

Dept of Health and Social Care

Consultation on the appointment and operation of the Patient Safety Commissioner

Question

We propose that the Patient Safety Commissioner shall serve for a term of 3 years.

What do you think of this length of service?

- Too long
- Just right
- Too short
- **Don't know**

Please explain your answer.

Several issues affect the appropriateness of any particular length of service. Experience gained in office is useful to the good functioning of the Patient Safety Commissioner's rôle. This would tend to suggest a longer term. However, the possibility of someone in such a high profile post being influenced by determined lobbyists is never far away, and to prevent such bias creeping in, a shorter term would be better. If there is genuinely neutral oversight with the power to demand removal by the Secretary of State if such bias is observed, then three years would be a reasonable length of service. Without such neutral oversight, no more than two years is suggested. Our main concern about bias results from the way in which many organisations, companies and government departments have been 'captured' by gender ideology, making it difficult or impossible for directors/employees/members/etc to dissent from beliefs such as 'some lesbians have penises'.

Question

We propose that the Patient Safety Commissioner will be eligible for one reappointment after having held office and that they may resign and be removed by the Secretary of State, if appropriate.

Do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- **Neither agree nor disagree**
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your answer.

Our concerns relate to the same points made in the response to the previous question. An experienced, effective, unbiased Commissioner would be valuable if in rôle for a second term; One who has been captured by a lobby group needs to leave as quickly as possible.

Remuneration

Question

We propose that the Patient Safety Commissioner will receive remuneration.

Do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

- Strongly agree

- **Agree**
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your answer.

It is genuinely important that whoever is in this rôle is committed to it and clearly expected to provide a considerable part of their time to fulfilling the tasks. Of course many voluntary rôles are taken by people with commitment, but remuneration gives the 'employer' a level of control over the time input.

Funding

The Secretary of State is to fund the operation of the Patient Safety Commissioner, including in regards to staff and facilities.

Question

We propose that the Secretary of State will fund the operation of the Patient Safety Commissioner.

Do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

- **Strongly agree**
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your answer.

This is a key aspect of health provision and thus should be funded through the budget of the Secretary of State.

Business plan

The Patient Safety Commissioner is to prepare a business plan which will set out, in relation to the discharge of the Commissioner's functions, what the Commissioner's proposed main activities for the period (12 months) covered by the plan will be, including any areas or matters the Commissioner intends to consider, and what the Commissioner's proposed strategic priorities for that period will be.

In order to ensure continuous and relevant direction, a new business plan is to be published before the end of the period covered by the preceding business plan. The Commissioner is to take reasonable steps to consult before publishing a business plan.

Question

We propose that the Patient Safety Commissioner produces an annual business plan setting out their strategic priorities for that year, and that they will have to take reasonable steps to consult before publishing each plan.

Do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

- **Strongly agree**
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree

- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your answer.

We strongly agree, in the expectation that consultation will be undertaken with ALL those potentially affected by any of the priorities, and those who may have been requesting certain other priorities that are not being included (as they deserve the possibility of objecting to the choices made). We refer, for example, to the way in which, too often, it has been claimed that only 'trans' people should have any input into decision-making that relates to issues regarded as 'trans' issues. The impact on women, parents, children etc has been discounted, and there has been a lack of consultation with these other affected groups or those concerned (e.g. in safeguarding).

Accounting

The Patient Safety Commissioner is to keep proper accounting records and prepare a statement of accounts for each financial year. A copy of this statement is to be provided to the Secretary of State.

Question

We propose that the Patient Safety Commissioner is to keep proper accounts, including a statement of accounts each financial year, a copy of which is to be provided to the Secretary of State.

Do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

- **Strongly agree**
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your answer.

[No idea what to put here!! why would they NOT produce a statement of accounts? It seems a weird question.]

Annual report

The Patient Safety Commissioner is to be required to publish an annual report as soon as possible after the end of each financial year. This report should detail the way in which the Commissioner has discharged their functions and what they have found in the course of exercising these functions during the year.

This may also include more specifically:

- a summary of the Commissioner's activities and an analysis of the effectiveness of those activities in relation to the Commissioner's core duties
- an account of the steps taken by the Commissioner to consult patients or otherwise involve them in the discharge of his or her functions
- a summary of how the Commissioner has taken into account the results of any such consultation and anything else resulting from involving patients in the discharge of his or her functions

A copy of the annual report to be sent to the Secretary of State and be laid before each House of Parliament.

Question

We propose that the Patient Safety Commissioner must publish an annual report to explain the activities they have undertaken during the year in relation to the Commissioner's core duties.

Do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

- **Strongly agree**
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your answer.

It is obviously crucial that a rôle intended to be acting in the public interest is seen to be doing so by publishing an account of what they have done. Although it is not stated here, we assume that it will be possible for the report to be questioned as necessary, and concerns raised if, for example, groups feel they have not been consulted when they should have been, or particular lobby groups have had too much influence.

Advisory panel

The Patient Safety Commissioner may appoint an advisory panel who will provide the Commissioner with advice and assistance relating to the discharge of his or her functions and encourage good practice in involvement with patients. We will want to ensure the panel will consist of persons who represent a broad range of interests which are relevant to the Commissioner's functions.

For example, members with experience and/or knowledge of the health system or sector and types of patient experiences. The Commissioner may invite additional members to join the panel if a requirement for expertise in a particular area is identified.

Question

We propose that the Patient Safety Commissioner may appoint an advisory panel, whose members will have a broad range of relevant interests, such as experience and/or knowledge of the health system, sectors and types of patient experiences.

Do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

- Strongly agree
- **Agree**
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please explain your answer.

In principle, a panel of experts is obviously important, but we must emphasise the need for a wide range of expertise being consulted around specific issues. For example, if considering the use of puberty blockers, it would not be appropriate to consult only those who have been prescribing such drugs, or those enthusiastically promoting them. In this particular instance, the viewpoint of

detransitioners and doctors, nurses and psychotherapists who dissent from the mainstream, is absolutely essential, as well as the lesbians and gay men who see in themselves the troubled children and young people who are being taken down a route that would have impacted disastrously had it been offered when they were young. How differently events might have progressed at the Tavistock and Portman Gender Identity Development Service had the dissenters been listened to. Just as with the scandal around vaginal mesh, a promoted viewpoint about the particular treatment was regarded as necessarily 'right' and those expressing concerns were regarded as ignorant or 'having an agenda'.

Conferring of functions on others

We are looking to ensure that any staff of the Patient Safety Commissioner, so far as authorised by the Commissioner, may exercise any of the Commissioner's functions. Such flexibility will be helpful if, for example, the Commissioner is temporarily incapacitated or otherwise unavailable or to support with the volume of work the Commissioner may receive.

Question

We propose that any staff of the Patient Safety Commissioner, so far as authorised by the Commissioner, may exercise any of the Commissioner's functions.

Do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- **Strongly disagree**

Please explain your answer.

The potential for ideological capture of staff by certain groups is far too high for it to be appropriate for any one staff member to be given such a powerful influential rôle, however temporarily.

Question

Do you have any additional thoughts on the operation and appointment of the Patient Safety Commissioner?

In order for this rôle to function as it should, potential appointees should be asked for their affiliations, views and ideas about contentious issues, in order to ensure that their work in the rôle will rely on evidence and rationality rather than ideology or prejudice. Similarly, oversight must be provided, without compromising independence, so that certain directions or decisions are open to challenge.