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Date: 20 February 2007

Supplementary Information

Mr. Nabil Manzoor,
Senior Consultant,
Aspiren Limited,
(replied by e-mail)

Dear Nabil,

Outcomes in Community Care

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the consultation. Attached are the comments from the West Dunbartonshire Partnership on the latest iteration of the National Outcome Measures.

Having been part of the evolutionary process that has brought us to this point, we fully understand the complexity of facilitating and co-ordinating the multiplicity of inputs that have been generated from the viewpoints and foci of all the agencies involved. It is therefore perhaps inevitable that in a bid to try to accommodate as many of these competing stances as possible, there can be a degree of slippage from the initial purpose of the exercise.

For that reason we feel it is important to ask that our comments be viewed in the original context, and to re-state our understanding of the vision for the final outcome measures. We fully support the original proposal to develop a small number of national outcome measures to drive continuous improvement and generate greater consistency in key areas. We also accept that there will most likely be a need to develop performance reporting arrangements to support these measures. However, one of the key benefits that the new suite of measures could potentially offer – a reduction in reporting burdens – seems to some extent to have been lost.

The latest iteration presents measures that have become complicated and bureaucratic, and some would in themselves require some very complex (additional) reporting structures and methodologies to be developed. In the simplest analysis, the more stages or levels that are built in, the more opportunity is afforded for divergent interpretation. We are concerned that the current suite will clarify very little, and could potentially complicate performance reporting and management, whilst reducing scope for comparability and/or benchmarking.

Our comments have therefore been developed with a view to offering constructive suggestions on how the indicators could be simplified. We have also highlighted some that we believe have no real locus in the process. Either because they are primarily in the domain of Community Planning, or

because we do not perceive them to offer much at a national level to drive forward service improvements in community care.

We hope that you will find our comments constructive and helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keith Redpath', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Keith Redpath,
Director of West Dunbartonshire Community Health Partnership

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William W. Clark', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

William W. Clark,
Director of Social Work Services.