

Dear Councillor,

reject the Accountable Care System

We attended the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) on 11 January, and were pleased to participate in the debate which the Mayor allowed at the outset of the meeting. We accepted the invitation to propose wording for a motion to Full Council, as the Mayor expressed the belief that our views were compatible with the course that the Council is actually following.

Sadly, the motion from the Mayor and Cllr Brant to be taken on 24 January, disregards our key points. We urge you to vote against it in its current form, for four reasons:

- the Council is developing an Accountable Care System via the Liverpool Integrated Care Partnership Group;
- Labour Party policy, agreed unanimously on 26 September, unequivocally rejects Accountable Care Systems;
- the LICPG would make NHS organisations and private sector providers accountable to each other, introduce a “risk/gain share agreement” and “population health management”;
- no evidence in favour of these proposals has been put to the public, healthworkers and their unions for consultation.

Liverpool City Council is developing an Accountable Care System

The Cheshire and Merseyside Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) mentions Accountable Care 32 times. On 1 December 2016, the HWB rejected the STP and the Mayor stated “the proposals within the STP are rejected by the Council and this Board, because it fails to address the key issues facing our residents and their health in the years to come”.

On 22 June 2017, the HWB approved a report advocating an ACS based on fully integrated community services.[1] The HWB then stated, in response to a question from Sam Semoff, “There is no connection between the STP and any Liverpool developed Accountable Care System between the Council and the NHS”.

On 10 July, the HWB Joint Commissioning Group advocated an Integrated Partnership Group to address issues of Governance for the development of Accountable Care in Liverpool. [2]

On 12 September, Liverpool CCG discussed Establishing an Accountable Care System, with an Update on establishing an Integrated Partnership Group under the Health and Wellbeing Board. [3]

On 21 September the HWB adopted plans for a Liverpool Integrated Care Partnership Group (LICPG), with a timetable aimed at formal organisational proposals by March 2018. [4]

Labour Party policy rejects Accountable Care Systems

Composite 8, adopted unanimously at Labour Conference on 26 September 2017, unequivocally rejected Accountable Care. It includes “Labour opposes ACSs” and “This Conference Calls on our Party to restore our NHS by reversing All privatisation and permanently halting STPs and ACSs”.

LICPG

According to the LICPG plan adopted by the HWB on 21 September, “all providers who provide care in the City will have accountability for delivery of outcomes... and to each other for this delivery”. This means private sector and NHS organisations will each be accountable to all the others. Also, “Through an agreed risk/gain share all partners will commit to supporting the health and social care system”. This means an agreement between NHS and private sector care providers to share the risk and gain across the system. Further, the Partnership will “focus on prevention and population health management”. This risks the diversion of NHS funds from the delivery of healthcare to the achievement of population targets through a “whole population budget”, a feature of Accountable Care models.

No Consultation

There has been no consultation on any of these proposals. An informed public debate and formal consultation including the public, healthworkers and their unions, should come before any decision to develop plans with far-reaching implications for the NHS as a universal, comprehensive service, publicly provided, publicly accountable, funded through general taxation, free at the point of need with decisions taken by clinicians on clinical grounds.

Labour was right to reject Accountable Care. Now Liverpool City Council should do the same.

Yours,

Dr Alex Scott-Samuel
Sue Ferguson
Lesley Mahmood
Felicity Dowling
Greg Dropkin

Notes

[1] <http://councillors.liverpool.gov.uk/documents/g15901/Public%20reports%20pack%2022nd-Jun-2017%2014.00%20Liverpool%20Health%20and%20Wellbeing%20Board.pdf?T=10> [see pdf p20-29]

[2] <http://www.liverpoolccg.nhs.uk/media/2670/website-lccg-governing-body-tuesday-12th-september-2017-papers-pack.pdf> [see pdf p31]

[3] <http://www.liverpoolccg.nhs.uk/media/2670/website-lccg-governing-body-tuesday-12th-september-2017-papers-pack.pdf> [see pdf p29]

[4] <http://councillors.liverpool.gov.uk/documents/g15903/Public%20reports%20pack%2021st-Sep-2017%2014.00%20Liverpool%20Health%20and%20Wellbeing%20Board.pdf?T=10> [see pdf p176 - 186]