

## NHS Supply Chain National Advisory Board - Key Messages December 2023

### Key points

#### NHS Supply Chain Service Proposition

- Customer workshops have now concluded, feedback has been sought from customers from 14 ICSs across all regions to ensure views from across the NHS are considered
- A series of recommendations and improvements have been collated
- This work is subject to funding from NHSE
- A further update will be provided at the Customer Live meeting in January 2024 with ongoing communications provided at the Regional Advisory Forums and via ICS managers

#### Feedback and Escalations from the Regions

- Acknowledgement that although there is a lot of change at NHS Supply Chain, positive relationships are being maintained
- Positive feedback received on the dashboard development, though further updates are required
- Conversations at the Southern Advisory Forum are maturing, good collaboration underway
- A request was made for more clarity on NHS Supply Chain's £1billion and CCF £1.5billion savings target, how these fit together and timelines to achieve

#### NHSE Update

- It was felt the launch at the HCSA conference of the Strategic Framework for NHS Commercial landed well, work now needs to be done on implementation
- Inventory management, logistics strategy and core list will be key deliverables for NHS Supply Chain
- Preeya Bailie has now worked through a year-by-year efficiency plan for the £1.5billion CCF savings target. This will be incremental, but it is not all in the form of cash releasing savings
- David Williams will be leaving NHSE imminently
- Concerns were raised around communications from NHSE, it was felt that there is a gap in communications to frontline colleagues, this needs to be strengthened
- It was noted that it felt like there was no alignment from the centre between SME, savings and green agenda targets noting it was becoming increasingly difficult to meet all of these at a local level

#### HCSA Update

- HCSA now has circa 4000 members
- The winter conference was a success and was the largest so far, it will be hosted in Telford next year to enable it to expand further
- The summer event will be moving to a regional format
- HFMA and HCSA are holding a joint conference at the end of January 2024, where the aim is to build the relationships between procurement and finance. Members are looking forward to the event and hope it will help to raise the profile of procurement

#### Ensuring we are ahead of the plan

The Chair reflected on the financial challenges that the NHS is facing. Ahead of the session, regional members had been asked to provide feedback on how ICSs can organise themselves and what more can be done to increase productivity when being faced with flat real time settlements. Members were asked to consider the below themes, key points were:

1. Digitisation – how this can streamline activity
  - System rationalisation is required on both a local and national level
  - Standardisation of Inventory Management Systems
  - eDirect improvements are needed

- Need for a single price at a system level to allow all trusts to benefit
- 2. Data sharing – how this can be improved to increase productivity across systems
  - National catalogue and PIM are required
  - Common formatting of product data is critical to the success of system wide procurement activity
  - Atamis will bring benefits, but the strategy from the centre needs to be clearer
- 3. Operating at Scale - what can be done differently
  - Choice needs to be reduced, there is a need to leverage the NHS buying power
  - Supplier Management and Contract Management is required from central teams
- 4. Communications - what can be put in place to improve system wide communications and reduce areas of inefficiency
  - Suggestion was made that NHS Supply Chain and the Regional Advisory Forums could align to the seven NHSE regions. The current structure creates unaligned conversations
  - Need to ensure all ICS communities are working together and sharing intelligence
  - Best practice sharing needs to be improved as well as transparency of when things haven't gone well
  - Focus is on acute spend, there is a real challenge for those trusts that do not fit in this sector, better engagement is needed with community and ambulance trusts
- 5. Continual Quality Improvement- what system wide processes are in place to review and refine what we do
  - Need for a national approach to rolling out evidence-based improvements
  - NHSE is pushing continuous improvement in clinical communities there is a need to find a way for those agendas to be pulled into commercial teams

Sara Ford and Jodi Chapman provided an overview of some of the work that is being done to support. Key points included:

- The Inventory Management Programme will help to simplify the interface. The In-hospital team is working closely with trusts who have not been selected for the programme to understand what their issues are and how NHS Supply Chain can support them to be more efficient
- Improvement work is ongoing with eDirect, this is one of NHS Supply Chain's top three deliverables. It is clear what customers want but this will be subject to NHSE funding
- An update on the new digital commerce platform which is under development was provided. NHS Supply Chain has worked with six trusts to create this
- The core list work will enable certain ranges of products to be rationalised. Assurance was given that effective communications will be provided as this work develops and assurance will be provided that sustainability and the clinical voice have been considered throughout
- Supplier Relationship Management team is now in place, work is ongoing and will be a core part of who we are going forwards
- The customer voice team are working to enable trusts voice to be captured and ensure an outside in approach is being taken
- A new patient pathway team is now in place, they will support with the rollout of evidence based national projects
- A new clinical executive director has been appointed; this will enable better engagement with the clinical community