. Comments on the North East Ambulance Service Quality Account were provided separately at a Joint Tees Valley Health Scrutiny Committee meeting at which this committee was represented by the chairman.

Next Steps

7. NHS County Durham and Darlington has indicated that it will develop its role in relation to facilitating the process of preparation and verification of information included in future Quality Accounts.
8. In the comments to NHS Trusts it was requested that Durham County Councils Adults Well-being and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (AWBH) would welcome:
 - Feedback on how its comments are received/and action that the Trust proposes to take in particular in relation to patient experience measures.
 - An indication from the Trusts on how they propose to engage with the AWBH committee in the production of its Quality Account next year.
 - Further consideration from the Trust and commissioners about the possibility and appropriateness of more frequent periodic quality reporting to AWBH in future.

Recommendation

9. It is recommended that Members note the content of this report and the comments made on behalf of the committee.

Contact: Feisal Jassat, Overview and Scrutiny Manager
Tel: 0191 383 3506 **E-Mail:** Feisal.Jassat@durham.gov.uk

Author: Jeremy Brock, Health Scrutiny Liaison Manager
Tel: 07909 877136 **E-Mail:** Jeremy.brock@nhs.net

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

None

Staffing

None

Equality and Diversity

None

Accommodation

None

Crime and disorder

None

Sustainability

None

Human rights

None

Localities and Rurality

None

Young people

None

Consultation

None

Health

Comments on Quality Accounts are for the purpose of assisting improved patient outcomes and patient experience of health services.

Appendix 2

Durham County Council's Adults Well-being and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Comments on the County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust Quality Account for 2009/10 and priorities for improvement for 2010-2011

Comment for inclusion in the Trusts Quality Account:

"We welcome the County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust Quality Account and the opportunity to comment on it. As a new way of communicating information about service quality to the wider public there are challenges in doing this meaningfully and we are confident the Trust has demonstrated to us that it is keen to do this. We anticipate that there will be opportunities for ongoing dialogue in future with the Trust to develop the structure and content of the Quality Account to ensure that it is locally relevant for communities of County Durham.

We welcome the progress the Trust is making in relation to the range of quality indicators included in the report and the plans to improve these further. In particular we note the improvement in performance on healthcare acquired infections, and the priority given to further improvement by the Trust. We are also particularly interested in improvements to the pathway of care for stroke patients and that the Trust continues to strive to meet the requirements of the National Stroke Strategy.

It is in relation to the experience of patients using the Trust that, as a scrutiny committee, we are particularly keen to see further emphasis in the Quality Account in future. We would like to see measures of patient experience developed next year that reflect what users and their carers themselves feel about the services they have been provided, and for this information to be collated and reported regularly throughout the year."

Other comments for the Trust to consider:

The comments set out below reflect discussions at the Quality Accounts Briefing held at County Hall in Durham on 14th May, as well as issues arising from membership of the Seizing the Future Implementation and Oversight Board.

Approach and process

We anticipate that there will be opportunities for ongoing dialogue in future with the Trust to develop the structure and content of the Quality Account to ensure that it is locally relevant for communities of County Durham. We will also explore opportunities for more regular quality performance reporting to the Adults Well-being and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (AWBH).

It is recognised by overview and scrutiny committees, commissioners and the Trust that the current Department of Health (DoH) guidance with respect to the inclusion of comments from overview and scrutiny committees and indeed from Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) within the Quality Account is unsatisfactory. We welcome the pragmatic approach taken by the Trust to the inclusion of comments from this committee within the Quality Account.

Patient experience

We would hope to see in future a wider range of local measures of patient experience reported on beyond the current national patient survey data information. This is a key issue for the AWBH and we note that the Trust recognises that more work needs to be done to ensure that measures of patient experience are developed to more appropriately reflect what users/carers really feel about the services they have used, as service users may have very different views of the quality of the services to those currently captured in existing measures.

It is noted that the reporting of patient experience measures to the Implementation and Oversight Board has not been regular, and has been limited to Patient Choices website data. We would, for example, be particularly interested in measures relating to patient experience of new A&E services that capture more than maximum waiting times, and also measure hospital accessibility issues including parking.

We would hope to see patient experience measures demonstrating improvements in relation to patient nutrition and privacy and dignity. Concerns have been expressed in relation to certain aspects such as attention to the ability of elderly patients to feed themselves; and the need for greater awareness of privacy issues in Wards where curtains provide little privacy in particular in relation to confidential verbal communication between patients and staff.

Robust patient experience data is anticipated as contributing to public assurance of the quality of NHS services.

It was suggested that more use could be made of the extensive Trust membership in taking views about measures of patient experience.

Local Involvement Networks could be approached as a source of patient experience information.

AWBH suggests that the Trusts approach to patient experience should be developed in the context of an 'NHS family-wide' approach to patient experience – an overall patient experience strategy.

Patient Safety

We would wish to see ongoing emphasis on action to address healthcare acquired infection and concerns have been expressed to AWBH in relation to the availability of wipes in particular in the Medical Assessment Ward and the infrequent cleaning of TV equipment.

