

**Appendix D**

**Procurement Strategy for the Purchase of Health Care Services**

**Incorporating:**

**Contestability Framework, Market Management Policy and Dispute Resolution Policy**

**April 2013 to March 2015**

**Document Control:**

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| **Date of Issue:** | 22 March 2013 |
| **Version:** | 1 |
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| **Next Review Date:** | September 2013 |
| **Approved by:** | NHS Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group |

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**Executive Summary:**

This Procurement Strategy incorporating a Contestability Framework, Market Management and Dispute Resolution Policy has been prepared by the Head of Procurement and endorsed by the Director of Clinical Implementation for consideration by the NHS Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Board.

This document builds on the previous NHS Gloucestershire procurement strategy document, incorporating revised Department of Health best procurement practice and secondary procurement legislation introduced by the UK Government in March 2013.

The document will require regular review / updates to take into account planned changes to the European Union procurement directives in Autumn 2013 and any case law emerging from the introduction of The National Health Service (Procurement, Patient Choice and Competition) (No.2) Regulations 2013.

**Part A Procurement Strategy**

1. Purpose / Introduction:

NHS Gloucestershire’s Clinical Commissioning Group (GCCG) is responsible for the commissioning of high quality, value for money health care services to the patients of Gloucestershire. The GCCG procurement strategy sets out its approach to achieving its delivery objectives through the application of good procurement practice.

Selecting the correct (most appropriate) procurement process can produce considerable quality improvements and cost savings. In the current NHS economic climate, we shall be required to make savings and efficiencies and strategic procurement is a useful tool in achieving this. It will also open up the market to a wider range of providers. This in turn shall help to drive up service quality, innovation and patient choice.

The objective of this policy is to provide a framework to ensure that all procurement activity is transparent; evidence based and delivers key business objectives. Clinical services procured should be innovative, affordable, viable, clinically safe and effective. Clinical service specification documents should set stretched targets to improve health outcomes and the quality of patient experience.

This procurement strategy does not offer detailed advice for specific health care groups or activity but sets out guidance for the GCCG on how to decide on the appropriate activity to be undertaken whilst ensuring compliance with current European Union procurement regulation, UK Government legislation and Department of Health procurement best practice.

The July 2010 White Paper “Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS” made clear the need for the NHS to deliver efficiency savings, whilst setting out the proposed direction for the NHS. This included:

* Focussing on clinical outcomes (quality) rather than targets
* Empowering clinicians and other health care professionals to use their judgement and innovate
* Giving patients greater choice

To achieve these aims, the GCCG will:

* Continuously review current health care services provision arrangements from a broad clinical and contractual perspective.
* Obtain quality information data to inform transparent and fair decision making processes.
* Ascertain whether it is necessary, desirable or appropriate to invite competition in accordance / compliance with EU competition regulations
* Actively manage the provider market, creating greater patient choice whilst maintaining quality outcomes
* Engage and work closely with the local community and a range of health care providers to deliver collaborative and integrated services
* Apply robust, fair and proportionate procurement processes that follow all mandated and ‘good practice’ requirements.
* Apply award criteria that takes account of whole life costs and overall service quality
* Put in place robust contractual arrangements to ensure service delivery
1. Procurement Policy:

In order to achieve its strategic objectives, and in accordance with Department of Health guidance, the GCCG must ensure that all procurement activity undertaken is:

* Transparent
* Proportionate
* Non-discriminatory
* Equal (equality of treatment)

GCCG procurement staff will work in accordance with all local, national and European Union procurement guidelines which will include, but not be limited to, the following policy / guidance documents:

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| **Body:** | **Publication:** |
| Department of Health | The National Health Service (Procurement, Patient Choice and Competition) (No.2) Regulations 2013 |
| Any Qualified Provider Operational Guidance (2011) |
| Patient Choice (Nov 2011) |
| Principles and Rules for Cooperation and Competition (Jul 2010) |
| Procurement Guide for Commissioners of NHS-funded Services (Jul 2010) |
| Securing Best Value for NHS Patients (Aug 2012) |
| The Operating Framework (Annual) |
| European Union | EU Public Procurement Regulations 2006 (and any subsequent amendments to legislation as enacted from time to time) |
| EU Remedies Directive (20 Dec 2009) |
| NHS Commissioning Board | Code of Conduct – Managing conflicts of interest where GP practices are potential providers of GCCG commissioned services (Oct 2012) |
| NHS Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group | Equality strategy |
| Gloucestershire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy |
| Integrated Annual Operating Plan |
| Quality Strategy |
| Standing Orders and Standing Financial Instructions |
| Strategic Commissioning Intentions |
| Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group Constitution |
| UK Government | Social Value Act (2012) |

New national guidance does not introduce any general policy requirement that all NHS services should be subject to competitive tendering. The policy is to create an NHS that is much more responsive to patients and achieves better quality outcomes. A step to achieving this is to increase the current offer of choice, giving patient’s choice of Any Qualified Provider where relevant.

The Procurement, Patient Choice and Competition Regulations 2013 were re-drafted and put before Parliament on 11 March 2013 and state:

* Regulation 2 - the benefits of arranging integrated services without the need for competition is emphasised. This confirms that one objective of procurement includes the services being provided in an integrated way. This is added to the other objectives of (a) securing the needs of patients, (b) improving quality and (c) improving efficiency. The decision to tender involves a balance between these objectives.
* Regulation 5 - Commissioners are not required to advertise if ‘satisfied’ that the services can be provided by a single provider only. CCG’s retain *‘reasonable’* discretion in the decision.
* Regulation 10 - Commissioners must not engage in anti-competitive behaviour unless to do so is in the interests of people who use health care services for the purposes of the NHS which may include:
1. by the services being provided in an integrated way (including with other health care services, health-related services, or social care services); or
2. by co-operation between the persons who provide the services in order to improve the quality of the services.

Under the revised Principles for Cooperation and Competition (30 July 2010), all new services and significantly redesigned services should be tendered unless approval is granted by the NHS Commissioning Board not to tender.

