This document is undergoing continuous review and consultation at the RCGP Centre for Commissioning to ensure it remains a relevant and comprehensive description of the skills required for clinically-led commissioning. If you would like to contribute to this process, please visit: www.rcgp.org.uk/commissioning.
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Part 2:
Essential Skills for Clinical Leads, Directors and Teams

This document describes the skills and attitudes that you and your team require to make clinically-led commissioning a success in your community. The skills and attitudes identified in this document build on those described in RCGP Competencies for Clinically-led Commissioning Part 1: Essential Skills for All Clinicians and map to the NHS Commissioning Board’s six authorisation domains.

The competencies set out in this document are required by individuals and teams undertaking the following advanced commissioning roles and responsibilities:

**Clinical commissioning lead**
A clinical commissioning lead is a professional working in a commissioning organisation as part of the team responsible for engaging member practices and other stakeholders, agreeing commissioning priorities and leading commissioning plans. Commissioning leaders will need thorough knowledge of all the activities of the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), and skills in many aspects of the Clinical Commissioning Framework, depending on their particular role. In addition to having high level skills in their particular area of responsibility, local leaders in a CCG should be skilled at leading individuals, teams and systems, and be able to appreciate how their role serves the vision and responsibilities of the organisation, leading commissioning, and most aspects of leading improvement and innovation.

**Clinical commissioning director**
A clinical commissioning director is a senior leader of a commissioning organisation, responsible for leading the organisation’s business, shaping culture, setting and communicating vision, leading commissioning and being accountable for the quality, safety and productivity of local health services. Commissioning directors need advanced knowledge and skills in all the activities of the CCG, although they are likely to delegate many of the operational activities. Commissioning directors should have high level skills in every competency area and must be able to support others in evaluating and developing their own skills.

**Senior commissioning team**
A senior commissioning team, within a commissioning organisation, is responsible collectively for leading the organisation’s business, shaping culture, setting and communicating vision, leading commissioning and being accountable for the quality, safety and productivity of local health services. Senior teams will need to ensure their members have the right skills and resources to fulfil their roles successfully. Teams will need to create and maintain effective team working and an organisational culture which promotes excellence. Many of the development and support opportunities for commissioning will be best undertaken by teams rather than individuals.
What principles do GPs bring to clinically-led commissioning?

We believe that, as generalist practitioners, GPs bring their own unique set of principles to clinically-led commissioning:

**Collaborative**
Working with the full range of partners to develop effective, sustainable and integrated healthcare systems

**Community oriented**
Engaging local people and communities throughout the commissioning cycle and prioritising the needs of patients and the public

**Comprehensive**
Meeting the healthcare needs of the whole population, including the disadvantaged and the vulnerable, to improve health outcomes

**Clinically led**
Putting clinicians at the heart of designing and delivering innovative, evidence-based and high quality healthcare services
1. Bringing clinical focus and adding value

Commissioning is a collaborative, multi-disciplinary process which brings managers and clinicians together to evaluate local health needs and opportunities, create vision and priorities with the public, and specify and manage services with providers. Your Clinical Commissioning Group is required to ensure that your patients receive appropriate, safe, effective and efficient care which improves their health outcomes and contains costs. The leaders in your CCG must ensure that commissioning plans are developed with all relevant partners, serve the vision and priorities, and deliver the right outcomes for patients and the public.

1.1. Engaging professionals

Services cannot be designed effectively without the full participation of the healthcare professionals who deliver them. Your group will need to engage professionals in local GP practices, community teams and hospitals. Together with patients, the public and managers, clinicians should shape local priorities, identify opportunities for improvement, design responsive, cohesive systems of care and evaluate data on patient experience and outcomes.

As a clinical lead in your commissioning team, you should:

• Understand the factors which promote professional engagement
• Employ appropriate strategies and behaviours to engage professionals in your area of responsibility.

Additionally, as a director of your Clinical Commissioning Group, you should:

• Create a culture of full professional engagement in all relevant aspects of the work of your Clinical Commissioning Group
• Support members of the CCG team staff in engaging professionals.

