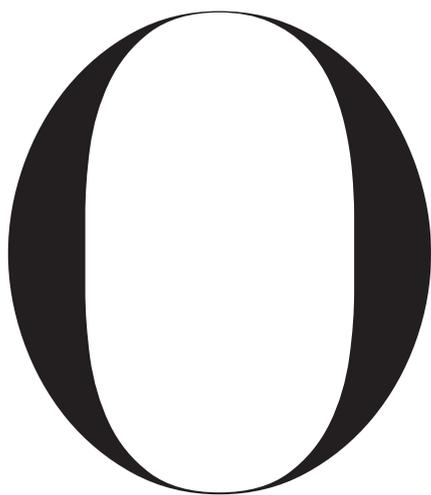




CLINICAL INVOLVEMENT: AT THE HEART OF NHS SUPPLY CHAIN

Jo Gander, director of clinical and product assurance at NHS Supply Chain's management function, Supply Chain Coordination Ltd, explains how health and care professional involvement is integral to the New Operating Model.



reflect the needs and preferences of our health and care stakeholders, informed by their knowledge and experience as users, to support the health and social care system to deliver high quality care in an evolving environment.

Stakeholder involvement informs the whole procurement cycle at NHS Supply Chain, from initial scoping to customer delivery and beyond, as we reflect on feedback and seek to continually improve the quality and value of the ranges we offer. The changes made to the Operating Model in April 2018 have advanced our procurement aims for the health and care system to demonstrate value for money and ensure products are fit for purpose, safe, and representative of the needs of health and care professionals, patients, and carers. For us, this is just the beginning, as going forward we have ambitious plans to further support more effective partnership working, acting as a system leader to strive for better quality and value for the NHS and our partners.

We have 11 specialist buying functions, known as 'Category Towers', working with us to deliver clinical consumables, capital medical equipment, and non-medical products such as furniture, food and office solutions. All our providers have a key part to

play to ensure the products we supply have the priorities of health and care stakeholders at the heart of the process.

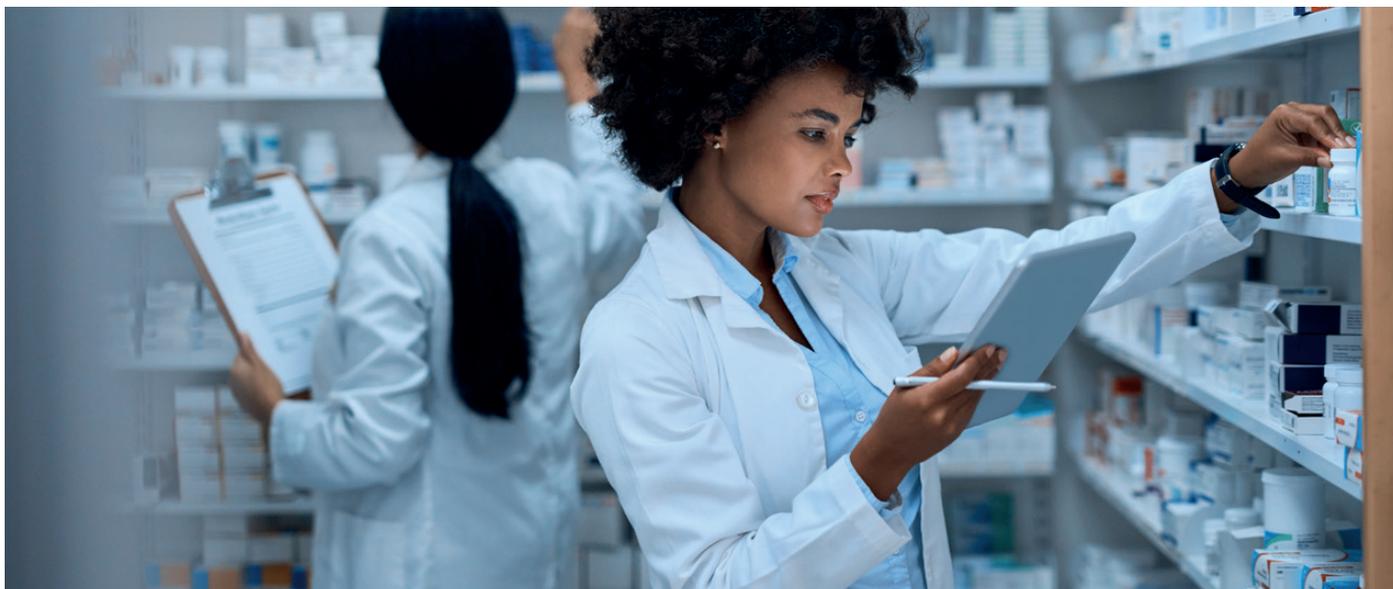
The importance placed on health and care professional engagement is highlighted by the appointment of Heather Tierney-Moore, OBE. Last December, NHS Supply Chain appointed Heather as a non-executive director to bring clinical expertise to the Board. Previously chief executive of Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust, Heather has extensive clinical experience in a wide range of roles including chief nurse at Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, and nurse director at the Lothian NHS Board.

