

29 August 2013

Publications Gateway Reference 00370

Dear colleague

Liverpool Care Pathway update – response to independent review report

This message is to update you on work that has started following the report by the Independent Review of the Liverpool Care Pathway (LCP). A Leadership Alliance for the Care of Dying People (LACDP) is being set up under the chairmanship of Dr Bee Wee, National Clinical Director for End of Life Care at NHS England, to respond at a strategic and system-wide level to the report.

The findings of the review challenge us all, irrespective of whether we currently use the LCP. Anyone who is dying, irrespective of whether or not their care is supported by the LCP or any other integrated care pathway, should receive high quality, compassionate care in the last days and hours of life, and their families should be supported. But this is not always the case and we must address that inconsistency. The review panel's recommendations chart a range of key areas - such as training, guidance, decision-making and evidence - in which the sector as a whole can act. We must seize this opportunity to impact positively on the care given to people who are dying, including where that care is already of a high standard.

The review panel called for a coalition of regulatory and professional bodies to lead the way in creating and delivering the knowledge base, the education, training and skills and the long-term commitment needed to make high quality care for dying patients a reality, not just an ambition. That is what the Leadership Alliance for the Care of Dying People intends to do.

So far, NHS England, the Care Quality Commission, the Department of Health, the General Medical Council, Health Education England, NHS Improving Quality, the Nursing and Midwifery Council, and the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) have agreed to be members of the alliance and we have approached a number of other organisations. Our immediate objectives include:

High quality care for all, now and for future generations

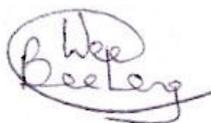
- supporting everyone who is involved in the care of people who are dying to respond to the findings of the review; and
- being the focal point for the system's response to the findings and recommendations of the LCP review.

Amongst other things, we are planning work to:

- provide guidance on what needs to occur in place of the Liverpool Care Pathway;
- consider how health and social care can best address the recommendations in the review about the accountability and responsibility of individual clinicians, out-of-hours decisions, nutrition and hydration and communication with the patient and their relatives or carers; and
- “map” existing guidance, training and development, as a prelude to considering how these impact on the care of dying people and the circumstantial factors that might affect the adoption of good practice.

We want to engage extensively with all professionals involved in caring for dying people, as well as individuals themselves and their families and other carers. Hence, we are planning workshops to help gather views and ideas from service users, clinicians and carers across the country, about good practice in caring for someone in the last days and hours of life, and how this can be achieved. We will keep you informed as we take the work forward, including how you can take part and contribute towards a considered response.

We look forward to working with you over the coming weeks and months, to help ensure high quality, compassionate care and support for all those who are dying, as well as their families and friends.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bee Wee". The signature is written in a cursive style and is enclosed within a hand-drawn oval.

Dr Bee Wee
National Clinical Director
End of Life Care