Working together, your commissioning team should:

• Routinely evaluate the level of professional engagement in the work of your Clinical Commissioning Group.

1.2. Setting priorities

Your CCG must set priorities based on a robust understanding of local health needs, service utilisation and performance, and patient outcomes. This will require use of epidemiological data, trends analysis, indicators of variation, and analysis of safety, quality and the patient experience. Your CCG will need clinicians with data interpretation skills to evaluate needs, predict trends and identify opportunities to improve, to inform the setting of commissioning priorities in partnership with the public and other partners.
### As a clinical lead in your commissioning team, you should:

- Use a variety of data analysis techniques to identify and interpret trends and variation
- Contribute to consultation and decision making about commissioning priorities.

### Additionally, as a director of your Clinical Commissioning Group, you should:

- Lead the collaborative process of assessing needs and setting priorities
- Make decisions and strategic plans on the basis of robust data and agreed priorities
- Be accountable for the CCG’s commissioning priorities and plans.

### Working together, your commissioning team should:

- Provide expert analytical skills for interpreting qualitative and quantitative data
- Evaluate service provision and patient outcomes against the CCG’s priorities.

### 1.3. Designing services

Commissioners have a key role in designing services to meet local strategic priorities, in partnership with service providers. Your CCG should ensure robust and creative processes are used to co-design services with patients and providers. These should be informed by high quality evidence and experience of innovative approaches to service delivery. Commissioners should apply a deep understanding of safety, quality, efficiency and patient experience to designing services and identifying opportunities to improve.

### As a clinical lead in your commissioning team, you should:

- Use skills in mapping patient journeys, incorporating input from patients and professionals in every relevant sector
- Identify the impact of different options on safety, quality, efficiency and patient experience
- Consider the whole patient pathway, ensuring a comprehensive and cohesive approach to meeting patient needs
- Consider the role of new technologies in the design and delivery of services, to improve quality, efficiency, choice and access
- Identify sources of variability and waste in existing and proposed services.

### Additionally, as a director of your Clinical Commissioning Group, you should:

- Foster open, collaborative relationships with all providers
- Create a culture of service co-design which includes patients, the public and providers and draws on expertise from all relevant professionals
- Ensure services are designed to reduce local inequalities wherever possible
- Form partnerships with other commissioners to design services addressing rare problems or requiring collaboration over large areas.

### Working together, your commissioning team should:

- Maintain positive working relationships with staff in providers
- Ensure the availability of staff skilled in designing services for quality, experience and value.
1.4. Shaping demand

As the leader of the local health economy, your Clinical Commissioning Group will be responsible for ensuring that demand for services is kept in line with capacity. Working with the community, and providers in all sectors, CCG leaders need to understand and shape demand, both extrinsic and intrinsic, to ensure patients receive appropriate, timely and effective care.

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Lead the measurement and mapping of demand in your area of responsibility</td>
<td>• Create a proactive culture of understanding and shaping demand in order to prevent ill health, improve patient experience and outcomes, support people to play a greater role in their own care, and maintain a sustainable financial position</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Understand patterns of demand and predict trends</td>
<td>• Foster positive relationships with providers and community organisations who are able to contribute to understanding and shaping demand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Work with partners to shape demand, focusing on issues such as inequalities, avoidable unscheduled care and inappropriate variation</td>
<td>• Lead systems to understand and shape demand, ensuring an holistic approach which considers primary, community, secondary, social care and third sector services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Help providers understand and predict demand, improving their ability to respond appropriately</td>
<td>• Identify opportunities to prevent ill health and empower communities and patients to contribute more to their own care.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Working together, your commissioning team should:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Provide expertise in gathering, storing and analysing qualitative and quantitative data about patient experiences, population needs and service utilisation.</td>
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</table>
2. Engaging with patients, carers and communities

Your local community forms both the purpose and the context for your team’s successful commissioning. To be effective, your CCG needs to build partnerships with local authorities, providers, the third sector and the community, ensuring that the healthcare system is responsive to the needs and priorities of local people. Based on robust data, you will help to co-create the vision, priorities and plans for improving health and providing healthcare in your community, and capitalise on the power of the community to improve its own health. You must also act to safeguard the needs of the vulnerable, the overlooked and ignored, reducing inequalities and improving wellbeing for all.