Commissioners may also seek to use competition as a means of securing value for money. For example, Commissioners may procure services via a competitive tendering process to encourage providers to re-evaluate existing services, re-design pathways, consider whether to introduce new technologies and improve efficiency.

1. Overarching Principles of Procurement:

The GCCG will adhere to the principles of public procurement whilst undertaking all procurement activity as follows:

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| **Principle:** | **GCCG Undertaking:** |
| **Transparency:** | State Commissioning Strategies and Intentions: |
| Publish short / medium procurement intentions on the GCCG web site |
| State outcomes of service reviews and whether a competitive tender / AQP process is to be used. |
| Pricing tariffs and other payment regimes will be fair and transparent. |
| Advertise all procurement opportunities via Supply2Health and the GCCG website (as applicable) and notification of contract award. |
| Maintain an auditable tender documentation trail (and for decisions not to tender), providing clear accountability. |
| Publish details of all contracts awarded on its website, including contract type, value and, in the case of AQP contracts, the names of accredited service providers |
| **Proportionality:** | Commissioner resources must be proportionate to the value, complexity and risk of the service being procured. |
| Contract duration to be proportionate to service type being commissioned. |
| Whilst maintaining quality standards / patient safety, Additional award criteria (including financials) must be proportionate to the value, complexity and risk of the service being procured and will not discriminate against smaller organisations such as voluntary sector / social enterprises etc. |
| The GCCG will seek to minimise bidder tender costs by avoiding timetable delays and significant changes to scope |
| **Non-Discrimination:** | The GCCG will ensure that the entire procurement process and associated documentation will not contain bias towards any particular bidder |
| All evaluations criteria and associated weightings will be fully disclosed |
| All relevant information will be disclosed equally and in good time to all prospective bidders |
| **Equality of Treatment:** | The GCCG will not favour a particular market sector i.e. public over private. Award decisions will always be taken based on a bidders ability to deliver the service rather than on the organisational type. |
| Finance and quality assurance checks will be applied equally to all bidders |
| Bidders will be expected to operate under this |

1. Commissioning Strategy / GCCG Procurement Intentions:

Procurement schemes undertaken are determined by the GCCG and are dependent on its annual Commissioning Intentions.

1. When to Procure (see Part B – Contestability Framework):

The GCCG as a Public Sector Contracting Authority is governed under the EU Procurement Directive and the following thresholds apply since 1st January 2012 (subject to on-going review):

1. Procurement Processes / Procedures (including Any Qualified Provider):

The procurement process starts from identification of need, the decision to tender through to the conclusion of a services contract and its on-going management. The development and management of provider markets to ensure capacity and capability is essential.

This Procurement Strategy has been developed to support consistent and transparent decision making within the GCCG when commissioning health care services.

The Procurement Strategy will identify the systems and procedures required for the GCCG to meet patient needs, demonstrate quality, governance and probity, good procurement practice and achieve value for money by delivering cost effective high quality services.

The GCCG’s aim is to improve the quality and accessibility of services to patients through a process of service review, robust contracting, key performance indicators (KPIs) and provider development activity. The GCG will work to develop provider markets as well as working with existing providers to improve service quality.

Once a decision has been made to procure, the main procurement routes available to the GCCG are detailed below. Advice should be sought from GCCG procurement staffs on the most appropriate route for each service tender.

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| **Procedure/ Process:** | **Description:** |
| **Any** **Qualified Provider:** | Allows Commissioners to increase choice to patients by qualifying / registering organisations to provide services via an assurance process that test providers fitness to offer the particular NHS‐funded service. The Commissioner sets local pathways and referral protocols which providers must accept. Referring clinicians offer patients a choice of qualified provider for the service being referred to. Competition is based on quality not price; providers are paid a fixed price determined by a national or local tariff. |
| **Competitive Dialogue:** | Allows input into the tender process by participating bidders. There will be a ‘Dialogue’ phase where bidders are able to discuss all aspects of the contract with the commissioner. Dialogue generates solutions to the agreed requirements, and tenders are invited based on the bidder’s solution.The Competitive Dialogue route should only be used where the GCCG is unable, due to the complexity of its requirements to define the technical means capable of satisfying the GCCG’s needs or objectives, specify either the legal or financial makeup of the project, and where neither the open or restricted procedure would be appropriate for the award of the contract. |
| **Framework Agreements:** | Although currently limited in scope for clinical services applications, the GCCG is permitted to access nationally negotiated framework agreements where appropriate. GCCG must conduct a mini-competition within the framework to select the most appropriate service provider where such framework rules apply. |
| **Grants:** | Public bodies must follow public procurement policy at all times. In certain circumstances grants are payable to third sector organisations. However, there should be no preferential treatment for third sector organisations. Use of grants can be considered where:• Funding is provided for development or strategic purposes.• The provider market is not well developed.• Innovative or experimental services.• Where funding is non-contestable (i.e. only one provider).Grants should NOT be used to avoid competition where it is appropriate for a formal procurement to be undertaken. |
| **Negotiated:** | This procedure allows the Commissioner to select one or more potential bidders with whom to negotiate the terms of the contract. There are two types of Negotiated procedure either with or without prior advert. Bidders need to be invited to negotiate the terms of the advertised contract.Under the procedure without prior advert, the GCCG could negotiate directly with its supplier of choice – this is usually due to the protection of exclusive rights where the contract can only be carried out by a particular bidder. The procedure should only be used in limited circumstances as detailed in the Regulations. |
| **Open:** | No pre-qualification stage. All prospective bidders may respond to the advertisement by tendering for the contract, although only those meeting the selection criteria (if stated) will be entitled to have their tender assessed. |
| **Restricted:** | All interested parties may express an interest in tendering for the contract but only those meeting selection criteria, assessed by a pre‐qualifying stage, will be invited to do so. An Accelerated Restricted Procedure can also be undertaken. |
| **Single** **Tender** **Action:** | Single tender actions should usually be avoided as this is contrary to achieving value for money through open and fair competition. Exceptionally, single tender actions may be justified where:* The work constitutes follow up work, which is directly related to a recently completed contract, and the added value gained from the additional work being given to the same contractor outweighs any potential reduction in price that may be derived through competitive tendering. However the follow up work should not be of significant cost (i.e. not more than 50% of the original contract value);
* The expertise required is only available from one source. This may be due to ownership of exclusive design rights or patents but, nonetheless, the specification should be reviewed to ensure that no other product / service would meet user requirements.
 |
| **Spot Purchasing:** | There will remain a need to spot-purchase for particular individual needs i.e. urgent medical requirement to place a patient in specialist care facilities. Whilst this requirement is infrequent, a waiver of standing orders will be sought to comply with the GCCG’s requirements for financial transparency and probity. |

1. Procurement Thresholds:

Procurement Thresholds (Public Contract Regulations 2006) are revised every 2 years\*.

