



The NHS Standard Contract – Key Points for Primary Care

Practice Management

Introduction

The NHS Standard Contract is mandated by NHS England for use by commissioners for all contracts for healthcare services other than primary care, and the contract has now been updated for 2021/22.

It's an important document for general practice as it sets out requirements on secondary care providers relating to the interface with local primary care teams. There have been reports of inconsistent implementation of the contract so we have prepared this briefing for practices to raise awareness of the key elements.

The NHS Standard Contract, and all associated documents, can be found at www.england.nhs.uk/nhs-standard-contract/21-22/.

Service Standards

Secondary Care Providers must continually review and evaluate services and must act on lessons learned. Providers must work with their local commissioners to assess by the end of September 2021, and annually thereafter, their **compliance with the interface requirements** of the contract.

The commissioners and providers will also have to agree an action plan to address any deficiencies identified by their assessment and ensure that this action plan is informed by discussion with and feedback from the relevant LMCs.

Providers and commissioners will finally have to ensure that the action plan is adopted in public by their Governing bodies, and that progress on its implementation is shared with the relevant LMCs.

Co-operation

Parties must take part in **the local Integrated Care System** to promote the NHS's "triple aim" of better health for everyone, better care for all patients, and sustainability for the NHS locally and throughout England.

Where the Provider provides community-based services, it must work with **local Primary Care Networks**, and put in place arrangements for delivery of those services by members of PCNs will be effectively integrated.

Choice and Referral

Providers must publish all acute GP Referred Services in the NHS e-Referral Service through a Directory of Service.

Providers should make sufficient appointment slots available within the **NHS e-Referral Service** to enable any service user to book an appointment for a GP Referred Service within a reasonable period via the NHS e-Referral Service.

Providers must offer clinical **advice and guidance to GPs** on potential Referrals.

Acceptance and Rejection of Referrals

Providers must accept referrals made in accordance with referral processes and clinical thresholds, but can withhold services on a number of grounds including if 'in the Provider's reasonable professional opinion is unsuitable to receive the relevant Service, for as long as they remain unsuitable'. Other grounds include no valid consent, and abusive behaviour.

Transfer of and Discharge from Care; Communication with GPs

Where there is a proposed Transfer of Care and a Shared Care Protocol is applicable, the Provider must initiate and comply with the Shared Care Protocol. Providers must issue a Discharge Summary to the Service User's GP within 24 hours.

Where a service user has a clinical need for **medication** to be supplied on discharge from inpatient or day case care, the Provider must ensure that the service user will have an adequate quantity of that medication.

Where a Service User either is admitted to hospital, or is discharged, or attends an outpatient clinic or accident and emergency service, the Provider must, where appropriate under and in accordance with Fit Note Guidance, **issue any necessary medical certificate** to prove the Service User's fitness or otherwise to work.

Help and Advice

If you work in general practice in the Humber area and would like help with issues concerning the NHS Standard Contract please [contact the LMC](#).

Humberside LMCs

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