

As you will have seen in the media, **The Health and Social Care Bill** was finally voted through Parliament and granted Royal Assent and will now become the Health and Social Care Act (2012). It is still emerging what was in the final version of the Bill: over 1000 amendments have been approved but the key areas of change remain the same:

- Increase in GPs powers to commission services on behalf of patients.(Clinical Commissioning Groups: known as CCGs)
- Cut the number of NHS organisations to help meet the Government's commitment to cut NHS administration costs by a third, including abolishing Primary Care Trusts and Strategic Health Authorities.
- Introduce more competition into the Health Service.
- Promote joint commissioning and integrated provision through new commissioning arrangements.

This has been a challenging time for the statutory and voluntary sectors. Across the country many of these NHS reforms were being implemented well before the Health and Social Care had actually been voted through Parliament. Alongside this local authorities have been forced to make major changes to the provision of social care due to cuts in the funding they receive via Central Government – and yet a White Paper on social care is expected from Government “in the spring”. In Manchester the Redefined Social Care offer has been implemented but only once the White Paper is published will we be able to see what the future shape of social care will be and how this will work alongside the new NHS arrangements.

### **The Manchester position**

The Health and Social Care Act will introduce a new structure for partnership working in health and social care, including a revised **Health and Wellbeing Board** which will be an official committee of the local authority.

Manchester has already established a Shadow Health & Wellbeing Board. This group met for the first time at the end of September 2011. The Board aims to provide strong leadership and drive the public health and health improvement agenda with a range of partners around the table including the Manchester's voluntary and community sector. The Director of MACC, Mike Wild, was asked to continue from his involvement in the previous Adults Board and be the voluntary and community sector representative on the new Shadow Board.

The first few meetings of the Manchester Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board have focussed on building partnerships and agreeing priorities: this is new territory for some of the members who have not been involved in structures like this before. The March meeting began to move onto more practical issues as the three Clinical Commissioning Groups, Children's Services and Adult Services shared a summary of their plans for 2012-13. This made a start on the various members of the Board

looking at connections between their work and at how this fits with the Board's new role.

What is important is the structures that develop beneath the Board: this is where much of the work will actually take place. One example we know of is the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) Steering Group. This was developed at the end of last year and partners aimed to have put together a completed document by April 2012. All Health and Wellbeing Boards have responsibility for producing a Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and responding to this with a local Health and Wellbeing Strategy. What we know about Manchester's plan is that it will focus on the following areas:

- Childhood and dental health and Childhood obesity
- Worklessness and healthy work
- Cardiovascular Disease
- Mental Health and Wellbeing and Falls

As well as this the Health and Wellbeing Board is also intending to establish an "agenda setting" group to do the forward planning and an "officers group" to help drive day-to-day working between the different organisations involved. The aim of these groups will be to provide the right advice and support, encourage innovation and implement and deliver the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

To support the voluntary and community sector's voice in all this, MACC has reshaped our Health and Wellbeing Forum to be a place where the local sector can discuss the work of the Board and provide a means for Mike to feed back and consult colleagues – to give Mike and MACC more generally a mandate for our work around health and social care. The Forum has agreed to focus on building partnerships between the local voluntary and community sector with the Directorate of Adults, local Clinical Commissioning Groups and NHS Trusts. There will also be work to develop partnership working between local voluntary and community sector organisations.

The last Forum meeting in March decided to focus on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment at the next meeting: we have invited Neil Bendel (Head of Health Intelligence) to join us in a discussion about how the sector can be more involved in producing the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. We will also be discussing finding ways to raise GPs' awareness of the role the local voluntary sector plays. The date for next Forum meeting is currently being arranged: for further information please contact Mary Duncan at MACC on 0161 834 9823 or email [mary@macc.org.uk](mailto:mary@macc.org.uk).

We'd like to encourage local voluntary and community sector groups to get involved with the Forum: it's an opportunity to collaborate with other organisations. In the words of Regional Voices "Forum(s) can demonstrate how the sector is placed to help statutory organisations fulfil their aims, both in shaping commissioning plans as well as in providing services, by bringing knowledge of the localities and local issues."