

Glossary

Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

Acute care

Care for a disease or illness with rapid onset, severe symptoms and brief duration.

Advocacy

Help given to people to enable them to express their opinions, eg about what community care services they require, and/or rights to which they or their advocates believe them to be entitled. An advocate can be a friend or relative authorised to speak or act on behalf of a person.

Assessment

The collection and interpretation of data to determine an individual's need for health, personal and social care and support services, undertaken with the individual, his/her relatives or representatives, and relevant professionals.

Best Value (BV)

A legal requirement of all local authorities to make sure that they deliver value for money across their services. This is implemented by carrying out reviews, consultations and monitoring of BV performance indicators.

Block Contract

A contract which guarantees a given volume of business with the service provider, usually enabling the contractor to obtain a reduction in the unit cost of service provided.

Capital

Expenditure on the acquisition of land, premises (including new and refurbished), equipment and vehicles, etc. Expenditure is regarded as capital if it is in excess of £5,000.

Care Package

A collective name for the service(s) a person can expect to receive following assessment.

Carer

A person providing care who is not employed to do so by an agency or organisation. A carer is often a relative or friend looking after someone at home who is frail or ill; the carer can be of any age.

Care Management

The process of meeting needs at an individual level, which is sometimes known as micro-commissioning.

Care Trusts

A type of NHS body which combines NHS healthcare services and certain delegated functions from local authorities, including personal social services.

Children's Trusts

Children's Trusts are organisational arrangements which bring together strategic planners from relevant sectors to identify where children and young people need outcomes to be improved in a local area and to plan services accordingly.

Choose and Book

Currently being introduced throughout England, Choose and Book is an NHS initiative that allows people to make their first outpatient appointment, after discussion with their GP, at a time, date and place that suits them.

Clinical Governance

A national framework through which NHS bodies are accountable for continuously improving the quality and clinical effectiveness of the services they provide.

Commissioning

The process of specifying, securing and monitoring services to meet people's needs at a strategic level. This applies to all services, whether they are provided by a local authority, NHS, other public agencies or by the private or voluntary sectors.

Community care

Care or support provided by social services departments and/or the NHS to assist people in their day-to-day living.

Consortium (or Buying Consortium)

An arrangement to optimise buying power and make best use of scarce commissioning skills by aggregating the purchasing requirements of more than one public sector organisation.

Contestability

The process of ensuring that there is a viable market of alternative providers by reducing barriers to market entry and encouraging competition.

Contract

A mutual agreement enforceable by law.

Contracting

Putting the purchasing of services in a legally binding agreement.

Continuing Care

Healthcare, provided over a long period of time, to meet physical or mental health needs which have arisen as the result of disability, accident or illness. It can be provided in hospital, or a person can be supported in their own home, or in residential or nursing homes.

Decommissioning

The process of planning and managing a reduction in service activity or terminating a contract in line with commissioning objectives.

Delayed Discharge

When it is intended to discharge a patient from hospital as they no longer require acute medical treatment, but they are retained, as no suitable alternative is available.

Day Care

Day-time care usually provided in a centre away from a person's home, covering a wide range of services from social and educational activities to training, therapy and personal care.

Direct Payments

Payments giving recipients the means of controlling their own care at home, allowing more choice and flexibility. They are regular monthly payments from social services enabling people to employ their own personal assistants for care, instead of receiving help arranged by social services.

Domiciliary Care

Services provided to people at home to assist them in living independently within the community, eg, meals on wheels, community nursing and home helps.

Drug Action Team (DAT)

A multi-agency team, which commissions and is accountable for local drug treatment (and alcohol) and prevention programmes.

eProcurement

Conducting procurement via electronic means i.e. internet, intranet, or electronic data interchange (EDI).

EU

European Union

Extra Care Housing

Also known as very sheltered housing, it is a style of housing and care for older people that falls between traditional sheltered housing and residential care homes.

Floating Support

Housing related support that is not tied to a particular property.

