

(Our Ref: ss/sh  
**Sent via email**

Health & Wellbeing Board & Overview  
and Scrutiny Panels (via supporting  
officers)

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27<sup>th</sup> June 2013

Dear Colleagues,

## **Re: Review of Specialised Commissioning Service Specifications**

As you know NHS England (via groups of clinical, commissioning and patient experts called 'Clinical Reference Groups') have been developing service specifications for Specialised Services, for which it holds direct commissioning responsibility. I am writing to let you know what is now being asked of providers and to seek your continued commitment to support the process.

As you may recall a range of stakeholders, including local authority colleagues, patients, carer and the public, were given the opportunity to comment on draft versions of the service specifications over the Christmas period. As a result, specifications were then refined in response to the comments that were received.

Links to the refined services specifications are below

<http://www.england.nhs.uk/npc-crg/>.

The next stage is to determine *local* compliance with each of the service specifications. Hence, providers of specialised services are now being asked to assess their services against the specifications by the 19 July 2013 and upload this information to a database called Unify2. It is appreciated that this is a tight timescale but as there has already been considerable provider involvement in the draft service specification reviews so we do not expect this to be too challenging. The Unify2 tool asks providers to answer a series of specific questions. These questions have been drawn out of the service specifications by the respective Clinical Reference Groups and are aimed at ensuring a nationally consistent assessment process.

I have attached the national timescales associated with this process, which clearly outlines the requirement for the Clinical Commissioning Groups and local authority colleagues to support the assessment and review of the local impact of any service changes required to fully implement each service specification.

As previously stated, the timescale for the initial service reviews is tight. Should there be any change to the deadline or the programme of work specified in the attached milestones outline we will let you know as soon as we can. Meanwhile, my team are available to support any specific questions that your organisation may have. In the first instance please address any questions to our Head of Stakeholder Engagement, Lou

Farbus, on lfarbus@nhs.net.

Contd..

Thank you for your support in this matter.

With Best Wishes

Yours sincerely,

**Steve Sylvester**  
**Head of Specialised Commissioning**  
**NHS England: Bristol, North Somerset, Somerset and South**  
**Gloucestershire Area Team**

cc: Linda Prosser, Director of Commissioning, BNSSSG AT  
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Sunita Berry, Network & Senate Associate Director

Specialised Commissioning Team

Att: Project Milestone Measure