

ONE YEAR ON... what they were saying about ACOs

(xii) Northumberland CCG set to hand over to 'Accountable Care Organisation'

As part of a national Vanguard inspired initiative and in what is being heralded as a first in the NHS, Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group is working towards handing over its budget and nearly all of its functions to a provider led ie an "Accountable Care Organisation" (ACO). The proposal is part of Northumberland CCG's work to overhaul its models of care and contracting. This would clearly represent a very substantial reduction of the CCG's functions, and a radical move away from the current commissioner/provider divide. The plan is to establish a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) organisation, to which both the CCG and primary care budgets for the geography in question would be delegated.

The SPV would be akin to an ACO and similar to the provider networks being developed in the United States to take on substantial delegated risk and responsibility for the planning and funding services for defined population catchments. It is understood the SPV would be jointly governed by Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust together with representatives of Primary Care, Public Health, and others in the area. It is understood governance per sé is being designed to ensure that population health needs and out of hospital care are prioritised. The expected start date for the new model is April 2017. However, some elements may be run in shadow form in 2016.

Impact and consequences in relation to 'North of Tyne' as a whole are being addressed, albeit may prove to be rather problematical under the given circumstances.

The Chairman will lead discussion on the key issues that most understandably beckon from the perspective of the impact on the local health economy.

From Newcastle Hospital Board meeting papers for September 2015 http://www.newcastle-hospitals.org.uk/downloads/Board%20of%20directors/September_2015_A4i_Executive_Report_-_Sept_15.doc