Wednesday 26 March 2014

Health Committee 2013 accountability hearing with Monitor

The HFMA agrees with the Commons Health Committee that the NHS will only be able to deliver the care required from it by significant innovation in the provision of healthcare. Drawing on its annual inquiry into the work of Monitor, the Committee concludes that insufficient change has been made to date and the system needs to change faster.

The HFMA believes that transforming healthcare services needs to be taken forward rapidly. However it recognises that change is a complex process that will require a partnership of NHS staff and key stakeholders. New models of care need to be clinically led, but there are also vital roles for finance and other professions. In particular, the NHS needs to understand the financial impacts of service change and then ensure that benefits are realised. Transformation also requires political and public support and a recognition that new models of care inevitably mean changes to existing services and facilities.

The Committee also repeats its recommendation from last year that Monitor should attach a higher priority to its work on the subject of the tariff structure and recommends that Monitor and NHS England should initiate a formal joint process for a prioritised review of the NHS tariff arrangements.

The HFMA fully supports the need to change tariff arrangements to support new ways of working. However effective new tariffs cannot be introduced overnight. They need to be underpinned by robust cost data and tested so that any changes in funding flows can be understood and planned for. There are already opportunities within the national tariff to use locally determined prices to support different ways of working and more integrated care.

See also the HFMA's December 2013 briefing 'Transforming healthcare: the role for the finance team' http://www.hfma.org.uk/download.ashx?type=infoservice&id=687

For HFMA's views on tariff system changes, see its response to last year's Monitor/NHS England discussion paper 'How can the NHS payment system do more for patients?' http://www.hfma.org.uk/download.ashx?type=infoservice&id=637 or its discussion paper Future payment systems in the NHS http://www.hfma.org.uk/download.ashx?type=infoservice&id=644

ENDS

Healthcare Financial Management Association (HFMA):

- 5000 members working largely in NHS finance departments across the UK
- Registered charity status
- 13 branches, covering the four home nations
- A headquarters in Bristol and conference centre in London
- More than 300 partner organisations

HFMA was established in 1950 as an independent and charitable organisation. It represents finance professionals' views to the government and other key national stakeholders such as Monitor, the government's health service regulator, NHS England and the National Trust Development Authority as well as the media. More information can be found here: www.hfma.org.uk

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