



To: Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5)

Date: 30 July 2014

Subject: Quality Accounts 2013/14

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 This Briefing Note is intended to introduce the Board to the 2013/14 Quality Accounts produced by local provider NHS trusts.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Board consider the Quality Accounts as supplied by local NHS provider trusts.

3 Information/Background

What Are Quality Accounts?

- 3.1 The Department of Health introduced the requirement for NHS trusts to issue quality accounts in the Health Act (2009). Quality Accounts are annual reports to the public from providers of NHS healthcare services about the quality of services they provide. This publication mirrors providers' publication of their financial accounts.
- 3.2 The purpose of Quality Accounts is to encourage the boards and leaders of healthcare organisations to assess quality across all the healthcare services they provide, and encourage them to engage in the wider processes of continuous quality improvement. Providers are asked to consider three aspects of quality:
- Patient experience
 - Safety
 - Clinical Effectiveness
- 3.3 This both reinforces transparency and helps persuade patients and stakeholders that organisations are committed to quality and improvement. Quality Accounts therefore go above and beyond regulatory requirements, which focus on essential standards instead engaging with patients and stakeholders to ensure that the organisation is constantly seeking to improve and achieve higher standards of care.

What Are Quality Accounts Used For?

- 3.4 Quality Accounts are published on the NHS Choices website, as well as being available in hospitals and other locations to illustrate providers' commitment to quality.
- 3.5 They are used by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to understand how providers are engaging with patients and stakeholders about quality and the need for improvement.

- 3.6 They can also be used by those monitoring or scrutinising providers to assess the risks of an organisation and monitor the services provided.

What is the Scrutiny Board's role?

- 3.7 This forms part of general efforts by the Department of Health to increase engagement and participation in the health service, and is seen as complementary to the existing role of overview and scrutiny committees regarding the operation and planning of local NHS services.
- 3.8 The Department of Health sees the overview and scrutiny committees role as building confidence in the accuracy of data and the conclusions drawn from it. Without some form of independent scrutiny, service users and members of the public may not trust in what they are reading.
- 3.9 Overview and Scrutiny has the opportunity to provide a commentary on the local Trusts Quality Accounts which the Trusts are required to publish unedited and in full. The commentary is required to be no more than 1000 words long. During this year, a quality accounts task and finish group made up of representatives from Warwickshire County Council, Coventry City Council, Healthwatch Coventry and Healthwatch Warwickshire has met to provide a joint commentary on the Quality Accounts for Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust and University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire. The Board has not traditionally made an individual response to the West Midlands Ambulance Service.

Trusts Providing a Quality Account to the Scrutiny Board

- 3.10 Quality Accounts from the following organisations are on today's agenda and those for UHCW will be scheduled for a later date:
- Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust (CWPT) – Appendix A
 - West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS) – Appendix B
- 3.11 The Board should note that at present primary care providers are not required to produce Quality Accounts, although this is something which has been discussed by the Department of Health. Were this to be the case then the requirement for commentaries from Health Scrutiny bodies would become more onerous.

Background information

Quality Accounts – a Guide for Overview and Scrutiny Committees, produced in April 2012, DH website accessed 10th June 2013.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/quality-accounts-mini-guides-for-quality-accounts-a-guide-for-local-involvement-networks-link-and-overview-and-scrutiny-committees-oscs>

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