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|  | **Supplies:** | **Services:** | **Works:** |
| Entities listed in Schedule 1: | **£113,057** | **£113,057** | **£4,348,350** |
| Other Public Sector contracting authorities: | **£173,934** | **£173,934\*\*** | **£4,348,350** |

Thresholds shown above are net of VAT

\*Rates show applicable from 1 January 2012

\*\*Services threshold of £173,934 used for the provision of Health Care Services (EU Service Category: Part B)

1. Market Analysis:

GCCG procurement staffs / CSCSU contracts staff should utilise service specification detail to benchmark comparable contracts to determine a range of fair and appropriate service costs. This activity should be conducted routinely for all high value health care services and prior to determining whether formal procurement is undertaken.

Market analysis is carried out to determine if commercial sources exist and to establish whether a preferred contract option will result in fair and reasonable service costs. The GCCG should seek to determine:

* Likely (whole service) costs
* The types of organisations in the market place capable of delivering the required services
* Whether existing or new organisations have sufficient capacity to deliver the services solutions sought
* The most appropriate / proportionate procurement route

Market analysis should allow the GCCG to recognise local SME’s and voluntary sector organisations operating in the area and help the GCCG to develop a capacity building plan for these organisations where required. This is useful when making service commissioning and procurement decisions by identifying market trends, market stability and performance profile of key prospective bidders.

Capacity building is an opportunity to identify areas of strength in supplying organisations to the GCCG and setting out opportunities for their development. To achieve this, GCCG staffs should work with potential service providers, as requested, to offer support, advice, training appertaining to the competitive tender process. This should enable SME’s to compete more fairly with larger organisations.

1. Provider Engagement:

Engagement with potential providers of health care services is an important element of effective commissioning. It is essential that both incumbent providers (where applicable) and prospective providers are included equally in the engagement process.

GCCG Commissioners may, and in accordance with Department of Health guidelines, use provider engagement to:

* Consider provider willingness / capability to deliver a service
* Establish / understand current provider landscape
* Lessons learnt from previous procurement schemes
* Assessing barriers to entry
* Development and testing of service specifications
* Determine most appropriate procurement routes
* Establish provider approaches to cost, risk, innovation, capacity, service locations and staffing requirements.

Resulting specifications will focus on service outcomes and not specific bidder technologies to ensure that any procurement process is without prejudice.

The GCCG may engender pre-procurement engagement through the following means:

* Placement of a Supply2Health or journal advertisements
* Prior Information Notice
* Public / Private Reference Groups
* Website notifications
1. Procurement of Goods and Generic Services:

Procurement for the supply of all goods and generic (non- health care services related) services shall remain the responsibility of the Gloucestershire NHS Procurement Shared Service (a service hosted by Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust). GCCG procurement staff shall be responsible for monitoring the quality of the service provided by the Gloucestershire NHS Procurement Shared Service.

1. e-Tendering:

A semi-automated / electronic approach to competitive tendering is presently used by GCCG procurement staffs when conducting competitive tendering processes. In-line with European Union guidance (December 2011), the GCCG is required to conduct all procurement processes electronically no later than 2017. The GCCG will investigate the availability of suitable electronic e-tendering systems and ensure that a system is in place no later than the aforementioned date.

1. Collaborative Procurement:

GCCG Procurement staffs will design procurement work plans in accordance with year-on-year GCCG Board commissioning intentions and any ad hoc in-year requirements as may arise from time-to-time. While it is envisaged that most procurement will be conducted in-house, GCCG procurement staffs will actively engage with Central Southern Commissioning Support Unit (CSCSU) staff, other Clinical Commissioning Group procurement staffs or nationally designated procurement teams to deliver complex / cross-boundary procurements where required.

1. Contract Duration:

Whilst the 3-year NHS Standard Contract will be applied for the majority of health care services procurements, the GCCG will take account of the following factors before finally determining contract duration (and prior to procurement advertisement):

* Overall contract value
* Complexity of the procurement process (i.e. nature of health care service to be commissioned and its interaction with other services and service providers)
* Number of potential providers in the market place.

Contract durations in excess of 3-years may be advertised, procured and awarded subject to GCCG Board approval.

1. Contract Management:

CSCSU Contract staff will work with GCCG procurement staff from project inception (or a pre-determined key stage) to ensure that robust contracts are developed, implemented and monitored on an on-going basis.

The GCCG’s Commissioning Implementation Manager will participate in high value / complex procurement projects to ensure that smooth transition from procurement contract award to service delivery commencement is managed in a proactive and timely manner ensuring key deadlines are achieved.

1. Procurement Guide and Procedures:

To develop the framework provided by this strategy document, we will produce a comprehensive written procurement guide for use by our staff engaged in procurement related activity.

The guide will provide background, guidance, information, lessons learned log and practical help for all GCCG staff when undertaking or participating in procurement activity. It is intended that this resource will be available through our intranet site, and will be regularly reviewed and updated. We will introduce and maintain standardised procurement documents to be used across the organisation.

1. Social Value Legislation:

Under recently enacted Social Value legislation, Public Sector organisations are required to consider how the service they commission and procure might improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area that they serve.

Social Value is a broad term and can be interpreted in a number of ways but could mean; a local person for a local job, an NHS Trust commissioning local patient groups (at cost) to run consultation events or a public body contracting with a private firm who employs local / long-term unemployed to service its contract requirements.