Form of tender

The document provided by the purchasing agency on which the service provider or supplier makes its formal offer.

General Medical Services (GMS)

This is one type of contract Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) can have with primary care providers. It is a nationally negotiated contract that sets out the core range of services provided by family doctors (GPs) and their staff.

GPwSI (General Practitioners with Special Interests)

General Practitioners with Special Interests supplement their generalist role by delivering a clinical service beyond the normal scope of general practice. They may undertake advanced procedures or develop specific services.

Green Paper

A preliminary discussion or consultation document often issued by the government in advance of the formulation of policy.

Home Improvement Agencies (HIA)

Agencies that help vulnerable people maintain their home by advising and assisting them to obtain repair and renovation grants and funding. Often known as Care and Repair services.

Housing Related Support Services

Support services which are provided to a person for a purpose of developing that person's capacity to live independently in accommodation, or sustaining his or her capacity to do so.

Independent sector

An umbrella term for all non-statutory organisations delivering public care, including a wide range of private companies and voluntary organisations.

Individual budgets

Individual budgets bring together a variety of income streams from different public care agencies to provide a sum for an individual, who has control over the way it is spent to meet his or her care needs.

Intermediate Care Services

Care which bridges hospital and home care and is often rehabilitative.

Joint Commissioning

The process in which two or more organisations act together to co-ordinate the commissioning of services, taking joint responsibility for the translation of strategy into action.

Joint Purchasing

Two or more agencies co-ordinating the actual buying of services, generally within the context of joint commissioning.

Local Area Agreement (LAA)

A Local Area Agreement is a three-year agreement that sets out the priorities for a local area in certain policy fields as agreed between central government, the local authority and Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). The agreement is made up of outcomes, indicators and targets aimed at delivering a better quality of life for people through improving performance on a range of national and local priorities.

Local Delivery Plan (LDP)

A plan that every PCT prepares and agrees with its Strategic Health Authority (SHA) on how to invest its funds to meet its local and national targets, and improve services. It allows PCTs to plan and budget for delivery of services over a three-year period.

Long-term conditions

Those conditions (for example, diabetes, asthma and arthritis) that cannot, at present, be cured but whose progress can be managed and influenced by medication and other therapies.

Macro-commissioning

The process of meeting needs at a strategic level for whole groups of service users and/or whole populations.

Micro-commissioning

The process of meeting needs at an individual level.

Most economically advantageous tender (MEAT)

The criteria, other than price, that a purchasing agency can take into account when awarding a contract, such as technical merit or quality.

National Minimum Standards (NMS)

Standards set by the Department of Health for a range of services, including care homes, domiciliary care agencies and adult placement schemes.

National Priorities Guidance

Guidance issued annually by the Department of Health to determine national priorities in the development of local services.

National Service Framework (NSF)

Department of Health guidance that defines evidence-based standards and good practice in a clinical area or for a patient group. Examples include mental health, coronary heart disease and older people.

Negotiated tender

A tender obtained from a single contractor, service provider or supplier, the terms, conditions or value of which have been determined by a process of negotiation.

NHS Direct

NHS Direct provides 24-hour access to health information and clinical advice, via telephone (0845 46 47 in England), as well as a website (www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk) and an interactive digital TV service (NHS Direct Interactive).

NHS Foundation Trusts (FTs)

NHS hospitals that are run as independent, public benefit corporations, controlled and run locally. Foundation Trusts have increased freedoms regarding their options for capital funding to invest in delivery of new services.

NHS Walk-in Centres

NHS Walk-in Centres are centres staffed by nurses that offer fast and convenient access to treatment and information without needing an appointment.

Non-statutory Sector

Voluntary, independent and private sector provision.

Partnering

A relationship between purchasers and providers of goods and services throughout the supply chain which is designed to maximise the effectiveness of each participant's resources.

Patients' Forums (or Patient and Public Involvement Forums)

Patient-led organisations, established by the NHS Reform and Healthcare Professions Act 2002, for every trust and PCT. Their functions include monitoring the quality of services and seeking the views of patients and carers about those services.

