

SIAA Response to the Health and Sport Committee

NHS Corporate Governance Call For Views

February 2018

1. Do you trust NHS Boards to make decisions that are in the best interests of the public?

We believe NHS Boards need to be more patient-centred and community focused. The decision-making process needs to be more open, transparent and democratic. It is really important that decisions made are transparent, clear and based on public experience, participation and engagement and comply with the Scottish Health Council Participation Standard.¹

We believe that a human rights based approach should be applied to public interest decisions made at all levels, following the PANEL principles.

A good example of public participation in strategic decisions include collective advocacy which enables groups of people with a shared agenda to lobby and campaign on issues.

2. Are NHS board decisions open and transparent?

NHS Board decisions need to be more open and transparent. Regular updates on ongoing issues, board minutes and representation from all levels of staff and members of the public would help to improve openness and transparency. We believe that the Board should be represented by members from different backgrounds and organisations and should follow the democratic process.

Board members should be prepared to outline the reasons behind the decisions they make and to make this information clear and transparent. They should be approachable and accessible and channels of feedback should be made clear and accessible.

3. How accountable do you feel NHS boards are?

We believe that NHS Boards could improve their accountability – there needs to be a clear process of scrutiny applied to the Boards and their activities. There should be national scrutiny standards across all Boards and there should be greater opportunity for persons' outwith the

¹ Scottish Health Council: Participation Standard. Available at:

http://www.scottishhealthcouncil.org/patient_public_participation/participation_standard/participation_standard.aspx. Accessed: 07.02.2018

Board to contribute to Board reviews.

4. How effective are NHS boards at delivering health services and improving the health of their population?

NHS Boards could improve their service delivery and subsequent population health by engaging with professionals, staff and the public prior to service delivery, providing a clear, accessible feedback route and ensuring that data is collected from consultations and used to improve services. We believe that there needs to be a greater focus on preventative measures and steps taken to involve people in the early stages of service planning and/or redesign. In addition a human rights based approach needs to be applied to service planning and design and a full equality and a human rights impact assessment conducted and acted upon.

Regarding independent advocacy, NHS Boards have a joint duty with local authorities to ensure access to independent advocacy to individuals covered by the Mental Health Act 2003.

The Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance (SIAA) is Scotland's national membership body for advocacy organisations. The SIAA promotes, supports and defends independent advocacy in Scotland. It aims to ensure that independent advocacy is available to any person who needs it in Scotland.
SIAA is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation Charity number SC033576
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