The GCCG will consider the Social Value implications of all prospective procurement processes and incorporate its responsibilities under the Act in key procurement documentation. The GCCG will take into account economic, social and environmental value, not just price, when commissioning health care services. This will involve requesting relevant policies or statement at the pre-qualification stage of the procurement process and seeking more specific information at ITT stage where it can be measured and linked to the performance of the contact.

1. Conflicts of Interest:

NHS Commissioning Board document (Oct 2012) entitled Code of Conduct, outlines guidance for managing conflicts of interest where GP practices are potential providers of CCG-commissioned services.

The GCCG will fully adopt this guidance to ensure that potential conflicts of interest are managed appropriately and that the GCCG and GP practices are protected from any perceptions of wrong-doing.

1. Equality Impact Assessment:

The GCCG will conduct an Equality Impact Assessment at key stages of all procurement tender processes. EIA’s will examine all proposed changes, assessing their impact on groups, individuals and communities. EIA outcomes will be made available on request.

1. Existing Commissioning Procurements – Organisational Transition:

As part of the transition to the new Commissioning architecture, the NHS Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group will continue to progress all current procurement schemes commissioned by NHS Gloucestershire (Gloucestershire Primary Care Trust).  These are:

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| **Procurement Title:** | **Anticipated Service Commencement Date:** |
| GP Out of Hours Services | 1 November 2013 |
| AQP – Computerised Tomography Services | April 2013 |
| AQP – Elective Care Services | April 2013 |
| AQP – Endoscopy Services | April 2013 |
| AQP – Magnetic Resonance Imaging Services | April 2013 |
| AQP – Non-Obstetric Ultrasound Services | April 2013 |

**Part B Contestability Framework:**

1. Introduction:

Contestability (or competition) can be an effective method of driving improvements to service quality, enabling change, managing overall service cost, and encouraging new providers and innovation into new, emerging or existing markets.

Traditionally, and in the majority of cases, elective care procedures were provided by neighbouring NHS Trusts under existing standard Department of Health contractual terms. Whilst quality of care could be monitored / improved, patients were unable to select from a range of health care providers.

In July 2011, the Cooperation and Competition Panel (CCP) reported on the implementation of patient choice of Any Qualified Provider in elective services. Nine recommendations were proposed to increase patient choice and included the following requirement:

Recommendation 1: Commissioners to review their existing practices in relation to restrictions on patient choice and competition, and take steps to bring themselves into compliance with the Principles and Rules of Cooperation and Competition (July 2010).

Recently, and particularly since the introduction of the aforementioned Patient Choice and PRCC guidance, there has been a considerable increase in the number of voluntary (Third Sector) and private organisations entering the health care provision market. Patients are now actively encouraged to select the health care provider which provides the most timely and geographically convenient service.

In consequence, NHS provider monopolies are becoming a thing of the past in terms of publicly funded health care and the GCCG is actively developing its market knowledge and its experience of market testing and procurement.

There are, however, potentially risks in adopting a market based model of health care provision, not least in terms of the potential impact if a key local provider becomes financially or operationally unviable due to competitors taking on only certain elements of NHS provision. Many services also have important clinical, operational and financial linkages which may not as easily be maintained across different organisations.

Other risks in contesting the provision of services could include:

* Reduced service stability (i.e. existing service may for example struggle to recruit to key posts if its future is uncertain)
* Gaps in provision (where there is an insufficient market to provide all of the services being contested)
* Delays in effecting service change (given the length of time to complete a service specification, tendering and re-contracting process and the time for a new provider to implement a full service)
1. Obligations on Commissioners:

PRCC guidance states that Commissioners must commission service from the providers who are best placed to deliver the needs of their populations. The guidance highlights that contestability is an option that the GCCG will want to consider to achieve patient care benefits in specific circumstances, rather than being an approach that we would wish to take in every case.

1. Triggers for Contesting a Service:

The GCCG will consider contesting providers in the following scenarios:

1. New Service Requirement - where there is a plan to place a new service contract (a service not previously provided)
2. Contract Expiration - where an existing contract is coming to the end of its agreed term, or can reasonably be considered to be likely to come to an end for other reasons (for example a provider notifying commissioners that it is considering withdrawing provision)
3. Failure to Achieve Quality Standards - where an existing provider is failing to achieve (or make sufficient progress on achieving) local or national quality standards or targets, or is not meeting the reasonable expectations of service users
4. Value for Money - where an existing service offers poor value for money when compared to other relevant local or national benchmarking information
5. Service Redesign - where a new type of service differs significantly from that currently in place (in terms of service model, volumes or types of activity, or financial value) such that a new range of service providers or partnerships might offer advantages in terms of patient care or cost compared to that currently in place
6. NHS Gloucestershire CCG Board Contestability Decision:

The GCCG In reaching a contestability decision will consider the anticipated benefit versus risk assessment which will cover, as a minimum, information in response to the following risk assessment checklist:

1. Has the Commissioner clearly identified the reason(s) for contesting the service (see triggers for contesting a service above)?
2. Is the Commissioner clear on the service specification and quality standards that are required in the contested service(s) (or is at least clear on the specific benefits that will be achieved by procuring a new service, if the detailed specification is to be developed at a later stage)?
3. Has the Commissioner identified any linked services which are highly likely to become clinically, operationally or financially unviable for Gloucestershire residents if not contested in parallel with the main service(s) under consideration?
4. Has the Commissioner considered the timescales and costs involved in contesting a service, such that they are able to fairly represent the benefits that could be achieved over and above an approach working with the existing provider(s)?
5. Is there evidence of a sufficient market of providers, or potential providers, to minimise the risk of significant gaps in the service(s) concerned and to ensure that patient choice is maintained or expanded?
6. Have current service costs been benchmarked, and an assessment of current and future demand and capacity been undertaken, such that the risk of increased costs is minimised and there is explicit information on affordability as part of the tendering decision?
7. Has the proposer ensured that other key co-commissioners have been informed of the GCCG’s proposals, and that explicit agreement is being secured where a service is jointly commissioned for Gloucestershire residents

Where a decision is taken by the GCCG to contest a service, consideration should also be given to the means by which the service might best be contested. There are two broad options:

Opt 1. A traditional tendering process, resulting in the award of a time limited contract to a single provider, partnership of providers or consortia with lead bidder / subcontractor arrangements.

