

Centre for Public Scrutiny - Health and Care Conference

Anatomy of Accountability: Governance and Scrutiny

27 June 2017 London.

The purpose of this document is to share the main points discussed at the workshop 'Building Whole System Accountability'.

Introduction

The session was facilitated by Cllr Alison Kelly, Camden Councillor, Chair of Camden's Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee and Chair of the Joint Health Overview Scrutiny Committee for Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Haringey and Islington and by Graham Prestwich, Lay Member Patient and Public Involvement, NHS Leeds North Clinical Commissioning Group

Graham and Alison began by introducing the workshop. Several groups have a role in holding health and care system leaders to account – for example scrutiny councillors, CCG lay members, provider non-executives and local Healthwatch. Although each group has a specific remit, their combined role is to provide assurance on behalf of local people that services are planned, designed and delivered in ways that meet local needs and expectations.

Delegates were encouraged to explain their different roles through common and shared themes and to share experiences of building effective relationships to overcome barriers and strengthen accountability across whole health and care systems.

Delegates worked in pairs to make the most of sharing and discussing experiences with people they would not usually meet. They then fed back key points. Clearly this did not capture all the elements of the lively and enthusiastic discussions but we give a flavour of the discussions on the day. We wanted to stimulate debate and to encourage discussions locally within local systems and at whatever level is relevant.

Delegates were from across England. Half were elected members. Half were scrutiny officers. One delegate was from NHS England.

The delegates considered three principal questions:

- What are we trying to achieve? In other words what is the problem we are trying to solve?
- What is working well locally? An opportunity to hear solutions and approaches that others have tried and to learn from their experiences
- What needs to be changed in order to achieve significant progress? And what is within your gift to change?

Q 1 What are we trying to achieve?

What are we trying to achieve?	Key Challenges
Building whole system accountability	Language: Developing and maintaining a common goal and the appropriate communications so that everyone who can contribute is encouraged to do so
Shared and agreed vision	This is about aiming to achieve a health and wellbeing service for people and citizens and far less about developing a health service for patients
Understanding goals/ relationships/systems/ boundaries	The context is becoming more difficult for citizens to understand and therefore more difficult to make a valued contribution. More effort is required to clarify the opportunities.
Pace and change	Boundaries create difficulties, and more importantly the changes that are being considered spend too much time in the 'back office' and not enough time involving citizens in the coproduction of solutions.
Transparency – using existing tools	Different systems account in different ways. This is leading to duplication in some aspects and important developments failing to be properly scrutinised in others
Proactive approach – strategic/ holistic	This is a continuation of the theme of shifting the emphasis from a health and care business that deals with problems to an outcome focussed health and wellbeing service that strives to keep people well, and to minimise ill health
Shared philosophy/principles	Requires everyone to be working towards the same common and shared goals
Co-ordination	Which is the result of effective and authentic partnerships
Concordat	How to ensure that what is shared and agreed is visible and transparent and delivered

Q 2 What is working well locally?

- Consultations on a range of topics through the Health Scrutiny process and the local Health and Wellbeing Board
- Scrutiny reviews and policy development are providing important insights into how well local processes are working.
- Collaboration across Boroughs is creating new opportunities and supports the sharing of ideas and experiences and learning.
- The national drive to encourage and support working together – Building on experiences of and learning from the Better Care Fund approach
- Positive relationships, making the effort to develop and strengthen collaboration
- Consultations of local people on what they want/place based plan/priorities
- The Health and Wellbeing Board as a leader and driver of the strategy
- Member seminars- up skill/language/issues

- Joint Health Overview Scrutiny Committees
- Scrutiny committees working more effectively together
- Communications to people to get directly involved which results in raw feedback and stories about what is working well and what needs to change.
- Common agenda setting, together and transparently

Q 3 What needs to be changed?

- H & WB Boards – missed opportunities
- Toxic exclusion of elected members and democratic accountability
- Important public documents far too long and not understandable
- Limitation of resources
- Scrutiny to go out; involve the public, meet STP leads, build relationships, bring scrutiny together (HW/HWBB/Scrutiny together – CCG).
- Not acting on the results and feedback shared

Q4 Supplementary Question: What can you do?

- Widen group of lay members directly involved
- Better and more effective use social media with and emphasis on a process to authentically capture the feedback and make sure it is acted on
- Common set of questions – sharing them across all the local stakeholders
- Work towards bring the whole system closer together through practical and working examples
- Bringing it back to account to the whole population
- Need to more effectively communicate with the public

In conclusion the delegates had a lot of issues to address and many examples of good work in progress to develop effective solutions. There were many exchanges of business cards and contact details at the end of the session. Everyone seemed encouraged to develop ways to have local conversations and strengthen local collaborative behaviours.

The facilitations wish to extend their appreciation to all the delegates for their positive and enthusiastic approach to the workshop.

Alison Kelly and Graham Prestwich June 2017