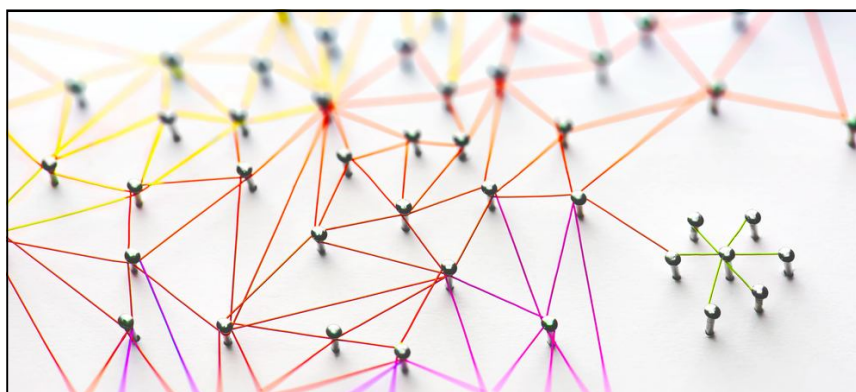


Factsheets for Primary Care

Primary Care Networks (PCNs)

Are you ready?
What are the Key Dates?
What do you need to do?
What about our GP Federation?



Factsheet No. 1 of 3

March 2019

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provided by **VWV Solicitors** in preparing this factsheet.

For PCN guidance visit

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/gp/gpfv/investment/gp-contract/>



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Primary Care Networks (PCNS)



Are you ready?

With the 15 May deadline looming for submitting your

Primary Care Network (PCN) application, and some of the detail and governance documents yet to be revealed, how can your practice best prepare? The Network Contract DES Specification, Network Agreement and associated guidance are due soon, what follows are some tips for GP practices.

Key dates for PCN formation

1. 31 March 2019. Network Contract DES Specification, Network Agreement and associated guidance made available
2. 15 May 2019. Deadline for submitting PCN registration form
3. July 2019. PCNs go live in England

Start Talking... Size Matters

If you haven't yet identified the other practices with whom you wish to network, then this is an important first step!

Primary Care Networks will consist of a grouping of GP practices within a coherent geographical area, that makes sense to

- (a) constituent practices
- (b) other community-based providers who configure their teams accordingly and
- (c) the local community covering a population of 30-50,000 patients.

NHS England has advised that networks will not be smaller than 30,000 unless in exceptional circumstances the commissioner agrees due to the PCN serving a natural community which has low population density across a large rural and remote area. Networks can be bigger than 50,000. Your LMC is well placed to help identify and bring together prospective networks. You may wish to seek specialist legal and accountancy advice around your network structure.

...Or If Not.....

If your practice does not wish to sign up to the Network Contract DES, your patient list will still need to be added into one of your local PCN. That PCN then takes on the responsibility of the Network Contract DES for your patients through a locally commissioned agreement under which the PCN receives all of your Network Contract DES payments. NHS England has advised that any practice not signing up will still be required to co-operate with those delivering services to their patients.

From 2020 new national services will be included into the DES so your practice may lose out on the opportunity to provide new services and the allocated funding.

The Application

The registration form for the DES application (Annex C: Network Contract DES Registration Form) in the *Five Year Framework* sets out the information required from practices:

- The names and the ODS codes and list sizes of the member practices
- The PCN list size (the sum of its member practices' lists as of 1st January 2019)
- A map clearly marking the agreed PCN area
- The Initial Network Agreement (the DES Specification will include further detail) signed by all member practices
- The agreement will outline:
 - the single practice that will receive the funding on behalf of the PCN
 - how practices will work together
 - which practices will deliver which specific services
 - how funding will be allocated between practices
 - how the new workforce capacity will be shared
 - who will employ the new staff
 - which Clinician will be the Clinical Director. *NHSE has confirmed this does not have to be a GP.*

The Initial Network Agreement will be available by 31 March 2019, check the NHS England website for more details: www.england.nhs.uk/gp

Next Steps?

Once you have a group of practices in agreed in principle to form a PCN, practices should start trying to achieve consensus on the above issues. Although the Network Agreement will be available from or a few weeks, it is expected that the Network Agreement will provide a contractual structure that will need to be populated/adapted locally. In terms of **Board Structure** it is not a requirement to have a board. Governance is down to local determination and how it organises itself to be accountable.

What About Our GP Federation?

It is for each PCN to decide its delivery model for the Network Contract DES. It could be through a lead practice, GP federation, NHS provider or social enterprise partner". This relates to how they may want to configure to employ the workforce rather than that an entity can receive the funding. Only a practice or provider holding a GMS, PMS or APMS contract will be able to receive funding as the nominated payee.

Any PCNs considering using their GP Federation company in this way or setting up a new entity may wish to seek specialist legal and accountancy advice.

Factsheet No.2 will include:

- VAT issues
- NHS pension scheme and new staff members.