Procurement staff will follow one of a range of EU mandated procurement processes. This approach may be mandated for high value contracts or where there are significant non-clinical components of the service. The results of any tender process will be published on the Supply2Health procurement portal and the GCCG web site.

Opt 2. Use of the ‘Any Qualified Provider’ procurement process which allows for the contested service to be offered to, and provided by, a range of providers, as long as they can demonstrate they fulfil key requirements. These include:

* Fulfilling any obligatory registration requirement
* Ability to meet the GCCG’s service specification in full
* Accepting the national or local tariff price (as applicable) as specified by the GCCG
* Accepting a standard DH contract with the GCCG, without any guarantees of volumes of activity or levels of funding.
* Ensuring potential conflicts of interest are acknowledged and minimised (for example where a referral is made into a service run or associated with the original referrer, and who may therefore gain financially from that referral)
* Ensuring adequate choice is provided on treatment options, and in any onward referral to another commissioned service
* Providing a service that is sufficiently flexible to respond to and meet individual needs

An AQP model may be more appropriate to higher volume services with less complex interfaces with other services.

All procurement processes (including AQP) will be advertised on the Supply2Health web portal and the GCCG web site.

1. Decision Not to Tender:
2. If, after a risk assessment and consideration of the principles contained within this Framework, the GCCG determines that a competitive tender process is not required or is inappropriate, the reasons shall be recorded on the Decision Not to Tender Form (see appendix 1).
3. The GCCG Board must approve any decision not to tender for new or significantly re-designed services

**Part C Market Management Strategy**

1 Introduction:

This strategy sets out the way in which the NHS Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (GCCG) will work to develop a health care market which supports delivery of its strategic commissioning plan. The strategy will identify the principles by which the organisation will enable the development of an appropriate provider market to meet local needs and improve patient experience. This strategy should be read in conjunction with the GCCG’s Procurement Strategy.

Our understanding of what constitutes an effective market management strategy in the NHS is still evolving. However, the dual functions of market analysis (understanding the current and potential market) and market development (supporting the development of innovation, quality and a diverse health care market) are central to developing a competitive provider environment and informed decision making about procurement routes.

This strategy will support the commissioning organisation to understand the steps to good market management that enables the delivery of the strategic commissioning plan and helps describe the market development needs at each stage in the commissioning cycle.

The GCCG is keen to ensure that the benefits of a competitive environment and new providers are harnessed. The Department of Health has introduced a number of documents which set out the general framework for system management. The documents are:

* Framework for managing choice, co-operation and competition
* Procurement guide for commissioners of NHS-funded services
* The NHS Operating Framework (reviewed annually)
* The NHS Performance Regime

The ultimate aim in applying any system or market management techniques is to ensure that it results in an improvement in patient experience, outcomes and value for money.

2 Current Provider Landscape:

* 1. Monopoly Providers:

The current provider landscape is dominated by monopoly providers. This presents challenges in offering patient choice and may influence the GCCG’s ability to drive up quality, contract with providers able to respond to modernisation and local needs and develop new care pathways which rely on innovative models of service integration.

* 1. Provider Economics:

The diminishing opportunities for providers to enter the health care market and make significant investment in the infrastructure in a climate of economic downturn and with default contract lengths of 3 years.

* 1. Developing the Third Sector:

Commitment to developing the third sector in a way that supports entry into the health care market must be conducted in a way that does not compromise the procurement principles of transparency, equity and value for money.

* 1. Information Technology:

The lack of a single patient record system poses constraints on the ease with which patient information and patient care can be transferred from one provider to another.

* 1. Transport:

The geography of the market can be defined by how far a patient is willing or able to travel to receive care. The inability or reluctance of patients to travel poses key constraints on the GCCG to increase the range of providers to increase patient choice.

3 Market Management in the NHS:

As leaders of the local health system the GCCG has a significant responsibility to lead and manage the NHS system. Market Management is a pivotal element of effective system management.

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| Ensuring Local Strategic Coherence | * Engaging with the population around the strategy for the system (including formal consultation)
* Ensuring that all system tools and techniques including market management result in a cohesive local system
 |
| Building and Working the Market | * Design of local incentives and local choice offer
* Market development
* Procurement
* Contracting
 |
| Maintaining Market Effectiveness | * Information for, and communication to the Patients, Public and the Market
* Managing service change through the market
* Managing the market by:
	+ Managing service/ provider failure
	+ Managing disputes
	+ Driving quality in provision
* Managing local political interface on market decisions
 |

Table 1: The Responsibilities of the GCCG Market Manager

The ultimate aim in applying any system or market management techniques is to ensure that it results in an improvement in patient experience, outcomes and value for money.

One of the best ways we can achieve this is to construct excellent provider relationships based on a common understanding of the service requirements through clear specifications for services based on good care pathways and models of care; effective contract performance monitoring and management systems, and to build up strong relationships with providers over time.

In some cases it is necessary and appropriate to have competition for services in order to secure improved outcomes, maintain complex service integration and patient experience. In other cases it is possible and desirable to maintain existing suppliers, whilst continuing to drive quality improvements.

4 NHS Gloucestershire CCG’s Approach to Market Management:

The GCCG’s approach to market management will focus on three clear activities; contract management; market analysis (including robust procurement processes) and market development. Market analysis and market development activities need to be undertaken in a planned and prioritised way in order to maximise the benefits to be derived through any procurements offered to the market.

The vision for the future provider landscape for the GCCG is to provide greater diversity where this is appropriate underpinned by two key principles:

* Increasing choice for users of services
* Provider development or contestability to drive up the quality of services and reduce costs

This will be achieved through a considered use of competition to improve quality. It is neither possible nor desirable to have a third District General Hospital within Gloucestershire, but it is possible to increase the options for accessing elements of care at a pathway level. This pathway approach was used by the GCCG’s predecessor, NHS Gloucestershire PCT, to develop a new musculoskeletal assessment service to support traditional secondary care orthopaedic provision.

