

# Clinical Commissioning Groups and effective engagement

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At the centre of the Health and Social Care Bill are proposals to set up Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs). The timeline is tight, with the expectation that CCGs will be operating in full shadow mode by April 2012. By April 2013, CCGs are to become statutory bodies.

These changes affect **all GPs** as CCGs will be accountable to their constituent practices, who will be responsible for the decisions the CCG takes on their behalf. Engagement with the local profession will therefore be central to the success of a CCG.

With the pace of change moving at startling speed, it is essential that CCGs are actively engaged with key stakeholders from the outset. This will form part of whether a CCG is deemed ready and authorised to hold commissioning responsibilities.

### The BMA View:

- **All GPs who work in a CCG area should be eligible to stand for election to the CCG board.** We believe all GPs have a valuable contribution to make to the work of a CCG. This would give commissioning groups access to the widest range of talent, essential to the success of clinical commissioning.
- **All GPs who work in the CCG area should be eligible to vote in elections to the CCG, on the basis of one-GP-one-vote.** Electoral processes must be inclusive of sessional and locum GPs as well as partners.
- **To be effective as clinical commissioners it is essential that the CCG retains the confidence of its member practices.** All GPs will be responsible for the decisions made by their CCG, and therefore mechanisms for holding the CCG to account are needed. If a CCG loses the confidence of its members then the practices must be able to pose a vote of confidence for an individual on the Board or the whole Board.
- **All GPs should understand the importance of engagement with their CCG.** Whilst CCGs have a responsibility to communicate with their constituent practices and local profession, all GPs, including sessional and locum GPs, should make efforts to keep up to date with developments and decisions made by their CCG in order to successfully hold them to account. It is vital that robust communications are established with all GPs in the CCG area.
- **Local Medical Committees (LMCs) are the only statutory body that represent GPs and should play a pivotal role in supporting and upholding these processes.** LMCs need to ensure their practices are fully engaged and that the CCG is supporting fully inclusive democratic processes. LMCs should ensure that all GPs in the area are kept informed of developments and understand the importance of engagement with their CCGs. CCGs should remain actively engaged with all GPs and ensure that commissioning developments are communicated.