Providing comments on the Quality Account

It was commented that the 30 days given for OSCs and LINKs to provide comments is not very long – DoH guidance suggests that providers should give at least 30 days for OSCs and LINKs to comment.

Language and accessibility

Comments were made in relation to the term 'quality account' and whilst recognising that the DoH and Monitor have placed requirements on the Trust in terms of the content of Quality Accounts (Quality Reports), it may be helpful for the Trust to identify the best way to communicate quality messages in a 'public-facing' document.

The Quality Account should use plain language and obtain a 'Crystal Mark'.

Other issues

It is suggested that consideration is given to inclusion of information on what is actually being done to deliver stated targets, whilst recognising that there is a limit to the amount of detail that can usefully be provided within this type of document. In order to make such

information available to those who are interested, reference to how it can be obtained should be included in the document.

Consideration should also be given to the opportunity for inclusion of locality performance information (not just data for the whole Trust area).

As dementia care pathways may cover many different organisations – how can the overall quality of service provided be assessed and reported on, in particular the issue of early identification and referral.

Future process

Durham County Councils Adults Well-being and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (AWBH), would welcome:

- Feedback on how its comments are received/and action that the Trust proposes to take in particular in relation to patient experience measures.
- An indication from the Trust on how it proposes to engage with the AWBH committee in the production of its Quality Account next year.
- Further consideration from the Trust and commissioners about the possibility and appropriateness of more frequent periodic quality reporting to AWBH in future.

Appendix 3

Durham County Council's Adults Well-being and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Comments on the Tees Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust Quality Account for 2009/10

We welcome the Tees Esk and Wear Valley's (TEWV) Quality Account and the opportunity to comment on it.

This report sets the views of Durham County Council's Adults Well-being and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (AWBH), and reflects discussions at the Quality Accounts Briefing held at County Hall in Durham on 14th May, as well as issues arising from scrutiny review activity relating to the Trust's services carried out by the scrutiny committee.

Approach and process

We anticipate that there will be opportunities for ongoing dialogue in future with the Trust to develop the structure and content of the Quality Account to ensure that it is locally relevant for communities of County Durham. We will also explore opportunities for more regular quality performance reporting to the Adults Well-being and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (AWBH).

It is recognised by overview and scrutiny committees, commissioners and the Trust that the current Department of Health (DoH) guidance with respect to the inclusion of comments from overview and scrutiny committees and indeed from Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) within the Quality Account is unsatisfactory. This year's comments from Durham's AWBH scrutiny committee will not be included in your Quality Account. We have made representations to the DoH on this matter, and we welcome your Board's commitment to review your approach if DoH guidance does not change.

Patient experience

We would hope to see in future a wider range of local measures of patient experience reported on beyond the current national patient survey data information. This is a key issue for the AWBH and we note that the Trust recognises that more work needs to be done to ensure that measures of patient experience are developed to more appropriately reflect what users/carers really feel about the services they have used, as service users may have very different views of the quality of the services to those currently captured in existing measures.

Robust patient experience data is anticipated as contributing to public assurance of the quality of NHS services.

We welcome your proposal to use an independent voluntary sector organisation to develop a 'top 10' of the most important issues for people and would wish to be informed on progress with this as it is developed.

It was suggested that more use could be made of the extensive Trust membership in taking views about measures of patient experience.

Local Involvement Networks could be approached as a source of patient experience information.

Patients experience of services is also affected by issues of transport and access. In relation to the location/relocation of services a proactive approach should be taken to assessing both service user and carer access/transport needs at the point of users accessing services.

AWBH suggests that the Trusts approach to patient experience should be developed in the context of an 'NHS family-wide' approach to patient experience – an overall patient experience strategy.

Providing comments on the Quality Account

It was commented noted that the 30 days given for OSCs and LINKs to provide comments is not very long – it should be noted that the DoH guidance suggests that providers should give at least 30 days for OSCs and LINKs to comment.

Language and accessibility

Comments were made in relation to the term 'quality account' and whilst recognising that the DoH and Monitor have placed requirements on the Trust in terms of the content of Quality Accounts (Quality Reports), it may be helpful for the Trust to identify the best way to communicate quality messages in a 'public-facing' document.

The Quality Account should use plain language and obtain a 'Crystal Mark'.

Other issues

It is suggested that consideration is given to inclusion of information on what is actually being done to deliver stated targets, whilst recognising that there is a limit to the amount of detail that can usefully be provided within this type of document. In order to make such information available to those who are interested, reference to how it can be obtained should be included in the document.

Consideration should also be given to the opportunity for inclusion of locality performance information (not just data for the whole Trust area).

As dementia care pathways may cover many different organisations – how can the overall quality of service provided be assessed and reported on, in particular the issue of early identification and referral.

Patient Safety

The management of risks in patient records should be prioritised to ensure that services are integrated (between different NHS providers) such that patients can be safely be passed between them on a single pathway of care.

Future process

Durham County Councils Adults Well-being and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (AWBH), would welcome:

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- An indication from the Trust on how it proposes to engage with the AWBH committee in the production of its Quality Account next year.
- Further consideration from the Trust and commissioners about the possibility and appropriateness of more frequent periodic quality reporting to AWBH in future.