2.1. Partnering with patients and the public

Your CCG should build partnerships with patients and the public that relate to them not only as recipients of care but co-creators of the group’s vision, priorities and plans. Your Clinical Commissioning Group will need to share knowledge and power with the public, making it easy and attractive to get involved, and actively seek the voice of the vulnerable. Your CCG will also need to become a ‘social entrepreneur’, promoting community-based organising to harness the power of patients and communities to improve their own wellbeing. These functions will usually be undertaken in partnership with third sector organisations.

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<tr>
<td>• Establish extensive links with your local community, to share information and decisions with the public</td>
<td>• Create a culture and systems for working in partnership with local people, sharing information and decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Promote the role of patients, carers and the wider community in improving their own health and wellbeing.</td>
<td>• Establish appropriate accountability mechanisms in the context of the community and the NHS.</td>
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</table>

Working together, your commissioning team should:

• Develop strategies and systems to maintain partnerships with local people
• Provide capacity and capability for sustained effective community engagement and empowerment
• Operate systems to ensure that the voice of the vulnerable and overlooked is included.
2.2. Evaluating population needs

To be effective, your commissioning team should shape the provision of services based on patient and public need. To do this, your CCG will require clinicians with skills in gathering and using data about health needs and service utilisation, in partnership with local authorities. Your group will need to build experience in using data from multiple sources, including public consultation, to build collaborative, evidence-based prioritisation processes and to evaluate the outcomes of services.

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<tr>
<td>• Base your plans on a sound understanding of available data regarding the needs of the population.</td>
<td>• Create a culture which puts the needs of the public first</td>
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<td>• Ensure prioritisation is informed by expert analysis of population and service data.</td>
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</table>

Working together, your commissioning team should:

- Gather and maintain data about population needs and service utilisation
- Ensure expert analysis is available to cover uses such as needs and risk assessment, process mapping, predictive modelling and scenario generation.

2.3. Protecting and promoting health

Commissioners of healthcare have a duty to protect the needs of the vulnerable, the overlooked and the ignored, and to promote health and wellbeing. Your CCG will need to develop a perspective of health which is broader than medicine. In partnership with the community, local authorities and others, your CCG should work to promote wellbeing and prevent disease and ensure that service plans take account of the needs of marginalised members of society.

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<tr>
<td>• Proactively consider the needs and experience of vulnerable and marginalised people when planning and evaluating local services.</td>
<td>• Ensure your CCG’s commissioning strategy takes particular account of the needs of vulnerable and marginalised people</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Create partnerships with organisations, both statutory and charitable, involved with vulnerable and marginalised adults and children.</td>
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</table>

Working together, your commissioning team should:

- Ensure data about population needs and service utilisation covers all relevant population groups, including those who are least able to care for themselves
- Maintain effective working relationships with colleagues in local authorities and the third sector involved with vulnerable and marginalised adults and children.
2.4. Managing media and communication

The way your CCG communicates will play a key role in shaping its relationship with patients, the public and other bodies. As a clinician, you will help determine communication priorities and strategy, and will act as a public face of the organisation in a variety of different settings.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Use communication and media skills to explain the work of your CCG in your area of responsibility.</td>
<td>• Shape and oversee the communications strategy of your CCG</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Use high level media skills to present the vision and work of your group in different contexts.</td>
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</table>

Working together, your commissioning team should:

• Maintain a strategy and capacity for communications
• Ensure enquiries from the media and other sources are handled promptly and effectively
• Continually evaluate the effectiveness of the communications strategy.
3. Delivering quality services and improving productivity

As commissioners, clinicians will be accountable for ensuring the services provided to local patients are equitable, accessible, acceptable, safe, effective and efficient. Your CCG will be well placed to create a culture of quality among providers in all sectors. By building relationships with lead clinicians and managers, your commissioning team can embed values of quality, innovation, prevention and productivity into the local health economy. To do this, you should adopt a facilitative approach, which acknowledges the ability of commissioning to influence providers’ vision, structure, processes and capacity. Your CCG can also act as a source of support and expertise for local providers’ continual improvement programmes.

