

ICB Primary Care Contracts Sub Committee

Date of meeting	10 July 2025
Title of paper	Delivery Assurance End of Year Report 2024/25
Presented by	Peter Tinson, Director of Primary and Community Commissioning
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Agenda item	6
Confidential	No

Executive summary

This report provides an overview of the management of primary care contracts undertaken by the delivery assurance team within the primary and community care commissioning team. There are a range of contractual management and monitoring activities undertaken in addition to the significant contractual decisions made by the Sub Committee and supporting groups.

The work undertaken by the delivery assurance team ensures that the ICB meets the requirements of its delegation agreement with NHS England and that contracts are managed in accordance with national legislation and policy. The report provides an overview of these activities for all four primary care contractor groups. It also provides insight into contractual changes which are received and processed by the team, as well as operational issues.

Advise, Assure or Alert

Assure the committee:

- That the contractual management of primary care (plus some community and secondary care) contracts have been undertaken in accordance with the delegation agreement

Advise the committee:

- Of the contractual management undertaken by the delivery assurance team within the primary and community care commissioning team

Recommendations

The Primary Care Contracts Sub Committee is asked to:

- Note the content of this report

Which Strategic Objective/s does the report contribute to		Tick
1	Improve quality, including safety, clinical outcomes, and patient experience	
2	To equalise opportunities and clinical outcomes across the area	
3	Make working in Lancashire and South Cumbria an attractive and desirable option for existing and potential employees	

4	Meet financial targets and deliver improved productivity	
5	Meet national and locally determined performance standards and targets	X
6	To develop and implement ambitious, deliverable strategies	

Implications

	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
Associated risks	X			As articulated in section 3
Are associated risks detailed on the ICB Risk Register?	X			
Financial Implications		X		

Where paper has been discussed

Meeting	Date	Outcomes
Primary Care Commissioning Groups for primary medical services, pharmacy, dental and optometry	During June and July 2024	For information

Conflicts of interest associated with this report

Not applicable

Impact assessments

	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
Quality impact assessment completed			X	
Equality impact assessment completed			X	
Data privacy impact assessment completed			X	

Report authorised by:

Craig Harris, Chief Operating Officer

ICB Primary Care Contracts Sub Committee

Delivery Assurance End of Year Report 2024/25

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The ICB contracts with over 1,000 primary care providers. The associated contractual administration and assurance is undertaken by the delivery assurance team within the primary and community care commissioning team.
- 1.2 Alongside the significant Sub Committee contractual decisions and the supporting group operational decisions, there is a range of contractual administration and contract monitoring that is undertaken by the delivery assurance team. This work ensures the ICB meets the requirements of its delegation agreement and that it manages contracts in accordance with national legislation and policy.
- 1.3 This report provides an overview of the contractual management that has been undertaken by the team.

2. Contract administration

- 2.1 The effective management of primary care contracts requires a range of administrative activities to take place that ensure contractual documentation is up-to-date and legally compliant. Decisions taken by the Sub-committee and the associated groups often result in the requirement for a contract variation or a new contract to be issued. In addition, the team process various types of transactional contractual variations.
- 2.2 Examples of contractual administration include:
 - 2.1.1 Following decisions made by the Sub Committee - issuing of a new contract following a contract award; issuing of contract variations following the agreement of a practice merger and to support investments agreed within the dental access plan.
 - 2.1.2 Following decisions made by the groups - issuing of contract variations following a change in contracted hours, changes in activity levels.
 - 2.1.3 Routine transactional processes such as adding or removing suitable individuals from a contract or issuing national variations.
- 2.3 Appendix one shows a summary of the various contractual administration activities undertaken by the delivery assurance team during 2024/25. There were 633 individual transactions.

3.0 Insights

3.1 Levels of contractual activity were not routinely kept by NHS England and it is not possible to track historical trends. However, it is observed that there is an increase in:

- Partners coming on and off contracts
- Requests by contractors to novate their contracts and merge with other contractors

It appears that providers are increasingly considering their business models, resulting in an increase in requests for contractual changes.

3.2 Through pro-active contract management, there is an increase in dental access towards pre-pandemic levels in most local authority areas, with the exception of the Fylde Coast.

3.3 The delivery assurance team work closely with the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) and Primary Care Services England (PCSE) who provide additional administrative support for some primary care functions, such as processing payments for providers and the management of some new contract applications. The delivery assurance team is routinely required to resolve hand off issues between these partners and practices.

3.4 The time taken to process contractual variations has increased in response to changes in governance arrangements such as the authorisation of contract variations. Proposals to improve efficiency will be included in the review of group delegation arrangements to be received by the Sub Committee in August 2025.

3.5 It is good practice to regularly undertake a contracting housekeeping exercise to ensure all contracts are current. It has not been possible to undertake this exercise for several years partly due to changes in information technology systems and also team capacity. This poses a risk to the ICB should contractual or legal action commence with a contractor. This risk is articulated in the primary care risk register.

4. Conclusion

4.1 The report shows the significant amount of contractual administration undertaken by the delivery assurance team.

5. Recommendations

The Primary Care Contracts Sub Committee is asked to:

- Note the content of this report

Paul Juson

Sarah Danson

David Armstrong

June 2025

Appendix One

PowerPoint Presentation