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Dear Colleague

**Transfer of commissioning responsibilities of the Healthy Child 0-5 Programme from NHS England to local authorities by October 2015.**

Currently NHS England has responsibility for commissioning the Public Health, Healthy Child Programme 0-5 years as part of the section 7a mandate of the Health and Social Care act (2012).

As you will be aware the commissioning responsibilities for these Public Health services will transfer fully to local government by October 2015, enabling local government to integrate commissioning for 0-5 year olds with commissioning for 5-19 year olds.

In order to achieve this, the Wessex Area Team propose forming local transition groups with each Local Authority (LA) and partners to plan and execute the safe and effective transfer of these commissioning arrangements.

Nationally, arrangements have already been developed through a task and finish group of the Children's Health and Wellbeing Partnership, of which both NHS England and Department of Health (DH) are members. The DH will retain responsibility for system assurance and due diligence for the transfer of responsibilities to local government.

As part of next steps in driving this work forward the national task and finish group are working to following milestones:

March – May 2014	Planning work streams including communications
June - July 2014	Initial discussions with LA regarding financial allocations Planned information workshop for partners
September 2014	Engagement with partners on Mandate
November 2014	Mandate agreed
December 2014	LA allocations announced

Commissioned services included in the transition are:

Health Visiting, a workforce of specialist community public health nurses who deliver the universal 0-5 Healthy Child programme. They provide expert advice, support and interventions to families with children in the first years of life, and help empower parents to make decisions that affect their family's future health and wellbeing. This service is led by health visitors and supported by a skill mix team. The service is central to delivering public health outcomes for children.

Family Nurse Partnership (where there is or is planned to be a service): an intensive, evidence based, structured, home visiting programme, which is offered to first time parents under the age of 20. A specially trained family nurse visits the mother regularly from early pregnancy until the baby is 2 years old and builds a close, supportive relationship with the family.

It should be noted that Child Health Information Systems will continue to be commissioned by NHS England until 2020 when it is expected that this responsibility will also be transferred to LAs.

To start the transition process locally I would request that you and your organisation identify any existing children and young people group into which you feel this work would naturally fit or, alternatively, let me know if you feel a new group needs to be created.

I would like to suggest that membership of this group would include representatives from LA Children's services, Human Resources, Finance, Public Health, local CCGs and current providers of the services in your area. It would be helpful if, as part of your response you list individuals from your areas that you feel would be suitable representatives, the dates of meetings of any identified appropriate group already in existence and a lead contact from your organisation.

Once a group has been identified or individuals nominated I will ensure draft terms of reference and agenda for the initial meeting are distributed to group members.

Due to the short timeframe, may I ask that you reply with your recommendations by May 23rd as I would plan that groups commence by July to align with the planned national workshops.

Thank you in advance for your support in this matter and I look forward to working with you and your team in the near future.

Yours sincerely

Sarah

**Sarah Stringer**

Commissioning Manager Public Health Commissioning  
NHS England