

**NHS CONSTITUTION
(Report by the Head of Head of Democratic and Central Services)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 As the Panel's remit includes health matters, the purpose of this report is to acquaint Members with the terms of the NHS Constitution.

2. NHS CONSTITUTION

- 2.1 The NHS Constitution was published earlier this year. It was one of a number of recommendations in Lord Darzi's report 'High Quality Care for All' which was published on the 60th anniversary of the NHS and set out a ten-year plan to provide high quality care and service for patients in England.

- 2.2 As well as stating the purpose, principles and values of the NHS, the Constitution brings together a number of rights, pledges and responsibilities for staff and patients. These rights and responsibilities have been formulated following discussions and consultations with staff, patients and public.

- 2.3 Subject to Parliamentary approval, all NHS bodies, and private and third-sector providers supplying NHS services in England will be required by law to take account of the Constitution in their decisions and actions. The Government will have a legal duty to renew the Constitution every 10 years. Changes cannot be made to the Constitution without consultation with staff, patients and the public.

- 2.4 The core purpose and values of the NHS will be reinforced by placing a duty on providers and commissioners of NHS services to have regard to the new NHS Constitution. This legal duty is contained within the Health Bill. The Health Bill also sets out the procedure for reviewing and amending the NHS Constitution and handbook.

- 2.5 A handbook on the NHS Constitution provides NHS staff and patients with information about the NHS Constitution. It acts as a guide to:

- patients' rights and pledges;
- responsibilities of patients and the public and staff, and
- staff rights and NHS pledges to its staff.

At the back of the handbook is an appendix, which outlines the legal source for both the patient and staff rights in the NHS Constitution. It has not been reproduced here as it runs to 148 pages but it can be viewed here: http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/documents/digitalasset/dh_093415.pdf. However, a shorter guide is attached, which outlines the main components of the Constitution and how it will be used.

3. CONCLUSION

The Panel is

RECOMMENDED

to note the contents of the report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NHS Constitution
NHS Constitution Guide
NHS Constitution Handbook

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