

Questions

1. Do you agree that an expert panel is the most effective way to provide independent scrutiny? If not, what would be your preferred choice?

A combination of local members of the public who understand local situations in terms of services (not just NHS), geography and demographics as well as expert panel members with less local connections would be NHS Orkney's recommendation.

2. Do you agree that the role of the panel should be to assess the safety, sustainability, evidence-base and value for money of proposals for major changes to local NHS services?

NHS Orkney agrees this should be the role of the panel however, the emphasis on sustainability for local services must be clearly understood.

3. Do you agree that the chair should be a lay person appointed by Scottish Ministers?

NHS Orkney would support this.

4. Do you agree that the panel should have a lay majority among its members?

NHS Orkney would support this but further qualify that there will be a requirement to be able to access lay people from outwith the local community at times, as it is extremely difficult for those living and working in a small community such as ours, to make emotive decisions which may require subsequent changes to service delivery where friends and family may / will be directly affected.

5. Do you agree that the panel should assess the evidence and options during the process of public engagement prior to consultation, and provide a commentary on these that would be available to the Board and to Ministers in reaching decisions?

NHS Orkney has concerns that this could substantially delay a consultation / service redesign process and would ask that strict time frames are put in place if further commentary is to be provided in addition to the original proposals put to the panel.

6. Do you have any other comments on how independent scrutiny should be carried out, or on the guidance on "Informing, engaging and consulting the public in developing health and community care services" at Annex 3?

No Comments

7. Do you have any other comments on either the consultation process or your preferred choice?

One comment on this regarding the "expert Panel", (preferred option 3 and as described in Annex2):

The description of how panel members would be nominated for selection seems rather vague with only three organisations mentioned as examples, concerns that members are likely to be based within easy reach of the main centres of the population with no Remote and Rural or island knowledge.

Whilst understanding that members selected would have no previous connection with the area of issues involved, nevertheless, for the sake of

Page updated: August 15, 2005