It is not always possible or appropriate to increase the number of providers in the market; there are other levers which need to be utilised to improve and shape the market and drive up quality. These include using contract performance levers, patient user participation in service reviews and analysis of data in respect of quality of services.

* 1. Contract Management:

The first stage of Market Management will be to consider the appropriateness of contestability as a system lever. In some cases, as described in section 6, robust contract management and effective supplier management, i.e. working with our current providers of patient care will improve outcomes; patient experience; quality and reduce failings. There are some circumstances where it is immediately apparent that contesting the service is not feasible or beneficial to improving outcomes and value for money:

* The service is a specialised service where provider designation has already taken place at a national or regional level
* Where the service to be procured has such strong service alliances with an existing service that an extension to an existing agreement is appropriate (complex service integration).
* Where the cost of undertaking a contested approach cannot be justified in light of the contract value (proportionality)
* Where the GCCG wishes to encourage provision from within a sector that might otherwise not prevail through a contested approach
* Where failing to award a contract to a preferred provider would put other core services at risk i.e. recognising the need to safe guard against unintended consequences relating to service viability and tipping points.

The GCCG will also ensure it demonstrates how as many of the possible benefits associated with a contested approach are realised through strong commissioning and specification of services.

Where it is not absolutely apparent that competition would not be beneficial then the GCCG will use the Contestability Framework to support the making of a decision about contestability. The GCCG will ensure that when a decision not to contest a service is reached, this will formally be documented and made available to interested parties. Only after deciding that contestability is needed to improve outcomes will the GCCG progress to market analysis:

4.2 Market Analysis:

The GCCG will adopt an eight step approach to market analysis as follows.

Delivering outputs for each of these steps will require joint working across the GCCG. The GCCG’s procurement team will support lead commissioners in understanding the tasks required to undertake market analysis.

The outputs for each step are defined below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Agree Scope** | * Identify and clarify market segment area to be addressed:
	+ geography
	+ specific pathway
	+ providers
	+ competition and choice for patients
* Agree which part of the overall system for that market segment will be reviewed:
* prevention
* assessment
* diagnostics
* intervention
* post acute
 |
| **Assess Market Needs & Demand** | * What services are required
* How can these be delivered
* Where are services required
* How will needs/demands change or grow
 |
| **Assess Current Market Performance** | * Comparative analysis of existing providers
* Articulate performance issues
 |
| **Provider Analysis** | * Map providers
* What capacity sits where
* What is the balance of spend/activity
* What access is there for the patient group
* Provider performance
* Do they meet GCCG requirements
* Do they meet patient needs
* Why over or under performing
* What plans to improve
 |
| **Competitive Environment** | * Is there competition in the market
* What is the basis for competition
* Review barriers to entry or exit
* Who are the potential providers who could enter the market
* Are there examples of good practice elsewhere
 |
| **Map out a Preferred Future Landscape** | * What provision does the GCCG want to see where
* What will the basis for performance measurement be
* Should it be contestable
* Should integration be encouraged at certain points of the system
 |
| **Assessment of Market Intervention Levers** | * What can the GCCG do to change the provider landscape:
* Competitive tendering
* Contracting
* Talk to Providers
* Incentives
* Penalties
 |
| **Implementation Plan** | * What levers should be used by when
* How does the GCCG want to monitor market performance
* What information does the GCCG need to do this better in the future
 |

4.3 Market Development:

The aim of provider development activity is to encourage a range of providers, willing and capable of responding to GCCG contracting opportunities and hence facilitating the commissioning of services of a high quality and which demonstrate effective use of NHS resources.

As services are reviewed and potentially redesigned and as commissioners gain a greater understanding of the needs of their patients, the provider(s) best placed to deliver the needs of the patient may well be different from the current service provider(s), this will only be possible if there are effective and willing providers in the market capable of responding to GCCG contracting opportunities.

GCCG Procurement staffs and CSU Contracting staffs will undertake a number of activities to support the development of existing and potential providers.

* Develop and manage its relationship with existing and potential providers, including all sectors (NHS, Private / Commercial and Voluntary / Third Sector organisations)
* Advertise for new and potential providers using both traditional procurement processes and the “Any Qualified Provider” procurement routes
* Provide advice to potential providers on the qualification and assurance process required to become a local provider of NHS Services
* Proactively shape the market through dialogue and procurement
* Qualify providers who are interested in providing services to support the GCCG’s commissioning intentions. This will include an assessment of the providers capacity and capability to meet the minimum standards required to deliver NHS care
* Ensure that appropriate support is available to providers to facilitate their involvement in the procurement process.

5 Developing Provider Competence and Capability:

Where provider options are limited and the preferred procurement approach requires the development of providers to ensure that appropriate services can be secured; the GCCG will identify and support the development of providers to enable market entry. This support may take the form of advice, signposting to education, training and business development opportunities. Any offer of support in this way must be transparent, proportionate, non-discriminatory and adhere to NHS rules of competition and contestability.

6 Market Management Support to the Commissioning Cycle:

6.1 Assess Needs/Review of Provision:

* Produce an updated map of current service providers relevant to the commissioning programme
* Identify providers that could be involved in helping define the needs assessment
* Provide market intelligence on the current provider market and any future trends
* Identify provider market gaps and any failing providers
* Are the current services delivering key national and local targets
* Do current providers offer services that are consistent with best practice and local and national strategy
* Determine the impact on the current and future provider market (will the introduction of new providers have a detrimental impact on the provision of services to patients)
* Where required begin a search for alternative providers

6.2 Decide Priorities and Investment:

* Identify and qualify potential providers
* Gain decision if to invest in developing providers
* Engage potential providers in the commissioning process
* Is the effort of developing the supply market justified by the benefits for patients

6.3 Define the Service:

* Ensure clear service specifications are developed
* Identify the implications on the provider market of the proposed service
* Support providers in bidding for services

6.4 Shape Structure of Supply:

* Provide assurance on the selection process of providers
* Ensure provider requirement documents are robust
* Oversee the commissioner selection process

6.5 Formalise and Communicate :

* Clear awards process with feedback to unsuccessful providers which may help them develop for the future
* Clear implementation plan for delivery of new services

7 Contract and Performance Management Frameworks:

Market management is underpinned by effective contract, performance management (including quality) and procurement frameworks.