3.1. Horizon scanning

Your CCG will need to take a proactive approach to identify and prepare for future developments in patient need. It will also need to prepare for changes in the healthcare provider market and other aspects of its context and work. Clinical Commissioning Group leaders will be required to consider the potential implications of future developments and help set priorities and plans for addressing them.

As a clinical lead in your commissioning team, you should:

- Identify issues in your area of responsibility which are likely to have an impact on future needs or provision
- Commission the gathering of appropriate data
- Make recommendations regarding future trends in your area of responsibility.

Additionally, as a director of your Clinical Commissioning Group, you should:

- Oversee processes for horizon scanning and strategic decision making.

Working together, your commissioning team should:

- Maintain a strategy and capacity for horizon scanning, including the gathering and analysis of relevant data.

3.2. Promoting research and development

Commissioners are well placed to support research and the diffusion of new ideas. Your CCG should create an environment which encourages providers to innovate and participate in research, and maintain systems to support the diffusion of innovation and evidence-based practice. You should make your group a learning organisation, participating in the generation and sharing of knowledge and embedding the values of innovation in commissioning strategies and plans.
As a clinical lead in your commissioning team, you should:

- Promote evidence-based practice and a culture which values clinical and health services research
- Provide appropriate support and incentives for providers to participate in research and to generate their own research questions.

Additionally, as a director of your Clinical Commissioning Group, you should:

- Support the ongoing development of the evidence base on which their patients depend
- Seek to attract inward investment in research and development
- Identify and create opportunities for mutual benefit between researchers and providers.

Working together, your commissioning team should:

- Maintain positive partnerships with academic institutions, research units, industry and others involved in research and development
- Ensure the priorities and activities of the CCG are based on sound scientific evidence
- Support the local research and development infrastructure
- Ensure high quality evidence is available to local clinicians and managers at the point of need.

3.3. Continual quality improvement

Commissioners are able to drive continual improvements in quality through their relationship with providers, contracting arrangements, and being a source of expertise. Your CCG should create a ‘quality culture’ in which the capacity, structures, processes and skills of the organisation are aligned with the local vision. Your group should use measurement and incentives frameworks which promote continual improvement, and act as an expert resource for providers in all sectors to reduce avoidable harm, improve outcomes and provide an excellent patient experience.

As a clinical lead in your commissioning team, you should:

- Mobilise the enthusiasm and energy of local clinicians, managers and patients to improve quality and value
- Analyse data on service activity and outcomes to identify opportunities for improvement in quality, safety or patient experience
- Work with providers to help them improve relevant aspects of their culture, teamwork, communication and processes.

Additionally, as a director of your Clinical Commissioning Group, you should:

- Lead a culture of collaborative continual improvement
- Create relationships and systems of incentives and support which increase the ability of providers in every sector to understand and improve care
- Ensure sufficient investment in improvement to overcome inertia and avoid the use of crude cost-cutting as a means to improve value.

Working together, your commissioning team should:

- Maintain resources and skills to support providers’ improvement efforts.
3.4. Promoting sustainability

Commissioners should act as careful stewards of resources in the NHS and the natural environment. Your CCG’s own operations should be efficient and ecologically sound, and commissioning plans should reduce wasted natural, financial and human resources.

As a clinical lead in your commissioning team, you should:
• Include the principles of sustainability in all service evaluation and design activities.

