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WEDNESDAY 15TH DECEMBER 2004

NHS Confederation: Practice based commissioning will deliver real benefits for patients

Practice based commissioning, set alongside payment by results, has the potential to radically transform health services and improve patient care, the NHS Confederation said today.

Dr Gill Morgan, chief executive of the NHS Confederation, said: "We have always been committed to the principle of practice based commissioning. The innovation that practices can bring to the design of local services will be a real boost to the programme of reform which PCTs are already leading.

"We are pleased to see that the final guidance recognises the importance of both national and local priorities and creates a framework in which practices and PCTS can work constructively together to achieve the best outcomes for their patients. Together with payment by results, this policy could create the most radical change of any of the current raft of policy initiatives.

"Effectively implementation will remain a real challenge, particularly given the tight timescale. It is important that practices and PCTs are able to realise the full potential of the policy and the benefits it can bring. This will be more likely if detailed guidance is kept to a minimum to encourage local innovation to flourish."