"It's really positive that we recognise the importance of having a clinician on the Board, as it shows real commitment to clinical engagement," says Heather. "I see my role as helping NHS Supply Chain really listen to and value the voices of clinicians in a focus on quality and safety."

Clinical and Product Assurance (CaPA) Team

In April 2018, CaPA was established to pro-

Our commitment to meet the needs of users and support health and care professionals to deliver a consistently high standard of care makes their involvement central to the work of NHS Supply Chain. Our approach to product assurance ensures that the ranges we offer re-



vide quality oversight, governance, and assurance, as well as to support NHS Supply Chain to evolve as a system leader, through effective stakeholder collaboration across the health and social care landscape.

Central to the work has been the development of the CaPA Assurance Framework to ensure consistent standards across our Category Tower Service Providers (CTSPs) so that their procurement approach reflects the priorities of our system partners, with suitably considered evidence and user feedback informing decision-making.

CaPA ensures that the procurement process is informed by the patient safety agenda, working in collaboration with partners such as NHS England, NHS Improvement, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), the Department of Health and Social Care and its arm's-length bodies. Through this process it supports the adoption of brand new innovation, prioritised for adoption for the health and care system via HealthTech Connect.

CaPA also works with national strategic partners to ensure that procurement supports initiatives such as the National Wound Care Strategy Programme (NWCSP), Excellence in Continence Care (EICC) and the associated National Bladder and Bowel Health Project (NBBH), Getting It Right First Time (GIRFT), the Orthopaedic Data Evaluation Panel (ODEP), and Beyond Compliance, to support the delivery of the NHS Long Term Plan.

Category Tower Service Providers

The 11 NHS Supply Chain Category Towers are delivered through service providers who recognise effective stakeholder involvement as central to their remit.

Although each service provider organises their stakeholder involvement slightly differently, they all operate in line with the Clinical

and Product Assurance Framework to ensure that products meet the needs of health and care professionals and other users. A CaPA product assurance specialist (PAS) is allocated to each tower to work closely with them, providing expert advice and support to reinforce requirements from a health and care professional perspective.

Each CTSP involves stakeholders appropriate to the products they have a responsibility for procuring, including health and care

NHS SUPPLY CHAIN HAVE THEIR EYE ON THE FUTURE

professionals, patients, carers, and suppliers. Product evaluation informed by all stakeholders ensures that ranges are optimised in line with user requirements.

The recent work of the Clinical Collaboration Team from the Ward Based Consumables Category Tower demonstrates how we seek to ensure that clinicians influence the tendering process. The team involved the Association of Anaesthetists to improve anaesthetist masks, surveyed clinicians to understand their needs, and found an overwhelming desire to remove plastic hooks from the masks, to which suppliers have started to respond.

Clinical Nurse Advisors

A team of 14 national clinical nurse advisors (CNAs) in the Customer Engagement team support clinically informed procurement and the operational delivery of CaPA Framework standards at a local level.

Working directly with NHS trusts and partners, our CNAs are a key communication and improvement interface, sharing progress updates and ensuring that feedback is listened to and acted upon.

Our CNAs also work closely with the CTSPs, providing expertise and an important link with NHS Trusts across the nation, sharing good practice and supporting cross-CTSP development. They aim to empower health and care professionals to make choices that contribute to savings.

Future NHS Supply Chain Stakeholder Working

As an evolving organisation that seeks to continuously improve, NHS Supply Chain have their eye on the future, seeking new opportunities to engage and work in collaboration with our partners to support better outcomes.

In November, NHS Supply Chain will launch a new Quality Products Forum to bring together our expertise across the NHS Supply Chain and support greater innovation in clinically led procurement.

Through this Forum, and other similar collaborations, NHS Supply Chain remains committed to ensuring that our health and care stakeholders are central to the effective delivery of our New Operating Model, and the NHS Long Term Plan.

MORE INFORMATION

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