

Key Messages Regional Advisory Forum – March 2024

Regional Focus – North

- Year to date the full year effect of savings nationally is £68.2m (4.2%), £18.84 (3.5%) of this has been achieved in the North. Q3 net savings in the North was £7.39m (£3.9%)
- Thanks were given to members for their support on the recent contract launch issues
- To better balance resource, there have been changes to the Senior Regional ICS Manager territories, ICS Procurement Leads that are impacted have been informed
- Jonathan Hilton was welcomed as the new representative for South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw
- Sam Davison (Clinical Procurement Nurse Specialist at South Tees NHS Foundation Trust) joined the meeting to provide his positive experience of being a pilot trust on the Digital Commerce Platform Programme

Key points

- Value Based Procurement (VBP) 24/25 priorities will be shared with customers shortly, this will show potential savings which have been financially modelled at NHS provider level
- It is expected that market inflation will be between 1.5 to 2% for 2024/2025 across the NHS Supply Chain catalogue. The aim is to deliver 2% savings net of the expected catalogue inflation, this excludes capital but will include VBP
- An update was provided on the alignment of NHSE and NHS Supply Chain savings methodologies. The methodologies are broadly aligned, however there are some issues around differing baselines which can cause discrepancies
- An update was provided on the Service Offer Development programme. The original working group have now been consulted with final recommendations. Communications are being produced to disseminate to all customers. This will include a phased high-level roadmap for delivery, with immediate priorities having already been built into the NHS Supply Chain Business Plan for 2024/25
- A summary of the National Audit Office (NAO) Report and Public Accounts Committee (PAC) was provided. The report highlighted the need for NHS Supply Chain to continue to run a structured transformation programme and to continue to understand how to partner more effectively with customers to improve customer satisfaction. A report from the PAC is due to be released ahead of the Easter break
- Members of the Commercial team joined the meeting to provide an update on the recent contract launch issues on TOS 3 and Airways Management. An apology was provided, recognising the additional resource that is required from trusts to resolve these issues. A full contract launch programme review is now underway to understand why the issues occurred and how processes can be improved to mitigate going forward

Emma Lowry (Head of Digital Commerce) joined the meeting to provide an update on the Digital Commerce Platform Project. Key points included:

- To ensure long term success, five key areas have been prioritised
- Team capabilities, a team of individuals who are experienced in complex B2B environments are being recruited
- Insights and knowledge, data has been sought from a variety of sources to ensure the right decisions are made
- Ways of working, aiming for a truly collaborative and co-design transparent approach
- A landscape view is being taken to ensure the whole customer digital experience is considered
- Technology and platforms are being implemented to ensure faster delivery of changes in the future

- Work is ongoing with six pilot trusts to test the Minimal Viable Product site; this will allow feedback to be gathered and fixes to be implemented. Additional features will be added in a controlled manner
- Release one and two have been completed and additional trusts are now being consulted for research purposes
- As the programme develops, more pilot trusts will be recruited to contribute to the feedback and increase user familiarity
- The platform will have a contemporary and intuitive design and will have mobile responsiveness from day one

Tom Brailsford (Head of Resilience) joined the meeting to provide an overview of the Resilience Steering Group (RSG). Key points included:

- The Resilience team operates through a resilience maturity approach which includes the following phases: Reactive, Controlled, Proactive and Leading
- The approach in the organisation was in a reactive state when the RSG was created, and the forum was used as a source of escalation for customers to receive further information and to discuss specific supply disruptions
- The team has moved to a more controlled approach, and the RSG is now used more strategically and enables collaboration on key pain points such as demand management
- Additionally, the RSG has been used to establish and gain customer consult on new processes such as RAPID
- The consequence of the approach has meant that product availability has improved, and disruptions has been reduced. Suspensions are now lower than they were pre-COVID, and demand management is consistently low. This is not reflective of the current global environment and considerable work is required to maintain this
- The aim is to move from controlled to proactive and the RSG is key to achieving this
- It will remain a forum for feedback, escalation, and collaboration, however the aim will be to change to a co-designed 12-month workplan approach
- A request was made for increased membership, noting the aspiration is for three Procurement Directors and one CPSN from each region. Members were asked to express interest via voiceofthecustomer@supplychain.nhs.uk

Actions for the NHS

- A request was made for trusts to support category strategy customer panels. Customers can view and sign up to the upcoming categories on the new Customer Voice in Category Strategy page on the website
- Where not already provided, please share local and ICS workplans with ICS managers