



## STP DATES TO CONSIDER

There is much confusion about the deadlines for CCGs, STP Boards to submit their Sustainability & Transformation Plans to NHS England. This is not surprising given the secretive and underhand processes. So let's try to clarify for ourselves a simple timeline that will help us...

### **23rd December sign off deadline for STP two year operating plan contracts that take effect from 1 April 2017**

The Sustainability and Transformation Plans that were sent to NHS England on 21 October are the Final STP Delivery Plans - not drafts that are subject to consultation. *(Even though NHS STP people will try to tell you so)*

In order to start operational delivery of their Sustainability and Transformation Plan, Clinical Commissioning Groups have to sign two year operational contracts with NHS providers on 23 Dec 2016. This is for the first two years of the STPs, 2017/18-2019/20. The contracts will kick in on 1 April 2017.

NHS England's instructions, P21.

<https://improvement.nhs.uk/uploads/documents/>

[Strengthening financial performance and accountability in 2016-17 - Final 2.pdf](#)

on STPs and two year operating plans for 2017/18 and 2018/19, say:

*"Once we have completed the 2016/17 'financial reset' it is vital that we move on swiftly with operating plans which deliver on the visions agreed within STPs. Final STP Delivery Plans, to be submitted in October by each footprint, will set out how individual organisations will play their part in delivering their locally agreed STP objectives, including sustainable financial balance across the health economy. Delivery plans will form the starting point for two-year, organisation level operating plans for 2017/18 and 2018/19, with collaborative actions across local health economies supported where appropriate by system control totals."*

**System control totals** are financial limits that NHS England will impose on across the STP "Footprint" area. It means that individual organisations may no longer control their own budgets if the STP Board or whatever governance process is in place decides that in order to meet the system control total an individual hospital or other NHS organisation has to make cuts or changes.

The December 23rd deadline for signing operational contracts for the first two years of the STPs - 2017/18 - 2018/19 - allows NO time for public consultation, even if the STPs had been published a few days after the 21st October, as was originally intended.

In a late change of plan NHS England [instructed](#) (*guidance letter for download*) the Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) Leaders not to publish the Final STP Delivery Plans once they had sent them in to NHS England.

Instead NHS England told them to publish summaries within local organisations' board papers by mid-December – but only after NHS England's Communications staff have made sure they are spun in way that "gives the public a good understanding of the proposed changes" and that they "articulate tangible benefits for patients" in language that is "clear and compelling".

Roger Davidson, NHS England head of Media and Public Policy, is responsible for contacting Footprint STP communications leads to begin this process.

It is rather weird that NHS England is so anxious to spin the Final STPs that they won't allow them to be published, when one of the questions they asked these STPs to set out is the "degree of local consensus among organisations" and "how you have held meaningful strategic conversations with both NHS Boards, CCG Governing Bodies and local government leaders"?

The other reason NHS England has told STP Leaders not to publish the Final STP Delivery Plans is because NHS England and NHS Improvement have to go over the STP figures and make sure they match the commissioner and provider financial control totals imposed by NHS England in July, in the so-called [financial reset document](#). (*.pdf download*)

Council leaders across England, with very few exceptions, are telling the public they know doodly squat about what's in the STPs. (Of course, this might not be the truth.)

By not insisting on proper oversight of and participation in developing the STPs for their "footprint"/area, the STP Agony Aunt thinks Councils have been negligent in failing to exercise due diligence on behalf of the public whose interests they are supposed to uphold and represent.

This negligence is worsened by misleading the public that the STPs that were sent to NHS England on October 21st are drafts that are subject to public consultation.