Payment by Results (PBR)

A scheme that sets fixed prices (a tariff) for clinical procedures and activity in the NHS whereby all trusts are paid the same for equivalent work.

Performance Indicators (PIs)

Measures used to judge whether objectives have been met. Various PIs exist including Best Value, Supporting People, Audit Commission, NHS, and locally set PIs.

Personal Medical Services (PMS) contract

This is one type of contract PCTs can have with primary care providers. This contract is locally negotiated with practices.

Practice based Commissioning (PbC)

Practice based commissioning gives GPs direct responsibility for managing the funds that the PCT has, to pay for hospital and other care for the GP practice population.

Primary care

The collective term for all services which are people's first point of contact with the NHS.

Primary Care Trusts (PCTs)

Locally managed free-standing primary care NHS bodies, responsible for delivering health care and health improvements to local residents. They commission or directly provide a range of community health services as part of their functions.

Procurement

The process of acquiring goods, works and services, covering both acquisition from third parties and from in-house providers.

Providers

Any person, group of people or organisation supplying goods or services. Providers may be in the statutory or non-statutory sectors.

Public Service Agreement (PSA)

An agreement negotiated between central government and a local authority to deliver improved outcomes in return for greater freedom in the means of delivery, and financial incentives. It specifies how public funds will be used to ensure value for money.

Purchasing

The process of securing or buying services.

Purchaser

A budget-holder who contracts to buy a service from a provider.

Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF)

Part of the contract PCTs have with GPs. It is nationally negotiated and rewards best practice and improving quality.

Registered Social Landlord (RSL)

Rented housing provider that is registered with the Housing Corporation to provide 'not for profit' social housing. Most, but not all, RSLs are housing associations.

Respite Care

Help to carers to give them a temporary break from the care they provide, which may be for very short periods of a few hours or for longer periods of time.

Secondary care

The collective term for services to which a person is referred after first point of contact. Usually this refers to hospitals in the NHS offering specialised medical services and care (outpatient and inpatient services).

Service Level Agreements (SLAs)

Written undertakings agreed between purchasing and providing agencies.

Single assessment process (SAP)

An overarching assessment of older people's care needs to which the different agencies providing care contribute.

Spot purchasing

A method of purchasing services for individuals to achieve the most flexible responses to an individual's needs.

Statutory body

An organisation set up as required by an Act of Parliament or other legislative body. The statutory duties of these organisations are laid out in legislation.

Step-down care

Part of intermediate care facilities that are outside acute hospitals, enabling people who strongly value their independence to leave acute hospital and get ready to return home.

Step-up care

Part of intermediate care facilities that are outside acute hospitals, enabling people who strongly value their independence to receive more support than is available at home.

Strategic Health Authority (SHA)

The local headquarters of the NHS, responsible for ensuring that national priorities are integrated into local plans and for ensuring that PCTs are performing well. They are the link between the Department of Health and the NHS.

Supporting People programme

A programme for funding housing related support services to help vulnerable people live independently in their own tenancies.

Tariff

A set price for each type of procedure carried out in the NHS, for example a hip replacement.

Tender

A formal offer to provide services as a response to a specification, usually for a stated price or in accordance with a schedule of stated prices.

Tenderer

A person or body that has, or been invited to, submit a tender.

Third sector

Includes the full range of non-public, non-private organisations which are non-governmental and 'value-driven'; that is, motivated by the desire to further social, environmental or cultural objectives rather than to make a profit.

Universal services

Services provided for the whole community, including education and health, housing, leisure facilities and transport.

Voluntary and community sector

An 'umbrella term', referring to registered charities as well as non-charitable non-profit organisations, associations, self-help groups and community groups, which operate on a non-profit-making basis, to provide help and support to the group of people they exist to serve. They may be local or national and they may employ staff or depend entirely on volunteers.

White Paper

Documents produced by the government setting out details of future policy on a particular subject.