Know your reviews: From Carter to Berwick

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What makes reviews different?

Different to national strategy documents (eg Five Year Forward View, national workforce strategy, NHS Plan) which are comprehensive in scope and hot-housed in development within the national bodies.

Reviews investigate an issue in detail and make recommendations
❖ Normally in response to ‘something’ eg event, care failing
❖ Focus on specific issue (eg patient safety)
❖ Operate over a finite period
❖ Informed by a comprehensive range of inputs (eg oral evidence, fieldwork)
❖ Independently led by a grandee
Lord Carter Review of NHS Productivity

Response to the funding gap and financial pressures facing the NHS. Tried to identify and quantify savings opportunities for hospitals.

Developed a single measure and common language of hospital productivity – the cost per weighted activity unit. Identified and share good practice through the Model Hospital portal.

Now expanding into mental health, community, ambulance, specialist services. Also part of the regulatory system for monitoring productivity. Parent of other programmes like Getting it Right First Time.

Why should you care?
A new approach of working alongside the frontline; reveals tension between encouraging and instructing; shows savings opportunities are there but are not quick or easy to realise
Berwick Review into patient safety

Response to care failings at Mid-Staffs hospital. Argued that patient safety problems largely result from systems, procedures, conditions, environment rather than individual staff actions. Proposed NHS should become devoted to continuing learning and improvement.

Now no-blame investigation through Healthcare Safety Investigation Branch; greater promotion of continuous improvement eg Virginia Mason programme; calls for more proportionate regulation

Why should you care?
Reveals tension between culture of support and culture of blame; level of acceptable risk; individual versus system accountability; can your regulate quality into a system? And because Don Berwick is an astonishing writer eg A letter to government, NHS staff and people of England
Wachter Review into information technology

A response to ambition to deliver a Paperless NHS by 2020 – particularly hospital care.

Argued for development of clinical chief information officer role at national and local level; galvanised regional IT planning through local digital roadmaps and global digital exemplars

Why should you care?
Raised debate on need for more proportionate approach to centralisation; need to look at wider return on investment; better to get things right than do them quickly; Data sharing and privacy both important; population-based healthcare and integrated care systems require heavy data and analytics component
Barker Commission on the Future of Health and Social Care in England

Review of whether post-war settlement of separate systems for health and social care is fit for purpose.

Furthered debate on future funding and delivery models for social care, facilitated moves towards integration between health and social care through Health and Wellbeing Boards / Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships

Why should you care?
Shows need for services to evolve as needs evolve eg aging population; political toxicity of hard choices needed; problems of collaboration and harmonising systems short of full structural alignment
Sir Stuart Rose NHS leadership review

Asked to consider how to attract and develop talented leaders in NHS.

Argued for a single NHS vision, a more porous approach to recruitment from other sectors, professionalisation of performance management and appraisal, reducing regulatory burden on frontline leaders.

Why should you care?
High level of leadership churn in the NHS and short tenures; evolving towards new leadership task focussed on working collaboratively as part of a system rather than ‘running a tight ship’; continual efforts to reduce regulatory burden from ‘the centre’ with little evidence of success.
Naylor review of NHS property and estates

Review of how to make best use of NHS buildings and land.

Argued for more strategic national leadership of the estate through an NHS Property Board; more funding from a mix of sources for capital investment in transforming how services are delivered and making up for previous underinvestment in maintaining the NHS estate.

Why should you care?
Debate on role of the private sector in the NHS; surfaced issues over who should benefit from sale of NHS assets and land; moves towards One Public estate; stewardship vs short-term management of resources.
Why focus on reviews?

• Because reviews often have **common themes** eg tension between respective roles of ‘the centre’ and regional or frontline organisations; between instruction to deliver and encouragement to improve and innovate

• And reviews **capture the zeitgeist** and current position of the constantly moving pendulum between finance and quality, and between long-term and short-term priorities for health and care

• ‘**NHS lingo**’ is not restricted to three letter acronyms.
Links

❖ Lord Carter Review of operational productivity  


❖ Wachter Using information technology to improve the NHS -  

❖ Barker Commission on the Future of Health and Social Care in England  

❖ Rose NHS leadership review  https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/better-leadership-for-tomorrow-nhs-leadership-review

Thank you

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