

## 1. Section 1 – Making things better

- 1.1 We welcome the Government's commitment to encourage greater public involvement in the planning and delivery of local NHS services in Scotland and in particular, its plans to embed independent scrutiny when considering all major service changes. We believe that to be effective, public and patient involvement needs to be embedded at all levels in healthcare organisation's development, design, delivery and review of all services and healthcare education and training. Good public and patient involvement can support NHS organisations in changing the shape of the workforce to support patient-centred care at all levels. To make this a reality, the public, patients and the healthcare workforce will need to be supported to develop the skills and capabilities required; and public and patient involvement will need to be embedded into organisational culture and practice.
- 1.2 Achieving this will require a focus on the **future workforce**, the **current workforce** and **patients, carers and the public**
- **Future workforce:** ensuring that all commissioned health care education and training programmes are 'patient focused' involving service users at every level: in the commissioning, design, delivery and review
  - **Current workforce:** ensuring that **all** staff have access to training and development opportunities as part of Continuous Professional Development and Performance Reviews supported by the Knowledge and Skills Framework.
  - **Service Users, Carers and the Public:** as the level of public involvement grows so will the need for personal training and development opportunities for patients, carers and the wider public.
- 1.3 Skills for Health is currently working to develop of a set of workforce capabilities for public and patient involvement, underpinned by National Occupational Standards, which will identify the skills needed by the workforce at all levels in an organisation from the public, patients and carers and front line staff to the Chief Executive. These capabilities will be consistent with the core skills relevant to community engagement set out in *Better Community Engagement: A framework for learning*. Articulating the skills required for patient and public involvement at all levels in the local NHS will ensure that it becomes everyone's responsibility and we believe will support the *National Standards for Community Engagement* as these relate to the NHS.
- 1.4 Skills for Health have developed a conceptual model and framework, 'The Circle of Influence' as a practical tool to support the development of capability and capacity for public (patients, service users and carers) and learner involvement in all aspects of healthcare education and training. This was developed by members of the public and learner advisory group in Skills for Health which was formed in December 2005 to enable staff, learners and the public to work on this agenda together.
- 1.5 Skills for Health is currently developing principles for public and patient involvement which will support the Sector Skills Agreements (SSA). The SSA for health sits at the heart of service, workforce and education change, through a coherent strategy, based on consensus across the sector and the UK, to develop a flexible workforce based on competence. The aim of these principles

will be to ensure that public and patient involvement is embedded within each of the six strategic objectives for the SSA.

Further information on these pieces of work is available from:  
[Karen.Walker@skillsforhealth.org.uk](mailto:Karen.Walker@skillsforhealth.org.uk)

## **Section 2 – A new approach**

### **2.1 Electoral Process, Procedures and Systems – Promoting Equality and Diversity of Candidates**

2.1.1 Members, whether they are directly elected or appointed to NHS Boards need to be representative of the communities that they represent. A potential barrier to achieving this is a lack of skills and/or experience. Overcoming this barrier is particularly important if people from more disadvantaged communities (who are often the greatest users of health care services) are to be encouraged to become involved at board level. To achieve this we believe:

- That members of the public aspiring to board level positions should have access to the necessary skills development
- That embedding public and patient involvement at all levels in an organisation provides a wide range of people with the opportunity to develop the necessary skills for board level involvement

2.1.2 Skills for Health have a set of National Occupational Standards for equality and diversity that can support healthcare organisations to ensure that they have the necessary skills to promote and embed. These NOS may be helpful in undertaking an equality impact assessment on the policy. There is a Human Rights and Equality project being taken forward by SfH with the Surrey and Borders Partnership Trust (SBPT) to demonstrate the use of the competences in this area. This is also a Pace Setter site with the British Institute for Human Rights and the Department of Health (England). The partners and Skills for Health would be interested in sharing the outcomes of this work.

Further information on this work and the NOS is available from:  
[Tess.Green@skillsforhealth.org.uk](mailto:Tess.Green@skillsforhealth.org.uk)

Thank you once again for the opportunity to respond to this consultation and I can confirm that we are happy for our response to be made public.



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