

## **Commission for Health and Social Care Integration in the North East – individuals and organisations invited to help inform its work**

The North East Combined Authority (neca) has signed a proposed devolution agreement with the Government to give the region the powers it needs to drive economic growth and bring jobs and investment to the North East.

As part of this proposed agreement the Commission for Health and Social Care Integration in the North East has been set up jointly by the combined authority and the NHS to look into how the NHS, councils and other public, private and community and voluntary sector bodies could further develop the work they do together to improve the health and wellbeing of the local population.

The proposed agreement recognises that while there are real strengths in the North East, the area faces huge challenges. Poor health is a key issue and despite excellent health and social care provision, outcomes are among the poorest in the country so there is a need to look at the whole system and address the wider issues that impact on people's health and wellbeing. For example, employment has an important role to play in improving health and there is also a need to improve health to enable people to take up jobs.

The proposed agreement acknowledges that improvements to health and wellbeing must be done in a climate of constrained resources and recognises that the current system is unsustainable both financially and clinically. As such there is a need to explore how resources can be freed up to focus more on health improvement and reduce reliance on hospitals.

The commission represents the first phase of the important work that will be carried out as part of the proposed devolution agreement to identify the opportunities for greater collaboration, integration and devolution across the Combined Authority's area, in order to improve outcomes and reduce health inequalities.

This independent commission, chaired by Duncan Selbie, Chief Executive of Public Health England, is now inviting individuals and organisations from across the combined authority area (County Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland) and from neighbouring areas, to submit written evidence to help inform its work on the following themes:

### **Supporting people to stay well and independent**

- Where do we need to focus our efforts and the money we spend on health and social care services to make the biggest difference to the health and wellbeing of people in the North East?
- How can our organisations work more closely and differently, including working more with the community and voluntary sector, to support people to stay well and independent and reduce reliance on hospital services?

- If there is already widespread agreement that the system ought to focus more on prevention, why is this proving difficult to achieve? What are the barriers that need to be overcome in order to shift the system to one which prioritises prevention and better health outcomes?

### **Focusing more on health, wellbeing and productivity**

- What do we need to do to support people to be sufficiently healthy (both mentally and physically) for work? Two significant factors that we need to explore are:
  - Being sufficiently healthy (both mentally and physically) is a condition for work, and maximising healthy life is a necessary goal for the commission
  - All employers need to value the strategic importance and benefits of healthy workplaces, to encourage a consistent approach to health and wellbeing for all, and to make health and wellbeing a core priority for senior management.

### **Exploring opportunities to improve health and wellbeing through devolution**

- How can we work with the wider devolution agenda on strengthening the regional economy, housing, training and skills so that they can play their part in efforts to improve the health and wellbeing of people in the North East?
- What additional powers should be devolved to the North East and how can local organisations work better with each other and with central government to improve the health and wellbeing of our population?
- What financial arrangements would need to underpin the shift to prevention and more community based care, supporting a place based focus and reducing spend on acute care?

Evidence can be in the form of existing or new reports, presentations or letters and should be submitted using the following routes:

e mail: [hsccommission@northeastca.gov.uk](mailto:hsccommission@northeastca.gov.uk) or

postal address: HSC Commission, North East Combined Authority, Quadrant, Cobalt Business Park, The Silverlink North, North Tyneside NE27 0BY

**by Friday 22 April.** These responses should be as concise as possible and it would be helpful if any submissions longer than four pages could include a summary of the key points. Early submission of your evidence would be very helpful to optimise the time available to review and synthesise the evidence we receive.

During the second half of April and the beginning of May the commission will hold listening events in each of the seven local authority areas within the combined authority area to provide organisations with the opportunity to discuss their ideas with members of the commission. Arrangements for the listening events will be shared in due course.

Further information on the proposed devolution agreement and the Commission for Health and Social Care Integration in the North East is available on the neca website [www.northeastca.gov.uk](http://www.northeastca.gov.uk) or contact: [rosemary.granger@northeastca.gov.uk](mailto:rosemary.granger@northeastca.gov.uk)

**18 March 2016**