7.1 Contract Management:

* Regular discussions with all key providers. Formal Contract Boards and appropriate subgroups in place for all major contracts
* Clear issue resolution/escalation processes
* Consistent and rigorous negotiation processes
* Use of the standardised NHS Contract

7.2 Performance Management:

* Predictive modelling, analysis and performance management
* Clear Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and defined performance improvement targets
* Regular and timely performance data analysed by efficiency, quality, outcomes, comparative benchmarks and patient experience
* Achievement of national targets and local KPIs.

7.3 Service Quality:

* Understanding the quality of services provided is a key element of market management. The following indicators will all be considered as part of a provider review.
	+ Mortality rates
	+ Readmission rates
	+ Length of stay
	+ First to follow up ratio’s - outpatients
	+ Conversion rates
	+ DNA rates

8 NHS Gloucestershire CCG’s Progress in Market Management:

Over the past 12 months, while we have been developing the skills needed to deliver the competencies for market management, we have taken a number of services and applied a variety of market intervention strategies.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Category:** | **Market Intervention Strategy:** | **Procurement Route:** |
| Direct Access Diagnostics for:* CT
* Endoscopy
* MRI
* Non-Obstetric Ultrasound)
 | Diversify ProvisionClear signalling to the market and market stimulationChoice and information | Any Qualified Provider |
| Community Drug & Alcohol Treatment Services | Clear signalling to the market and market stimulationJoint commissioning | Competitive tender |
| Elective Care Services | Diversify ProvisionChoice and InformationClear signalling to the market and market stimulation | Any Qualified Provider |
| Provision of NHS Dental Services | Diversify Provision | Competitive tender |
| Provision of Diabetic Eye Screening Services | Clear signalling to the market / market stimulation.Simplified care pathwayOverall cost reduction | Competitive tender |

Table 2: Categories already addressed:

9 Measurement of Success**:**

* Clear articulation of current and future provider market
* Robust contracts negotiated with clear outcome measures
* Robust contract/performance management processes in place
* Capability is improved within the organisation

10 Conclusion:

This strategy sets out the GCCG’s approach to market management and, together with the GCCG procurement strategy, forms an integral part of the GCCG’s approach to system management. It explains the way in which the dual functions of market analysis and market development will support delivery of the GCCG’s commissioning intentions.

Market management is an evolving concept for the NHS and this strategy will require an annual review to ensure that it is consistent with patient experience, national policy and local requirements.

**Part D Dispute Resolution Policy:**

1. Introduction:

NHS Gloucestershire developed its Dispute Resolution Policy in September 2009 as an addendum to its Contestability Framework which was endorsed at its Board meeting in March 2008. The Disputes Resolution Process document is now updated to reflect changes to the national Principles and Rules for Cooperation and Competition (PRCC) which came into effect on 1 October 2010 and the advent of the NHS Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (GCCG), 1 April 2013.

The GCCG will work to reach resolution of any dispute arising from contracting / commissioning decisions. Disputes, not resolved by access to any contractual terms that may exist between them, may arise over decisions about contractual sanctions and termination, remuneration, practice area and ‘opt-outs.’

Contractors have the right of appeal in some circumstances against contracting / commissioning decisions. The resolution process for dealing with challenges will be in line with the national Principles and Rules for Cooperation and Competition published by the Department of Health on 30 July 2010 (Gateway reference 14611). It will draw on best practice from the Dispute Resolution Guidance, Office of Government Commerce (March 2002).

 For the avoidance of doubt this Dispute Resolution Process is a non-contractual process and is intended for use in situations where the prospective parties have decided not to follow other resolution solutions that may be available to them including formal contract dispute resolution or action under statutory or legal provision available in UK law.

In the event that a provider or potential provider of services wishes to dispute the procurement / contracting / commissioning or related decision-making decisions by use of this Dispute Resolution Process, the following process will be followed:

* The GCCG will seek to resolve any disputes by local resolution. A conciliation process will be proposed in all cases.
* If the dispute is not successfully resolved at local level, the complainant or the GCCG can refer the dispute to the Regional Panel to be operated by the NHS Commissioning Board.
* If the dispute is not successfully resolved by the Regional Panel, it may be referred to the national Cooperation and Competition Panel.

The appellant may withdraw the appeal at any time during the process. If for any reason an appeal is withdrawn, the GCCG will not accept a future appeal on the same grounds.

2. Objectives of the Dispute Resolution Process:

The GCCG’s objectives of this process are as follows:

* To resolve competition disputes transparently, fairly and consistently and to mitigate risks and protect the reputation of the NHS.
* To be compliant with acceptance criteria of the national Cooperation and Competition Panel
* To prevent where possible legal challenge and external referral processes.
* To provide confidence to parties that the process is fair and transparent, enhancing willingness to participate in the market.

3. Acceptance Criteria:

The CGG will only accept appeals that meet the following criteria:

* The content of the dispute is covered by the Principles and Rules of Cooperation and Competition (PRCC) and no legal proceedings have commenced.
* There is complete disclosure of all relevant and applicable information. Any individuals connected to the complaint are available to provide further evidence or testimony and the GCCG is not precluded from requesting more detailed information to make an informed decision.
* To provide confidence to parties that the process is fair and transparent, enhancing willingness to participate in the market.
* That the GCCG is the commissioner or lead commissioner for the service in question.
* The dispute is not trivial or vexatious
* The dispute is raised within 3 months of the disputed event occurring.
* The dispute is not a ‘reserved matter’ under the Principles and Rules of Cooperation and Competition, i.e. issues that overlap with existing legislation and the role of competition authorities.
1. NHS Gloucestershire CCG Process:

Stage 1 - The Complaint:

The GCCG will acknowledge the appeal within two working (business) days of receipt.

The first stage is to gather information (see attached form – Appendix 2) and complete an initial assessment. A nominated officer will be appointed to carry out the assessment.

Following the initial assessment, the GCCG may instigate an informal investigation to add further detail. This stage is to be completed within 14 days. Following this assessment there will be an opportunity for conciliation between the parties. A timescale will be set and notified to each party.

