

The Department of Health report **Developing Clinical Commissioning Groups - Towards Authorisation** (2011) looked at the available support for the development of Clinical Commissioning Groups. The authors worked with CCG pathfinders to identify areas where support was needed. One of these areas was **knowledge**;

*‘The organisation and its leaders (should be) equipped with the knowledge they need or an understanding of where they can find that knowledge.’*

In addition to this need to locate knowledge, a range of competencies required by commissioners have been identified in two documents published by the **Royal College of General Practitioners Centre for Commissioning** -

**Competencies for Clinically-led Commissioning Part 1: Essential Skills for All Clinicians**

**Competencies for Clinically-led Commissioning Part 2: Essential Skills for Clinical Leads, Directors and Teams**

These draw heavily upon the original World Class Commissioning competencies document and replace an earlier RCGP competencies framework from 2011.

LKS teams can apply their professional knowledge and experience of the content and structure of healthcare evidence and intelligence to support these commissioning competencies.

Standard LKS services and resources are listed here in broad themes, then mapped to relevant competencies for commissioners, to provide a tool to support the development and promotion of services to support commissioning.

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## LKS Skills & Services – Searching and Enquiries

### LKS teams can

- 🔍 Undertake comprehensive literature searches to identify the **evidence base** for **commissioning, decision-making** and **practice**.
- 🔍 Search for examples of **best practice and innovation** from published research and 'grey' information sources.
- 🔍 Provide comprehensive **enquiry services** searching for data, facts & figures and information on demand

## LKS Skills & Services – Current Awareness

### LKS teams can;

- 🔍 Alert users to relevant '**Horizon Scanning**' and **current awareness resources** through in-house bulletins, blogs, mailing lists etc.
- 🔍 Identify resources to create a portfolio of current awareness alerts for commissioners.

## LKS Skills & Services – Advice and Consultation

### LKS teams can:

- 🔍 Prepare summaries of policy and evidence on specific topics to support presentations & meetings.
- 🔍 Signpost users to relevant sources of high quality and reliable information on request.

## LKS Support for Research and Development

### LKS teams can:

- 🔍 Search for existing research to provide a foundation for new research projects.
- 🔍 Search for current UK and International Trials.
- 🔍 Advise on writing for publication and selecting relevant journals and 'Open Access' online resources to publish in.
- 🔍 Provide materials to support research, writing and study skills.

## LKS Support for Education and Training

### LKS teams can:

- 🔍 Enable access to the NHS Core Content of research databases and full text journals and provide training and guidance in the effective use of all of the content.
- 🔍 Provide training in information retrieval skills to suit all levels including:
  - Introductory, intermediate and advanced literature searching skills
  - Critical appraisal skills

## LKS Resources

### LKS teams can:

- 🔍 Check and update references for evidence statements in guidelines, commissioning documents, protocols and procedures.
- 🔍 Maintain physical library collections to support commissioners' information needs.
- 🔍 Use their professional knowledge and expertise to enable access to virtual resources to supplement any physical library.
- 🔍 Provide access to document delivery services to supplement library collections.

In addition to the RCGP competencies described overleaf, the National Prescribing Centre [Local decision-making Competency framework](#) has been published. This;

*'supports local NHS commissioners in their understanding of the range of specialist, administrative and deliberative skills and expertise and competences required when considering the prioritisation and resource allocation for medicines and treatments for a population and for individual requests.'*

The first of the nine competencies is **assessment of evidence for clinical and cost effectiveness** which includes the following elements, all of which can be supported by LKS services, skills and resources;

### Commissioners require the skills to:

Scope the initial commissioning or funding question and **identifies best available evidence**.

**Interpret, summarise and present the clinical and non-clinical evidence** so all members of the decision making group can understand the process of assessment.

**Critically appraise and synthesise evidence** from selected papers and other relevant sources.

Undertake or commission a **comprehensive evidence appraisal**.

## Competencies

### Setting priorities

Commissioners must develop a **critical, evidence-based approach** that extends beyond practice into local commissioning discussions.

In order to determine priorities the Commissioner must understand the disease, the service and the **evidence base** underpinning specific interventions.

*Supported by:*

- 🔍 [LKS Skills & Services – Searching and Enquiries](#)
- 🔍 [LKS Support – Education and Training \(Critical Appraisal / Literature Searching\)](#)

### Designing services

Commissioners have a key role in designing services to meet local strategic priorities, in partnership with service providers and patients. These should be informed by high quality **evidence** and **experience of innovative approaches** to service delivery.

*Supported by:*

- 🔍 [LKS Skills & Services – Searching and Enquiries](#)

### Shaping demand

Commissioners should be able to signpost patients and carers to services on the basis of **accessing and analysing relevant evidence** on effectiveness and quality.

*Supported by:*

- 🔍 [LKS Skills & Services – Searching and Enquiries](#)
- 🔍 [LKS Support – Education and Training \(Critical Appraisal\)](#)

### Evaluating population needs

Commissioners should shape the provision of services based on an **assessment of patient and public need**.

*Supported by:*

- 🔍 [LKS Resources \(guidance on conducting Health Needs Assessments\)](#)

**Skills in gathering and using data from multiple sources** about health needs and service utilization are required.

*Supported by:*

- 🔍 [LKS Support – Education and Training \(Literature Searching\)](#)
- 🔍 [LKS Skills & Services – Advice and Consultation \(Advising on sources of data\)](#)

## Horizon scanning

Commissioners need to understand the **future** needs of their population and the forces, factors and technological changes which shape the need, demand and supply of healthcare services.

*Supported by:*

 [LKS Skills & Services – Current Awareness](#)

## Promoting research and development

Commissioners are well placed to support research and the diffusion of new ideas and should create an environment which encourages providers to **innovate and participate in research**, and maintain systems to **support the diffusion of innovation and evidence-based practice**.

*Commissioners should:*

- Appreciate the importance of using **available scientific evidence** to inform clinical decisions
- **Locate, evaluate, share and interpret evidence**
- Promote a **culture of evidence-based practice**
- Pursue **opportunities to participate in research** for patient benefit

*Supported by:*

-  [LKS Support – Education and Training](#) (Literature Searching)
-  [LKS Resources](#) (guidance on research methods)
-  [LKS Support – Research and Development](#)

## Supporting education and training

Commissioners should work in partnership with other agencies to provide individuals, practices and teams with access to high quality **training and support** that equips them with the skills, competencies and expertise required to deliver effective healthcare commissioning;

CCGs should be **learning organisations**, participating in the generation and sharing of knowledge and embedding the values of innovation in commissioning strategies and plans.

*Supported by:*

 [LKS Support – Education and Training](#)

## Contracting

Commissioners need to be able to develop **evidence based service specifications** and service monitoring requirements relating to organisational structure and relationships, processes and outcomes.

*Supported by:*

 [LKS Skills & Services – Searching and Enquiries](#)