

Influencing Clinical Commissioning Groups (England)

standing up for dietetics

Dietitians make a difference to patients' lives – their health and quality of life. Our services are also cost effective. Dietitians know this but do the people who are responsible for making decisions about health services in your area know? In the current health system it's now more important than ever to engage locally with key decision makers.

What are Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs)?

There are 212 CCGs in England. CCGs are run by Boards made up of doctors – GPs and some hospital doctors - healthcare professionals, other NHS managers and lay members. They are responsible for planning and commissioning excellent quality and 'value for money' health care services for their local population.



This is one of a series of fact sheets designed to help you to 'stand up for dietetics' in your local area and influence the decision makers.

Dietitians need to be aware of what the CCG is planning to do, when and how to 'stand up for dietetics' and influence the decision makers.

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Why do dietitians need to influence CCGs?

Decisions made by CCGs affect:

- i. What health services are funded? Will your existing dietetic service be funded next year? Are they looking to fund a new service for patients that would benefit from dietetic intervention?
- ii. Who provides the funded services? Anyone can tender for a service i.e. a NHS, voluntary or commercial provider and even nutritionists or nutritional therapists.










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 How can I 'stand up for dietetics'?

All dietitians and not just dietetic managers can influence CCGs.

Your action need not be grand in scale – it will count no matter how small.

What can I do? Here are some ideas...

-  **Find out which are your local CCGs** – visit their website to find out their priorities or follow them on twitter
-  **Summarise how your service helps them to meet their priorities** in a cost effective way using published evidence - this could form your 'elevator pitch' to a CCG Board member
-  **Find out what challenges are being faced by your CCGs.** Consider how you might work in novel, innovative ways to help them to meet their challenges
-  **Find out who is on the CCG Boards and who you think you could get to know?** Understand how your own organisation links to CCGs, who are the main contacts.
-  **Develop relationships with key CCG board members** – arrange to meet them NB. Talk to your Trust service managers and contracts managers first to find out whether you should make direct contact with your local CCGs
-  **Attend CCGs public meetings** – you will be allowed to listen any time but you may need to table a question in advance
-  **Find out the planning cycle of the CCGs** e.g. when they are agreeing priorities, setting commissioning intentions, tendering – work to these dates
-  **Get involved locally by becoming a member of your local Healthwatch** (Healthwatch is a 'consumer champion in health and care' organisation), sharing your views and experiences with your CCG or take part in consultations
-  **Work with other AHPs and patient groups if you share a project** – joint services are encouraged

Let us know how you get on: e-mail: trustdietitian@bda.uk.com