Additionally, as a director of your Clinical Commissioning Group, you should:
• Create a culture in which quality and value are understood in natural, human and financial terms
• Be accountable for your CCG’s stewardship of resources.

Working together, your commissioning team should:
• Build capability in measuring, predicting and improving the use of resources in the local health economy.

3.5. Promoting education and training

Commissioners should work in partnership with other agencies to provide individuals, practices and teams with access to high quality training and education, equipping them with the skills, competencies and expertise required to deliver effective healthcare commissioning.

As a clinical lead in your commissioning team, you should:
• Undertaking targeted training activities to enable you to master the specific knowledge and skills required in your area of work
• Act as an expert resource for others, including colleagues, patients and the community
• Contribute to the development of new educational resources and opportunities in your area of work.

Additionally, as a director of your Clinical Commissioning Group, you should:
• Promote a culture which encourages multi-disciplinary education and shared learning
• Support the implementation of a comprehensive and integrated education and training strategy for your CCG
• Ensure that high quality educational opportunities and resources, relevant to local health priorities, are made available to your team
• Contribute to the development and maintenance of national education and training networks for commissioning.

Working together, your commissioning team should:
• Actively seek out and engage with team-based learning and training opportunities
• Ensure training opportunities are available for all team members, tailored to their needs and roles.
4. Meeting organisational, governance and financial responsibilities

Your CCG, regardless of size, will have many different organisational duties, functions and relationships. As a complex organisation with important responsibilities, your group will require a breadth of skills from everyone involved in leading and contributing to its formation and activity. These include skills in business leadership, contracting, financial management and organisational governance.

4.1. Business leadership

The business of your CCG will require effective leadership, strategic planning and management. As a clinician, you will not generally undertake managerial functions (such as accounting, corporate governance, procurement, insurance and human resources). You may, however, play a key role in setting priorities, overseeing the business processes, and supporting managers in their work.

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<tr>
<td>• Participate in identifying risks and opportunities for the group’s business interests</td>
<td>• Ensure the group is constituted and governed appropriately, in reference to principles of good financial and legal governance</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Work as an effective part of your CCG’s team, maintaining skills appropriate to their role.</td>
<td>• Help to set strategic direction for your group’s business affairs</td>
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<td>• Shape the organisational culture of your CCG</td>
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<td>• Oversee business affairs and be accountable for your organisation’s conduct and viability.</td>
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Working together, your commissioning team should:

| • Employ staff with skills in business management or purchase contracted services, to ensure all relevant functions are performed to a high standard |
| • Monitor the conduct of your CCG’s business affairs to minimise risk and maximise impact. |
4.2. Market shaping

Your CCG will play a key role in simulating and shaping the market of providers, to ensure the sustainable provision of the right range of accessible, high quality services for your patients. Your group will need to predict future service requirements, identify gaps in provision and work with providers to create and shape services to meet patient needs.

As a clinical lead in your commissioning team, you should:

- Identify current or future gaps in services in your area of responsibility
- Help to formulate plans to fill gaps using existing or new providers
- Ensure the local health system is configured to promote health and reduce avoidable intervention, as well as to provide care when needed.

Additionally, as a director of your Clinical Commissioning Group, you should:

- Ensure the current and future market of providers meets the Clinical Commissioning Group’s commissioning intentions, paying particular attention to the needs of the vulnerable and marginalised
- Identify opportunities to draw on the ability of the third sector and communities themselves to meet public needs
- Adopt a robust and consistent approach to the decommissioning of services
- Oversee negotiations with providers regarding necessary changes in services.

Working together, your commissioning team should:

- Maintain systems for evaluating the current market and predicting future needs and gaps
- Collaborate with providers to predict and prepare for future trends.
4.3. Contracting

Contracts are one way to drive continual improvements in quality for patients and the public. Your CCG is responsible for overseeing the commissioning and decommissioning of services, ensuring contract systems operate well, serving strategic goals, investing wisely and managing risk appropriately. Your CCG will need effective systems to design, negotiate, monitor and manage contracts which deliver safe, effective and efficient care.

