



Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

Scrutiny Board (Health)

Date: 22 February 2011

Subject: Quality Accounts 2011

Electoral Wards Affected:

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

1.0 Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present and seek the Board's view on a range of options for commenting on the Quality Accounts of local healthcare providers for 2011.

2.0 Background

2.1 Quality Accounts were mandated by the Department of Health in 2010 for all providers of NHS care. Quality Accounts are annual public reports about the quality of services provided, and must be published by the end of June each year. The publication process requires that providers seek comment on the account from commissioners, Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) and Overview and Scrutiny Committees (OSCs). This paper sets out the requirements of service providers and commentators, and suggests options around how the Council's Scrutiny Board (Health) might be involved and provide comment.

2.2 In 2009 the Department of Health advised all providers of NHS funded health care that from 2010 onwards, in addition to their general annual report, they must publish a Quality Account. The Account should provide a summary of quality performance for the previous year and enable patients and the public to understand:

- What the organisation is doing well
- What improvements in service quality are required
- What the priorities for improvement are for the forthcoming year

- How the provider has involved service users, staff and others with an interest in the organisation in determining the priorities for improvement.

- 2.3 The Quality Account must be published by the end of June every year. Prior to publication, and as part of the assurance process, commissioning Primary Care Trusts (PCTs), Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) and Overview and Scrutiny Committees (OSCs) must be offered the opportunity to comment on the report and provide a statement regarding the account if wished. Any such statement must be included as part of the published Quality Account. The statement may be up to 1000 words in length, although Department of Health (DH) guidance suggests that 500 words is the optimum. PCTs, LINKs and OSCs must have 30 calendar days to provide a response. However, it is important to note that there is no obligation for OSCs or LINKs to provide a response or comment.
- 2.4 All providers of NHS funded Health Care are required to publish a Quality Account, with the exception of primary care providers (general practice, out of hours, dentistry and pharmacy) which means that, the Scrutiny Board (Health) might receive and be asked to comment on a number of quality accounts. This may require significant Board time. .
- 2.5 The NHS funded Health Care providers based in Leeds that are required to produce a Quality Account by June 2011 are detailed below:
- Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust
 - Leeds Partnerships Foundation Trust
 - Leeds Community Healthcare
 - Spire Hospital Leeds
 - Nuffield Hospital Leeds
 - Fountain Diagnostics
 - Commuter Walk-In Centre Leeds
- 2.6 Previously, in 2010, the Council's Scrutiny Board (Health) felt it only necessary to comment on the Quality Accounts produced by Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust (LTHT) and Leeds Partnerships Foundation Trust (LPFT) as they are Leeds' largest providers of acute and mental health care. The Board may again wish to restrict comment to these two providers for 2011.

3.0 Quality Accounts 2011 – issues for consideration

- 3.1 Timescales for commenting on Quality Accounts are tight, as the production process come towards the end of the municipal year and run up to local elections.. In order for a providers' Accounts to be published at the end of June, it is in the providers' interest to forward a draft account to commenting bodies by the end of April or as soon as possible prior to this date. The regulations specify the requirement that each provider forward the quality account to LINKs and OSCs within 30 days beginning with 1 April
- 3.2 As such, the key dates for providers are:
- 30 April – Deadline for provider to forward quality account to LINKs, OSCs and PCTs
 - 30 June – Deadline for provider to publish Quality Account

- 3.3 As in 2010, the Scrutiny Board may wish to see comments, and seek assurance, from the service commissioner (NHS Leeds) before providing a statement. This is likely to require providers to forward their quality account even earlier, which may prove difficult, as providers may not have a full year's data and therefore may not be in a position to forward a completed draft account in a timely manner. As such, this approach may further restrict the time available for the Scrutiny Board to provide a statement

Options for the Scrutiny Board

- 3.4 It should be highlighted that the Scrutiny Board is not required to provide a statement on any provider's Quality Account. However, the Scrutiny Board must be afforded the opportunity to comment if it so chooses. As such, the Scrutiny Board may wish to consider local arrangements to discharge this aspect of its role, as follows:

Option 1

- 3.5 The Scrutiny Board may opt not to receive and comment on the Quality Account of any provider of NHS funded Health Care services.

Option 2

- 3.6 The Scrutiny Board may opt to receive and comment on the Quality Account of a limited number of providers. For example, LTHT and LPFT, or any number of providers identified above, in paragraph 2.5.

- 3.7 Under this option, the Scrutiny Board may opt to formally receive and comment on Quality Accounts at a formal Board meeting, or devolve this aspect to a working group of the Board. Each of these options are likely to have an impact on the overall production timetable of the Quality Accounts and reporting of the Board's comments.

Option 2a – Full Board meeting

- 3.8 Under this option, providers forward their draft quality accounts in time for NHS Leeds to consider the account and provide a response. This is then presented with the Account to the most appropriate Scrutiny Board meeting. The Scrutiny Board makes recommendations on the content of their response which is drafted and then sent to the provider in time for inclusion in the final Quality Account. The Scrutiny Board may still choose not to issue a response

- 3.9 Due to printing timescales this option is likely to require a statement of the Scrutiny Board to be returned to providers by the end of May 2011 – which is likely to require formal approval at an additional Board meeting in May 2011. Currently, there are no plans to hold a formal Scrutiny Board (Health) meeting in May 2011, therefore an informal approval process may be necessary, with the formal comments presented to the Board after the production and/or publication deadlines of individual providers, in June 2011.

- 3.10 In addition, due to the slightly different timescales for LPFT, an earlier response date (9 May 2011) would be needed, which would require consideration at the Board meeting scheduled for 26 April 2011. It is possible that the draft Quality Account from other providers (including LTHT) may not be available for consideration at the April meeting and an additional formal meeting may still be required.

Option 2b – devolved working group (membership to be determined)

- 3.11 Under this option, providers forward their draft quality accounts in time for NHS Leeds to consider the account and provide a response (as in Option 2a). This is then presented with the Account to an appropriate working group meeting. The working group chooses to draft a response and returns it accordingly. Alternatively, the working group chooses not to issue a response
- 3.12 The Scrutiny Board (Health) is subsequently advised of the outcome of the working group, as soon as practicable, and receives any responses provided (as appropriate). Currently, as there are no plans for the Scrutiny Board to a meeting in May, it is likely that a report of the working group would be presented after the production and/or publication deadlines of individual providers, in June 2011.
- 3.13 Under this option, the Board may also wish to consider receiving providers' Quality Accounts at a joint meeting with Leeds LINK.

Option 3

- 3.14 The Scrutiny Board may opt to comment via the Chair of the Board, on the Quality Account of a limited number of providers. For example, LTHT and LPFT, or any number of providers identified above (paragraph 2.5).
- 3.15 Given the difficulties around the respective publication timetables, under this option, the Chair of the Scrutiny Board would receive and consider the draft Quality Account (including the comment of NHS Leeds, as the service commissioner) and circulate a proposed response to other Board members. Subject to any amendments, this would then be issued as the formal response of the Scrutiny Board (Health).
- 3.16 The formal response would then be reported to the Scrutiny Board for formal ratification as soon as practicable. However this would most likely be in June 2011 and most certainly after the production and/or publication deadlines of individual providers.

4.0 Recommendations

- 4.1 It is recommended that the Scrutiny Board (Health) consider the options outlined above and agree the most appropriate way forward.

5.0 Background Documents

Quality Accounts Toolkit 2010/11 – Department of Health