



RCN Policy Unit

Policy Briefing 03/2007

Social Enterprise Update

February 2007

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Introduction

The government White Paper on the future direction of health services
“closer to home”, *Our Health, Our care, Our Say*¹

lead the way in delivering innovative services. They wanted applications in three specific areas;

- Health and/or social care professionals seeking to form a social

vary from those of the Secretary of State in terms of the level and priorities for investment in education. This was amply illustrated when, as NHS Trusts and PCTs dramatically reduced opportunities for staff to undertake post registration training and education due to financial deficits, the Department of Health withdrew financial sponsorship of an intensive, academically credible scheme to promote nurse entrepreneurs. Albeit only 13 places were available in 2005 but the fact that there were more than 600 applications for the course at the Said Business School in Oxford shows how committed nurses are to developing as social entrepreneurs! The DH have, though, given support to schemes such as *Flying Start* at the University of Central Lancashire which will enable 40 individuals to pursue their ambitions to launch specific social enterprise projects. Each of the 25 Pathfinder organisations have been granted a place on *Flying Start but*, given the massive shortfall in experience and understanding of the workings and management of social enterprise in public services this does appear to be a drop in an ever-growing ocean and an indication of the need for further and more strategic investment in the development of nurse entrepreneurs.

need to be certain that this new model of provision has a sustainable part to play in the future of health and social care and their concerns and expectations need to be addressed. If social enterprise is really about sustainability and community engagement; if it is truly a means for achieving greater flexibility and more person-centred services, then it must surely be worthy of a fully funded programme of implementation that includes minimising the risks to public sector employees; investing in the education and research needed to verify its long term viability; and identifying the cumulative benefits that it brings to patient services, compared with the previous models of state-only provision.

Conclusion

Whilst acknowledging the potential for Social Enterprise to develop, compliment and enhance public sector provision of health and social care services, the RCN considers that;

- Social Enterprise models of service provision should compliment rather than replace successful public sector provision,
- Social Enterprise models of service should not be encouraged simply as a means of driving down costs of provision of health and social care,
- The terms and conditions of employment for public sector workers should not be put “at risk” as a result of their transfer into Social Enterprise models of provision,
- The future development of social enterprise and nurse entrepreneurs will depend upon an increasing investment in education, training and skills development for existing practitioners and the NHS workforce of the future,
- Nurses and public sector staff should be involved at the earliest possible stage in any proposal to re-provide services through a Social Enterprise model and have a continuing place in the governance of the service.

We furthermore believe that managerial and business issues relating the successful operation of a social enterprise need to be consider within the context of NHS provision, including;

These represent some of the features that RCN will be considering as part of their survey of the operation and development of social enterprise in health and social care.

If you wish to discuss any of the issues in this briefing or other matters related to social enterprise and nursing, please contact Colin Beacock at colin.beacock@rcn.org.uk

Appendix 1

On 10 October 2006, the Social Enterprise Unit invited applications to be part of its social enterprise pathfinder programme. Pathfinders will be eligible to apply for financial support and will have access to wider support, for example business advice and training. The learning from the pathfinders will be shared across health and social care, so that others can benefit from their experience.

The closing date for social enterprise pathfinder applications was 28 November 2006. The successful pathfinders are as follows.

Lorica Learning Disabilities, is based in Pulborough, Sussex. It proposes setting up a Community Interest Company to provide services for people with learning difficulties and their families, including helping support young

Phoenix Care Agency based in London will provide health and social care services to vulnerable adults, including emotional well-being, art activities, horticultural therapies, training, support to employment, and carer's services.

Healthy Living Centre in Southend is proposing developing a healthy living centre with a hub for integrated children's services into a social enterprise. Services will include primary care, children's services, adult mental health, and health enhancing activities.

Lifestyle Solutions in Thurrock will be providing services for disabled people and people with learning difficulties, including social and emotional support, the provision of personal assistants, respite for carers and support towards independent living.

Leicester Homeless Primary Care Service is proposing providing primary medical services to vulnerable patients. Its primary health care centre will be co-located with a 42 bed night shelter and a YMCA drop in centre.

Based in Rushcliffe, Principia Partners in Health is a coalition of GP practices, community professionals, community pharmacy and local people. Principia will provide primary care, including extended hours access, and community services to a population of 118,000.

Willow Bank Community Interest Company based in Stoke on Trent will provide General Medical Services and one stop care, with a particular focus on vulnerable groups including lone-parent families, local homeless people and BME communities.

Coventry based Health Equality Lifestyle Plan proposes transforming a successful healthy living centre into a social enterprise.

The Open Door is proposing providing a wide range of primary care services for vulnerable people in the Grimsby area, in addition to support into employment, gardening and music therapies, exercise and cooking skills.

Hull based City Health Care Partnership Ltd will provide all primary and community health services across the city through a social enterprise.

Salford Health Matters will provide essential medical services and community based enhanced health services, to a population of 12,600. The organisation also aims to provide training and development that benefits the local community and to support social enterprise activity with a wider health benefit in the community.

Cumbrian based Alston Healthcare is proposing to provide community health services, including e-health services, across a rural area, with a particular focus on older people

Delivering Connected Care in Hartlepool will provide integrated health and social care services, bringing these together with housing, education, employment, community safety and transport, in an area of high deprivation.

DCP is a third sector organisation that will set up a social enterprise in Newcastle to deliver services to people living with dementia, and their carers.

Based in Middlesbrough, the Developing Partners Project aims to develop and provide user led training for health workers, and user led research and evaluation of health services.

The Forest of Dean Health Enterprise Trust proposes providing community health and social services in a rural area, including the operation of existing community hospitals.

London based Service User Led Direct Payments is planning to set up a service user led social enterprise to support and manage direct payments and individualised budgets.

Maternal Link Birth Centres proposes providing antenatal, postnatal and community midwifery services at home or in birth centres in the Trafford area.

Secure HealthCare is bidding to provide prison and offender health care services in HMP Wandsworth, and will consider how to develop and implement innovative ways of delivering care to this complex population and how these services could be applied elsewhere.