

Strategic Outline Case for a National Information and Intelligence Service for Adult Social Care

Introduction

On 4th September 2007, the ADASS Executive received an update on a project exploring the development of a National Intelligence/Information System (NIIS) for adult social care. The project takes as its starting point the need for adult social care to make better use of the extensive information resource at its disposal in locally-managed systems, in order to meet the needs of the Modernisation agenda.

The project's aim is to produce a report along the lines of a Strategic Outline Case (SOC) for a NIIS for adult social care. It is intended that the SOC will outline a way forward in terms of the NIIS, on the basis of which collective decisions can be made by the key stakeholders. This may involve more detailed research or scoping, or, in the event that there is a single preferred option for the way ahead, the development of more detailed specifications and business case.

The production of the Strategic Outline Case is an important stage in the debate about a NIIS, given the technical and operational complexities, the number of stakeholders, and scale of the challenges we face. The production

of the SOC is sponsored jointly by David Behan, Director General for Social Care at the Department of Health (DH), and David Johnstone, chair of the Standards and Performance Committee, and member of the Executive of the ADASS. Its development is being facilitated by the Information Centre, whose interests lie in the promotion of information to support and improve the delivery of health and social care.

A detailed discussion paper has been prepared, and is being used as the basis for engaging with stakeholders and gathering views. This can be obtained via www.ic.nhs.uk Or by contacting Ursula Turner (Ursula.turner@ic.nhs.uk)

Potential benefits of a National Information/Intelligence Service

The ideas to be developed in the SOC are aimed at supporting service delivery. The production of the SOC will enable all stakeholders to identify their interests in the project, and the benefits they wish to obtain from a NIIS. The primary aim is to improve access to, and use of information to support service delivery. The project includes an ICT component, but it is not a technical IT project as such.

Benefits should include:

- A more robust benchmarking service, which will map statistical analyses and trends against other similar organisations, and over time. It will also support investigation into variations in performance
- A genuinely national service which would meet the information needs of a broader range of stakeholders than is currently possible. It will provide a more accessible service with greater potential capacity, and would be underpinned by appropriate governance controls
- Improvements in the quality and usefulness of the information available to support decision making at national policy level, and locally. An example of this is the opportunity to pool information across organisational boundaries, to give larger population sample sizes to support analyses
- More cost-effective and sustainable approach to the public sector than the current range of limited solutions and one-off exercises