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**A Survey of Regional Associations of  
CHCs**

## SURVEY OF REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS OF CHCs

All 14 regional associations of CHCs were sent a copy of the questionnaire; only Wessex failed to reply.

1) Has the regional group of CHCs observer status at RHA meetings?

None of the 13 respondents had observer status at RHA meetings. In Trent, Mersey, South-west and North-west Thames Regions, CHC officers or members attend as members of the public. In East Anglia it was pointed out that CHC Secretaries and Chairmen have observer status.

2) If, yes, do the observers attend throughout or are they excluded from substantial parts of the Agenda?

Exclusion from the confidential part of the agenda is the rule.

3) Are Agendas/papers for RHA meetings circulated to Regional groups and/or CHCs?

Nine RHAs send agenda/minutes/papers to individual CHCs, but not to the regional associations. 2 RHAs, Mersey and North-west Thames, send them to both. 2 RHAs Yorkshire and South East Thames, send neither agendas nor minutes to individual CHCs or the regional associations. South-east Thames sends papers to CHCs.

4) How are contacts/consultations between Regional groups and RHAs maintained? e.g. regular meetings between Secretaries and Officers, Chairmen and/or Secretaries, exchange of documents and information, telephone contact, representations as necessary, etc?

In all but 1 case, South-east Thames, there are regular meetings with Regional Officers or Chairmen. There is considerable variation in the frequency of these meetings and in the personnel involved, ranging from bi-monthly meetings of RHA officers and CHC secretaries in the West Midlands to an annual meeting for CHC chairmen and regional officers and chairman in Yorkshire. On the whole, meetings with regional officers are more frequent than meetings with the chairman.

5) Does the RHA issue consultation papers? e.g. regionally managed services, regional specialities (designation and location), regional operational capital programme (selection of DHAs' bids), etc.

Three RHAs, Northern, Yorkshire and West Midlands, do not issue consultation papers. 6 regions expressed overall satisfaction with the information passed from the RHA directly to CHCs.

In 3 cases the respondents refer just to consultation over the regional strategy. Oxford point out that some papers are issued, but the region prefers CHCs to liaise with their own DHAs.

6) Does the RHA make available to the Regional group/CHCs any regional services? e.g. parliamentary reports, press cuttings, legal and other forms of advice or information?

Eight RHAs make some kind of service available to CHCs or the regional association. Trent, North-west Thames, Northern and West Midlands provide some form of regular service such as Hansard or press cuttings. The others provide a service when it is asked for. 2 respondents refer to legal advice, though one can assume that this is also available in 3 other cases.

7) Is there any formal discussion/negotiation on individual and regional CHC budgets?

In 4 regions there was no formal discussion on individual and regional CHC budgets. In North-west Thames there was discussion only over the salary of the Regional Association Liaison Officer. In South-east Thames CHC secretaries discuss their individual budgets with the RHA. In Trent there is an opportunity to place such items on the agenda for discussion when wished. The remaining 7 regions thought that there was a reasonable amount of consultation and discussion on this issue.

8) Do CHCs avail themselves of the appeal procedure to RHAs if they consider that DHAs have not allowed sufficient time for consultation, the consultation has been otherwise inadequate or if necessary and relevant information has been unreasonably withheld.

Seven of the respondents knew of CHCs who had made use of the appeals procedure to RHAs over unsatisfactory consultation or the withholding of information. 6 answered negatively or did not know.

9) If so, with what results?

This was answered by 5 of the respondents. Yorkshire's use of the appeals procedure had positive results; Northern - mixed results; North-Western, Mersey and North-west Thames - no results.

10) Are these issues discussed at regional level?

Seven of the respondents either had or were intending to discuss these issues at regional level. 2 simply answered "No". 3 did not answer. 1 was unclear.

11) Has the regional group asked for/obtained a meeting with the Regional General Manager? If "Yes" please attach the report.

Six regional groups had either not asked for or not obtained a meeting with the RGM. In 1 case there was as yet no RGM appointed. 6 respondents had obtained or had requested such a meeting. No reports were attached.

12) Have the Regional group/individual CHCs re-submitted their budgets and asked for increases to cover additional responsibilities (e.g. FPCs)?

Eleven regional groupings/individual CHCs had not re-submitted their budgets for increases to cover additional responsibilities. 2 of these intended to do so in the near future. 4 had done so or were in the process of doing this. In 2 of these of cases the request covered only the regrading of the CHC secretary. In South-west region there has been a reallocation of the total CHC budget to achieve a fairer distribution of funds, but no overall increase. North-east Thames are satisfied with their current budget, and in Trent and North-west Thames these matters are dealt with at CHC level.

13) In 4 regions no application had been made for extra funds for special projects. Yorkshire had made such an application but had been refused. In 1 case no application had been made but the respondent was sure that such an application would get a favourable response.

