

## Summary – the Health and Social Care Act

Status: received Royal Assent 27 March. Most of the new system comes into force on 1 April 2013

The Health and Social Care Act makes a number of changes to the architecture of the NHS, public health and social care by:

- introducing GP commissioning – Primary Care Trusts will be replaced with Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs). CCGs will hold substantial commissioning budgets (around 80 percent of the total NHS budget) procure medical services from NHS trusts, independent providers or charities
- introducing a national NHS Commissioning Board to set CCGs' budgets and hold them to account for obtaining value for money and improving results for patients
- transferring responsibility for local public health services to local authorities and creating Public Health England (a new national body for public health which will carry out the Secretary of State's public health functions as an executive agency of the Department of Health)
- creating local Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBs) with representatives from CCGs, Local Healthwatch, councillors, local authority directors of public health, children's services and adult social services. HWBs will lead the preparation of the Joint Strategic Assessment, Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for their local area.
- replacing Local Involvement Networks with Local Healthwatch organisations. Local Healthwatch organisations will involve local people in the commissioning, scrutiny and provision of health and social care services.
- creating Health Watch England - a committee of the Care Quality Commission which will represent the views of health and social care service users, members of the public and Local Healthwatch organisations and provide information and advice to CCGs and other organisations
- abolishing NHS trusts and requiring all NHS trusts to become foundation trusts (either by applying to Monitor or merging with an existing NHS foundation trust) by 2016 at the latest
- extending the remit of NICE (and renaming NICE as the National Institute of Health and Care Excellence) to cover social care as well as NHS services
- introducing a new role for Monitor as the economic regulator of all healthcare services and giving the Secretary of State power to issue regulations which may require Monitor to regulate adult social care services
- giving local authorities scope to change their health scrutiny arrangements
- transferring the duty to arrange independent mental health advocacy services from Primary Care Trusts to local authorities

