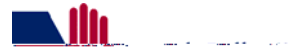


RCN Policy Unit



Health Scrutiny

- 1.1 This short briefing note describes how the RCN can work with the local authority Health Scrutiny process to influence the local health economy; influence local politicians and establish new partnership working opportunities.
- 1.2 Since January 2003, all local councils with responsibility for social services (County Councils, Unitary Authorities & London Borough Councils) have the power to scrutinise health services, through **overview and scrutiny committees** or **OSCs**.

Legislation

- 2.1 The NHS is compelled by the Health and Social Care Act 2011 to consult local OSCs on any proposals it may have for 'substantial variation' in services, whilst the Local Authority (Overview and Scrutiny Committees Health Scrutiny Functions) Regulations 2012 made under the Act provide specific details of the health scrutiny function.

Context

- 3.1 Overview and scrutiny of health is seen as an important part of the Government's commitment to place patients and the public at the centre of health services. It is the fundamental way by which democratically elected community leaders may voice the views of their local constituents and require local NHS bodies to listen and respond. In this way local authorities can assist to reduce health inequalities and promote and support health improvement.

Powers and functions

- 4.1 Health OSCs can way that they monitor the ongoing operation and planning of local health services^e

(DoH) issued guidance in Guidance) to assist with the planning and development of effective overview and

to review any matter relating to the planning, provision and operation of health



Health OSC – what

- an overview of issues of concern to OSC
- provide a briefing on the Scrutiny agenda and the council's 'own' health agenda – past & present
- provide a timetable of any forthcoming