Seven such applications had been made with favourable or mixed results, mainly for individual CHCs rather than the regional groupings. North-west Thames had received money for part time secretarial help for the Regional Liaison Committee. South-west region will be having discussions on setting up a regional research/project budget for CHCs.

14) Have you any comments on the statements made by John Patten and reported in Community Health News No. 6 on pages 11, 17 and 18 relating to CHCs and RHAs?

Seven respondents commented on John Patten's remarks. Only 1 of these, North-east Thames felt that the relationships with the FPCs were going well and presented no problems. However, the respondent admitted that she was speaking only for her own district. South-west Thames were unhappy only about John Patten's remarks on the misconduct provisions. For the rest, comments were made on the problems facing CHCs in their relations with RHAs - an unwillingness to co-operate and the occasional tendency to undervalue CHCs. Understaffing and lack of resources were stressed by 4 regions.

15) Has the regional groups entered into negotiation with the RHA on job evaluation of CHC staff, salary scales, training of staff and members? If so, describe progress/results.

Only 2 regional groups had not entered into negotiation with the RHA on salary scales etc. 4 regions had discussed training with their RHA and received positive results. Discussions on re-grading were underway in 5 regions.

16) Further observations?

Six respondents availed themselves of the opportunity to make some further comments. Trent and North-east Thames were reasonably satisfied with their relationship to the RHA. East Anglia were disappointed with the RHA's response to the grading review. North Western region pointed to the serious lack of resources and offered a vivid account of the problems of a CHC. Yorkshire and North-west Thames were dissatisfied with their relationship to the RHA. In North-west Thames the complaint is one of sluggishness in dealing with CHCs. The complaint in Yorkshire is one of almost complete non co-operation by the RHA.

Tables summarising answers by region

| REGION      | 1  | 3              | 5        | 6        | 7        |
|-------------|----|----------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Northern    | No | Yes:CHCs       | No       | Yes      | No       |
| Yorkshire   | No | No             | No       | No       | No       |
| Trent       | No | No             | Yes:CHCs | Yes      | Yes?     |
| East Anglia | No | Yes:CHCs       | Yes      | Yes      | Yes      |
| N.W.Thames  | No | Yes:both       | Yes      | Yes      | Yes      |
| N.E.Thames  | No | Yes:CHCs       | Yes      | No       | Yes:RAWP |
| S.E.Thame   | No | Papers<br>only | Yes      | probably | No?      |
| S.W.Thames  | No | Yes:CHCs       | Yes      | No       | Yes      |
| Oxford      | No | Yes:CHCs       | Yes      | No       | Yes      |
| S.West      | No | Yes;CHCs       | Yes      | Yes      | Yes:RAWP |
| W.Midlands  | No | Yes:CHCs       | No       | Yes      | No       |
| Mersey      | No | Yes:CHCs       | Yes      | Yes      | Yes      |
| North West  | No | Yes:CHCs       | Yes      | No       | No       |

| REGION        | 8            | 9               | 10                | 11             | 12             | 13         |
|---------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------|------------|
| Northern      | Yes          | mixed           | No                | Yes            | No             | +<br>Yes-  |
| Yorkshire     | Yes          | positive        | No                | N/A            | No             | Yes/+      |
| Trent         | N/A          | -               | -                 | No             | No             | Yes/+      |
| E.Anglia<br>r | No           | N/A             | Yes               | Yes            | No             | No         |
| N.W.Thames    | Not<br>known | N/A             | No/but<br>will be | Yes            | Yes            | Yes/+      |
| N.E.Thames    | Yes          | No reply<br>yet | Yes               | Yes            | No             | Yes/+      |
| S.E.Thames    | No           | N/A             | ?                 | No             | No             | -          |
| S.W.Thames    | No           | -               | -                 | No             | No             | No         |
| Oxford        | Yes          | -               | Yes               | See 4          | No             | No         |
| S.West        | No           | N/A             | -                 | Yes            | No             | +<br>Yes/- |
| W.Midlands    | Yes          | -               | Yes               | No             | Probably       | Yes/+      |
| Mersey        | Yes          | not much<br>joy | Yes               | No             | No             | Yes/+      |
| North West    | Yes          | no progress     | Yes               | No/but<br>will | No/but<br>will | No         |

+ = positive results. - = negative results. + = mixed results.

REGION 15

|             |  |
|-------------|--|
| Northern    | Each Secretary to make their own case.           |
| Yorkshire   | Negative response so far to grading and training |
| Trent       | Grading appeal rejected, rest OK.                |
| E.Anglia    | Grading appeal rejected.                         |
| N.W. Thames | No   |
| N.E.Thames  | Training - OK. Grading appeal under review.      |
| S.E.Thames  | Grading appeal under review.                     |
| S.W.Thames  | Training under review.                           |
| Oxford      | Training OK.                                     |
| S.West      | Training OK.                                     |
| W.Midlands  | Not as a Region.                                 |
| Mersey      | No progress on appeals.                          |
| North-West  | Don't know.                                      |