If the criteria for dispute are met and conciliation has not resolved the issue, the nominated officer will complete a report for the GCCG Panel.

Stage 2 - GCCG Panel:

Membership – the Panel has three core members:

* Non-Executive Member (Chair)
* Executive Director
* Head of Procurement

The nominated officer will attend to present their investigation.

The Panel will formally meet and review the case. This stage is to be completed within 20 working days. Both parties will have had the opportunity to submit written material in advance of the hearing. Both parties may be offered the opportunity to attend the Panel.

Stage 3: The Decision:

The GCCG Panel has 4 potential outcomes:

* Complaint upheld
* Further investigation needed – to be completed within a maximum 20 working days
* Complaint rejected
* Complaint judged to be beyond the scope of the Panel so will be referred to NHSCB Regional Panel or to the National Co-Operation and Competition Panel.

The GCCG will write to the complainant(s) notifying them of its decision, explaining the rationale and any course of action required.

If the complainant does not believe the case has been satisfactorily resolved an appeal can be lodged with the Regional Panel operated by the NHSCB.

All results of the process will be presented to the GCCG Board on an annual basis for information. Reports will include summaries of complaints and outcomes, as well as performance against target timescales.

**Appendix 1**

**Decision Not to Tender**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Project Manager:***(Name)* |  |
| **Project Director:***(Name)* |  |
| **Date:** |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Project Title and Background:***(Include summary of proposed service and cross reference to annual operating plan)* |
|  |
| **Proposed Contract:***(Include proposed provider, contract duration and proposed commencement date)* |
|  |
| **Market Assessment:***(Summary of outcome of market assessment supporting the proposal)* |
|  |
| **Financial Assessment:***(Anticipated total aggregated contract value)* |
|  |
| **Reasons for Not Tendering:**:*(MUST ensure that reasons are permitted in accordance with the National Health Service (Procurement, Patient Choice and Competition) (No.2) Regulations 2013)* |
|  |
| **Risk Assessment:***(Identify risks to patients if proposal is rejected / Identify risks to GCCG if proposal is accepted)* |
|  |
| **Due Diligence:***(Basic financial and quality assurance checks must be undertaken in respect of proposed service provider. This will include: financial viability, economic standing, clinical capacity & capability, governance, affordability / value for money)* |
|  |
| **Stakeholder Engagement:***(Is the proposal acceptable to patients? Include findings of any patient engagement)* |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Compliance with Principles and Rules for Cooperation and Competition:***(Indicate Yes, No or N/A)* |
| Principle 1 - *Commissioners must commission services from the providers who are best placed to deliver the needs of their patients and populations.* |  |
| Principle 2 - *Commissioning and procurement must be transparent and non-discriminatory.* |  |
| Principle 3 - *Payment regimes and financial intervention in the system must be transparent and fair.* |  |
| Principle 4 - *Providers and commissioners must cooperate to improve services and deliver seamless and sustainable care to patients.* |  |
| Principle 5 - *Commissioners and providers should promote patient choice, including, where appropriate, choice of Any Qualified Provider and ensure that patients have accurate, reliable and accessible information to exercise more choice and control over their health care.* |  |
| Principle 6 - *Commissioners and providers should not reach agreements which restrict commissioner or patient choice against patients and taxpayers interests.* |  |
| Principle 7 - *Providers must not refuse to accept services or to supply essential services to commissioners where this restricts commission or patient choice against patients’ and taxpayers interests.* |  |
| Principle 8 - *Commissioners and providers must not discriminate unduly between patients and must promote equality.* |  |
| Principle 9 - *Appropriate promotional activity is encouraged as long as it remains consistent with patient’s best interests and the brand and reputation of the NHS* |  |
| Principle 10 - *Vertical integration is permissible where there remains sufficient choice and competition to ensure high quality standards of care and value for money.* |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Approved / Rejected by GCCG Board:***(Signature)* |  |
| **Date:** |  |
| **Comments:** |  |

**Appendix 2**

**Dispute Resolution Form**

1. Complainant Contact Details:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name:** |  |
| **Address:** |  |
| **Telephone Number:** |  |
| **Email Address:** |  |
| **Date:** |  |
| **Name and title of the person(s) authorised to represent the complainant:** |  |

2. Acceptance Criteria:

|  |
| --- |
| **Evidence that each of the acceptance criteria has been met:** |
| *Acceptance Criteria 1:**The content of the dispute is covered by the Principles and Rules of Cooperation and Competition and no legal proceedings have commenced.*Evidence 1: |
| *Acceptance Criteria 2:**There is complete disclosure of all relevant and applicable information. Any individuals connected to the complaint are available to provide further evidence or testimony and the GCCG is not precluded from requesting more detailed information to make an informed decision.*Evidence 2: |
| *Acceptance Criteria 3:**To provide confidence to parties that the process is fair and transparent, enhancing willingness to participate in the market.*Evidence 3: |
| *Acceptance Criteria 4:**The GCCG is the commissioner or lead commissioner for the service in question.*Evidence 4: |
| *Acceptance Criteria 5:**The dispute is not trivial or vexatious*Evidence 5: |
| *Acceptance Criteria 6:**The dispute is raised within 3 months of the disputed event occurring.*Evidence 6: |
| *Acceptance Criteria 7:**The dispute is not a ‘reserved matter’ under the Principles and Rules of Cooperation and Competition, i.e. issues that overlap with existing legislation and the role of competition authorities.* Evidence 7: |

3. Basis of Complaint:

|  |
| --- |
| **Details of the basis of the dispute and which principles are breached:** |
|  |

4. Evidence:

|  |
| --- |
| **Any supporting evidence available:** |
|  |

5. Summary Statement:

|  |
| --- |
| **A statement as to the desired outcome or resolution:** |
|  |

This form should be completed and forwarded by email or post to:

David Porter

Head of Procurement

NHS Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group

Sanger House

5220 Valiant Court

Delta Way

Gloucester Business Park

Brockworth

Gloucester

GL3 4FE

Email: david.porter6@nhs.net