

## South West Clinical Senate

The South West Clinical Senate is hosted by Bristol, North Somerset, Somerset and South Gloucestershire (BNSSSG) Area Team of NHS England but covers both Bath, Gloucestershire, Swindon, Wiltshire (BGSW) and Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly (DCIOS) Area Teams also. This presents a huge geographical area, and a large population of around 5 million. The Senate's purpose is to be the body that 'brings together a range of professionals to take an overview of health and healthcare for local populations and provides a source of strategic, independent advice and leadership on how services should be designed to provide the best overall care and outcomes for patients'.

As commissioners of most services, CCGs are the clients, although the Senate does not restrict itself to only those services commissioned by CCGs and will, where appropriate, make a recommendation on specialised services also.

As a new entity, crossing professional boundaries and sitting above the existing geographic and organisational borders, the Senate's role is to ensure that quality and efficiency in the commissioning of patient services are firmly prioritised.

The Senate consists of its Council, a small group of senior clinicians and managers with a breadth of experience across local healthcare provision, whose role is to oversee the work plan, and agree and ensure adherence to operating principles. It will be supported by the larger Assembly, of indeterminate size (likely to be in the region of 250), drawn from the wider health community, to include representation across all health professions and Patient and Public involvement. The Assembly will meet only occasionally to deliberate (probably 2-3 times /year).

The Senate can also draw on specialist expertise in order to inform its deliberations.

The Senate management team is led by the Senate Chair, Dr Vaughan Lewis, a paediatrician in Exeter. Executive responsibility sits with Dr Caroline Gamlin, Medical Director of BNSSSG Area Team of NHS England, supported by Sunita Berry, Assistant Director for Strategic Clinical Networks and Senate. The newly appointed Senate Manager, Ellie Devine, commences in January 2014, supported by Sarah Redka, Senate Administrator. It is important that GPs are involved with the Clinical Senate in order to provide a grassroots, generalist view with a firm focus on patient advocacy. From time to time we will be seeking new members and hope that GPs across the region will consider getting involved. If you would like to become involved with the Senate Assembly, please contact Sarah Redka on [sarah.redka@nhs.net](mailto:sarah.redka@nhs.net).

**Dr Shelagh McCormick**

Deputy Chair South West Clinical Senate

11.11.2013