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<tr>
<td>• Participate in the specification of contracts relating to their area of responsibility</td>
<td>• Create strategies which are ethical and financially sound</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Support the evaluation of data regarding contract performance</td>
<td>• Lead an incentives strategy which is built on commitment as well as compliance as a lever for change, ensuring that contracting is aligned with a collaborative vision of quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Adopt a risk-based approach to setting and managing budgets, and employ modelling to identify opportunities to mitigate risk and improve outcomes.</td>
<td>• Supervise the operation of a financial strategy which serves the commissioning strategy, making it sustainable and accountable, and taking a proactive approach to the identification and mitigation of risk</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Take decisions regarding commissioning and decommissioning of specific services on the basis of expert advice and evidence regarding needs and performance</td>
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<td>• Be accountable for the CCG’s contracting activities and their impact on outcomes and NHS finances.</td>
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Working together, your commissioning team should:

| • Provide expertise for the design, negotiating, monitoring and management of service contracts, and ensure contracting operates within the overall finance strategy and governance framework |
| • Operate in accordance with agreed frameworks and principles regarding competition, contestability and conflicts of interest |
| • Provide comprehensive and timely feedback to providers regarding trends and performance, to support improvements in quality and value. |
4.4. Governance

Your CCG will be held to account for its activities, including managing its finances to ensure value-for-money, managing risk, ensuring probity, and improving the health outcomes of the local population. CCGs need to ensure that effective systems of governance and accountability are operated and that appropriate action is taken if concerns arise regarding performance or probity.

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<tr>
<td>• Ensure that work in your area of responsibility is conducted in accordance with your CCG’s governance requirements</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Work with all relevant local stakeholders to promote a culture of good governance and accountability.</td>
<td>• Create an open culture of accountability and excellence</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Establish and lead robust policies and systems of information, financial, corporate and clinical governance in accordance with best practice and relevant national and local requirements.</td>
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Working together, your commissioning team should:

• Operate appropriately resourced systems to ensure your CCG maintains high standards of governance.
5. Working and commissioning collaboratively

Your CCG will need to put in place arrangements for collaborative working with other commissioning organisations, to enable the effective commissioning of those services that extend beyond your group’s geographical locality and to achieve economies of scale. Integration of health and social care is essential, and groups will need to develop robust partnership arrangements with local authorities to enable this. Groups will also need to work closely with the NHS Commissioning Board and other organisations.

5.1. Forging partnerships

Your group will need to form a variety of strong strategic partnerships with other organisations. Such partnerships should integrate with the CCG’s overall vision. They should have a clear purpose, effective governance and appropriate safeguards. Clinicians will therefore need to develop the skills to balance competing priorities and demands, negotiating and handling difficult conversations with colleagues, providers, the public and others.

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<tr>
<td>• Assist in the creation and maintenance of effective and accountable partnerships with appropriate organisations</td>
<td>• Seek and create effective partnerships with all relevant organisations, including local communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Continuously seek opportunities to include patients and the public in the work of the commissioning group and to empower communities to shape and contribute to their own care.</td>
<td>• Oversee the maintenance and monitoring of partnerships and their outputs, handling risk appropriately and being accountable for outcome</td>
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<td>• Negotiate effectively with partners and commercial providers to protect the best interests of the CCG and the population it serves.</td>
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</table>

Working together, your commissioning team should:

| • Operate systems which involve the public and draw on partnerships as a matter of routine |
| • Invest in programmes to engage partners and empower patients and the public. |
5.2. Partnering with local authorities

CCGs and local authorities together make an ideal partnership for improving outcomes for their communities; each can best discharge its duties in collaboration with the other. Your group will need to form positive partnerships with elected members and staff in local authorities, co-producing local priorities and plans and harnessing the synergies between healthcare and the wider determinants of health. In return, your CCG may benefit from local authorities’ experience in commissioning of certain services and in consulting with the public.

