

Guidelines for Categorisation of Scrutiny Topics

County Committee or County Task Group

Defined as such if:

- The issue pertains to the whole of the county
- Where the structure of the health organisation is based beyond one PCT area; or beyond the county's boundary (e.g. Wiltshire Ambulance Service, Acute Hospital Trusts, AWP Mental Health Trust, etc.)
- It's an issue which may require referral to the Secretary of State

(N.B. Detailed work is likely to be undertaken by a Task Group with the County Committee still responsible for the overall management of the system).

Local Task Group

- Issue contained within one PCT area (local)
- Issue considered 'parochial'
- The effect of the service change is centralised in a distinct area within the county.
- Pertains to services 'commissioned' by that PCT, including acute services, but where impact is limited to a particular population or group

Patients' Forums

(Also see detail on the role of Patients' Forums that follows)

- The impact of the change is limited to small groups of individuals
- Involves scrutiny of GP surgeries or other practitioner services
- Monitoring the duty of the NHS to involve and consult (Section 11)
- Deals with complaints about the NHS where advice or advocacy support is required.

Role of Patients' Forums

Role:

- To monitor and review services commissioned by PCTs
- Monitoring of practitioner services (e.g. pharmacists, doctors, opticians).
- Empower local communities (esp. excluded groups).
- Engaging in public decision making
- Monitoring the duty of the NHS to involve and consult (Section 11).
- Providing Independent Advocacy Services.
- Make available information about making a complaint about the NHS.
- Representing the views of the public on matters affecting their health.

Powers:

- Inspecting NHS premises.
- Referring matters to Health OSCs
- Obtain information from NHS organisations within 20 working days.

Criteria to Help Prioritisation of Issues

Members will need to check with the Health Scrutiny Officer as to whether impact assessment tool scores have been received.

In the instance where it is NOT “substantial variation” the merits of a request will be based upon meeting the following criteria.

The Member Request Form (See Appendix D) will need to be completed with written account of evidence which meets the following criteria:

- How will the topic help address the needs and health inequalities of local communities?
- Does the topic require consideration in response to a PCT consultation on service reconfiguration?
- Will this issue represent scrutiny of agencies beyond the NHS for the benefit of the Wiltshire health community?
- Will the cumulative effect of service reconfigurations have a detrimental impact on the wellbeing of the community?
- How much added value will result from the scrutiny of this topic?
- What scope will there be for altering the decision of a health agency and what the intention for scrutinising such an issue might be?

Confirm that the request does NOT refer to:

- *A temporary service change (as described within Section 11 Guidance)*
- *A case where Health & Safety issues take precedence .*
- *An issue that is currently under scrutiny elsewhere either via Patients’ Forum network, Council Cabinet system, Wiltshire Strategic Board or National Inspection Agency.*