



## Health and Care Bill – Second Reading debate

### Voice for primary care providers on Integrated Care Boards

This short briefing outlines the concerns of the British Dental Association, the Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee, the Association of British Dispensing Opticians, the Association of Optometrists, FODO The Association for Eye Care Providers, and the National Community Hearing Association, about the lack of adequate representation on Integrated Care Boards of over 190,000 non-medical primary care professionals working in the NHS in England.

- The Health and Care Bill allows for a shift in responsibility for managing the contracts for primary NHS services, including general practice, general dental practice, community pharmacy and primary ophthalmic services from NHS England to Integrated Care Boards (ICBs).
- This reflects the importance of the whole of primary care to population health and care. It also underlines the need for the whole of primary care to have a voice at all levels of the NHS in England.
- However, as it stands the Bill only dictates that each Integrated Care Board includes a member nominated by General Practice, with no insight from any of the other primary care professions.
- This is despite GPs and their staff accounting for only about a quarter of the primary care workforce in England.
- The fact that decisions will be made in the absence of representation from the majority of the primary care workforce is a matter of great concern to our members. One part of primary care – general practice – cannot possibly be expected to effectively represent the views, perspectives and distinct challenges facing other branches of primary care.
- We believe that for the benefit of patients and the NHS the crucial contribution non-medical primary care professionals make to the local health and care systems must be recognised and reflected within ICBs.
- We believe the only way this can happen effectively is if they are **guaranteed a voice on the Integrated Care Boards, with mandated Board presence drawn from non-medical primary care professions** such as dentists, community pharmacists or optical professionals.
- To this end, during the passage of the Bill through Parliament we would like to see the list of 'Ordinary members' of ICBs in Schedule 2 (p. 127) amended to include a member nominated by clinicians providing non-medical NHS primary care services within the Integrated Care Board's area.
- It is a fundamental problem that as it stands the Bill does not ensure that the voice of three quarters of NHS primary care professionals is heard in the making of commissioning decisions that affect their services and the millions of patients they treat and serve every day.

#### **Contact:**

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