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<tr>
<td>• Proactively seek opportunities to improve outcomes and streamline services through joint working with local authority departments.</td>
<td>• Create a shared culture between your CCG and appropriate local authority(s)</td>
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<td>• Maintain positive relationships with elected representatives</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Establish shared understanding and priorities for the population in partnership with appropriate local authority(s).</td>
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</table>

Working together, your commissioning team should:

• Develop effective working relationships with counterparts in local authorities
• Share knowledge about local needs and services with local authorities
• Identify opportunities to create efficiencies through the use of joint plans and shared systems.

5.3. Sharing commissioning

Commissioning of some services is best undertaken for a population that is larger than that covered by many groups. Your CCG will need to develop relationships and agreements with other commissioning groups in order to commission these services jointly, sharing expertise and risk. Your group leaders will need to set the strategy and parameters of shared commissioning partnerships, and oversee the processes for shared commissioning.
As a clinical lead in your commissioning team, you should:

- Identify the features of a population or service which necessitate a different scale of commissioning.

Additionally, as a director of your Clinical Commissioning Group, you should:

- Form compacts with other commissioners to allow for a flexible but robust approach to shared commissioning for certain needs
- Ensure that a joined-up approach is taken to the design of services over large geographical areas, to reduce variation and gaps between services
- Evaluate the development and delivery of shared commissioning plans against the Clinical Commissioning Group’s own priorities and the need to improve quality, value and inclusion.

Working together, your commissioning team should:

- Maintain positive working relationships with staff in other commissioning groups
- Identify opportunities to pool resources with other commissioning groups to reduce management costs.

5.4. Partnering with providers

Effective commissioning takes place within a culture of shared values and collaborative working between commissioners and providers. Services are best designed using a multi-disciplinary partnership of clinicians and managers from primary, secondary, tertiary, community and third sector providers. To be effective, your CCG will need to build relationships with providers built on trust, mutual respect and two-way communication, putting the needs of patients and the public first, and supporting providers in delivering the best possible care.

As a clinical lead in your commissioning team, you should:

- Lead service design projects in partnership with clinicians and managers in other sectors, drawing upon their particular expertise
- Support providers in their evaluation and planning of services.

Additionally, as a director of your Clinical Commissioning Group, you should:

- Create a positive culture with providers, based on shared values, open communication and a facilitative approach to service delivery
- Establish service design partnerships with their providers, to enable the creation of service pathways, specifications and metrics which are as effective, efficient and feasible as possible.

Working together, your commissioning team should:

- Build effective working relationships with managers in providers
- Maintain the capability and capacity to work with providers to evaluate services and identify opportunities to improve.
6. Building leadership capacity and capability

This area considers how your attitudes, skills and behaviours help you to be a successful leader and follower in your local commissioning team. It describes a collaborative approach to team leadership involving personal integrity and continuing professional development; skills in building and supporting your team, creating and communicating a vision, and leading others through times of change.

6.1. Managing self

As a leader and follower within a team, you cannot perform your role effectively and sustainably without attending to your personal skills, wellbeing and professional development. As a professional, you have a responsibility to continually evaluate and improve your performance and to behave in an ethical manner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Acquire and maintain skills relevant to your particular area of commissioning responsibility</td>
<td>• Create an organisational culture which values the diverse contributions of all staff in the local health economy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify potential future leaders and support them through mentoring and coaching.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Working together, your commissioning team should:

- Acknowledge the importance of supporting individual wellbeing and professional development, maintaining a culture of sustainable excellence
- Promote a healthy work-life balance and design structures and systems to ensure opportunities exist for staff to maximise their potential in a stimulating but safe environment.
6.2. Leading a team

Effective shared leadership requires a facilitative approach to working with others, which acknowledges the contribution of the whole team to successful outcomes.

