



HEALTH SERVICES AND EDUCATION: MAKING THE LINKS AND UNDERSTANDING HOW EACH OTHER WORK.

Over the past nine months a group of Somerset staff from all corners of education and health have been meeting together to look at how they can improve joint understanding of their roles and remits. In the last couple of years both health and education have undergone major reorganisations at a national level and more locally been subject to financial savings. Such changes have sometimes meant that previously established links have disappeared or that capacity to support children and young people has been challenged.

A starting point for strengthening partnership working is to understand the changes that have occurred at a local and national level. Here, Clare Laker, Public Health Coordinator for Children and Young People at Somerset County Council; gives a brief overview of what this means for us with regard to health services.

The structure of health services in Somerset in three steps

Understanding the structure of health services both nationally and locally can be a challenge. In April 2013, the Health and Social Care Act 2012 came into effect, making sweeping changes to the way in which the NHS is organised. The Act abolished the former Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and in their place divided responsibility for health commissioning amongst a number of bodies with local doctors taking much of the lead through bodies known as Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs). Our local body is Somerset CCG.

To understand the complexity of the restructured health service, it is important to remember three important points.

1 The first of these is not to assume that everyone in the National Health Service (NHS) knows what each other do and that they work collectively. In fact **the NHS is not one big organisation**. Rather it is a collective name for lots of different and separate organisations, each with their own remits, management structures, budgets and governance.

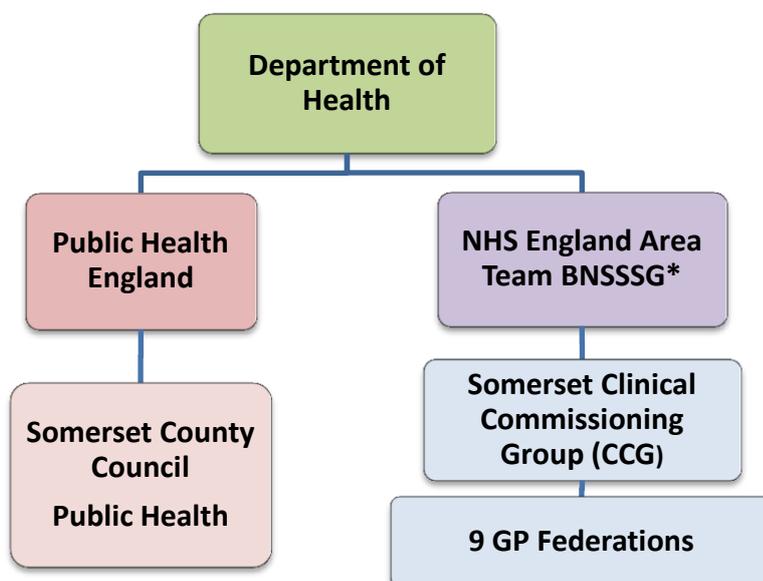
2 Secondly within health there is a very **clear divide** between those organisations that plan and purchase services based on local needs, known as **commissioners**, and those organisations that they contract to meet these needs, known as **providers**.

Figure 1 shows the national structure for commissioning health services and what these various organisations are called in Somerset.

The three big organisations that our commissioners currently fund to provide services in Somerset are; Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, the two hospital trusts, (Taunton & Somerset NHS Foundation Trust and Yeovil District Hospital NHS Foundation Trust) and of course the 75 GP practices. For further information on these, what services they provide, who pays for this and details of other providers visit the [Somerset Health in Schools Website](#).

3 Last but not least we should remember that not all aspects of health support for children and young people can be provided by NHS organisations. Educational settings too have a responsibility for the health and wellbeing of the children and young people within their care. Preventative health care in the form of Public Health messages, early help and intervention are key to ensuring children reach their full physical, emotional, social and academic potential. In April 2013, Public Health moved into Local Government. In Somerset we have an established Children & Young People’s Public Health programme which can support schools and other settings in tackling issues such as emotional health & wellbeing, healthy weight, oral health, relationships and sexual health, substance misuse and more. For further information visit www.somersethealthinschools.co.uk

Figure 1: National structure for commissioning health services and what these various organisations are called in Somerset



<i>Department of Health</i>	<i>Government department responsible for improving people's health and wellbeing through its stewardship of the adult social care, public health and NHS systems</i>
<i>Public Health England</i>	<i>National body responsible for Public Health strategy and national campaigns</i>
<i>Somerset County Council: Public Health</i>	<i>Public Health is now led through local government rather than the NHS. Local Authorities are required to undertake a local needs assessment and contribute to strategic thinking and commissioning that improves the population's health & wellbeing</i>
<i>NHS England</i>	<i>Regionally structured organisation that commissions a range of community based public health and healthcare services and provides leadership for local GP led Commissioning Groups</i>
<i>Somerset CCG</i>	<i>GP led body that commissions most health services in Somerset</i>
<i>GP Federations</i>	<p><i>Groups of between 4 and 13 GP practices working together in their area and informing the CCG's commissioning priorities</i></p> 
<i>GP Practices</i>	<i>Independent businesses providing GP led services. Usually first point of contact for patients.</i>

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