

# East of England PCTs

## CCP STUDY: NHS CONSULTANTS' NON-CONTRACTED HOURS

### Notice of possible recommendations

The PCT Network represents the fourteen primary care trusts in the East of England. The Network wishes to respond to the Panel's Notice of Possible Recommendations insofar as they will affect *commissioners* of healthcare services. The PCTs are committed to securing a range of high quality healthcare services, offering real choice to patients.

As commissioners, the promotion of choice needs to be backed by clinically-driven service strategies and commissioning decisions. Both elements need to be reflected in the Panel's recommendations.

#### *Option 1*

The Network believes that recommendations (a) and (b) would serve to promote choice and contestability for local people. They would support the use of both approaches. The only issue may be the need to be explicit about the role of consultants in contributing to the commissioning cycle. Whilst both recommendations allow for consultants to provide clinical services, trusts might still seek to restrict their involvement, for example, in the development of clinical strategies which might lead to contesting a service.

Similarly and with respect to (c), the Network remains concerned that the exceptions proposed to the prohibition would limit the ability of PCTs to engage with a range of clinicians in the commissioning process. Whilst the brief for the Panel's study relates to the PRCC, PCTs also have to be mindful of the competences described in World Class Commissioning, especially competence 4 on clinical collaboration, competence 7 on stimulating the market and competence 8 on promoting innovation and improvement. The exceptions appear to limit choice based on real clinical engagement in commissioning and procurement. The Department of Health's new commercial operating model will encourage PCTs to increase their engagement with the market, but for this to be meaningful and innovative, PCTs will wish to be assured that there is strong clinical leadership within current and potential providers, not just in the delivery of diagnostic and treatment services, but in the planning and review of such services.

#### *Option 2*

The Network would support the inclusion of the appropriate recommendations in the NHS Consultants' Contract.

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