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<tr>
<td>• Exercise broad-ranging skills in written and verbal communication, including the use of audiovisual presentations</td>
<td>• Be highly skilled in communicating in a wide variety of environments, to both lay and professional audiences, making appropriate use of visual media, story-telling and data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tailor your style and language of communication to different audiences and motivational styles</td>
<td>• Be confident in communicating safely and effectively with the media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understand the barriers to engagement in organisational change and formulate plans to overcome them.</td>
<td>• Support others in developing their influencing skills.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Working together, your commissioning team should:

| • Adopt a systematic approach to embedding partnership working as a core organisational principle, forming and maintaining positive working relationships with other organisations and continually evaluating your effectiveness | • Ensure organisational processes take account of the need for engagement and collaboration with relevant people and organisations |
| • Seek to be a learning organisation which fosters a culture of empowerment in which open communication, meaningful involvement and enabling delegation are the norm | • Regularly assess your organisation’s effectiveness at engaging others. |
6.3. Setting a vision

Effective clinical leaders have to look beyond the status quo, motivating others with a vision of a different, improved future. In collaboration with patients and your team, you will need to use ideas and information from a variety of sources to evaluate existing systems and generate ideas for improvement. You must become skilled at communicating your vision and inspiring your team to work towards achieving it.

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<tr>
<td>• Use appropriate processes and tools to contribute to the creation of the organisation’s vision, ensuring that local patients and clinicians and fully engaged in the process</td>
<td>• Make the casting and communication of your vision a high priority for the organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lead the gathering and interpretation of data and expert opinion in their area of responsibility, to help inform the creation of a vision for commissioning</td>
<td>• Ensure the organisation’s vision is communicated in an effective and timely manner to patients, providers and other stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Contribute to the communication of vision to patients, providers and other stakeholders.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Working together, your commissioning team should:

| • Establish systems to ensure the engagement of all stakeholders in the creation of the organisation’s vision | |
| • Actively communicate the organisation’s vision to all stakeholders. | |

6.4. Leading change

Commissioning teams need clinicians with the skills to turn good ideas and team commitment into successful change as efficiently and sustainably as possible. Your team will need to be able to use a variety of different tools to generate new ideas, set appropriate objectives, test and refine solutions, measure changes and ensure improvements are sustained over time.

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<td>• Use advanced continual measurement techniques to understand variation and identify opportunities to improve processes and systems</td>
<td>• Promote the use of data to drive organisational performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Plan and monitor multiple simultaneous change projects.</td>
<td>• Supervise multiple simultaneous change projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ensure successful changes are sustained.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Working together, your commissioning team should:

| • Create systems to support systematic, sustained approaches to change, including systems to gather, analyse and present data. | |
About this document

This document was developed in April-July 2011 by Dr Ben Riley (Education Lead, RCGP Centre for Commissioning and member of the RCGP Curriculum Development Group). It is intended as a guide for GPs and other clinicians wishing to understand the key skills and attitudes they will require to contribute effectively to GP-led commissioning in their local community. The skills and attitudes identified in this document build on those described in the RCGP Centre for Commissioning publication entitled Clinically-led Commissioning: Essential Skills for All Clinicians, which is drawn from the original Centre for Commissioning Commissioning Competency Framework (CCF).

The competencies within the document were developed by a Working Group of the RCGP Centre for Commissioning, led by Dr Robert Varnam. The Working Group included GPs and staff from the RCGP (Centre for Commissioning, Professional Development Board and Clinical Innovation and Research Centre), as well as from the NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement (Leadership, Commissioning and Primary Care Improvement teams).

The development of the competencies was informed by input from a number of sources, which are gratefully acknowledged, including:

- Discussions with national representative bodies, including the General Practitioners’ Committee of the British Medical Association, the NHS Alliance, the National Association of Primary Care, the Family Doctors’ Association and the NHS Clinical Leaders Network;
- Consultation with experts involved with the National Leadership Council, the Medical Leadership Competency Framework, the Leadership Competency Framework, the Leadership Qualities Framework and the NHS World Class Commissioning competencies.

Further information about the RCGP Centre for Commissioning can be found at: www.rcgp.org.uk/commissioning
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