What is it?

A guide which supports commissioning managers by describing the simple steps to success required for successful project management of pathway redesign projects.

*Project Delivery for Commissioners* covers the whole project management process from creation of the project team right through to implementing the new pathway as business as usual. This tool should be used by commissioning managers or project leads responsible for the day to day tasks of securing pathway changes and delivering benefits for patients.

Our guide should be particularly helpful for PCTs seeking to develop their approach to competency 8 (promote innovation and improvement) of the world class commissioning framework. It also supports the design services element of the commissioning cycle.

What does it do?

Everyone knows that pathway redesign projects need to be project managed but experience shows that some approaches are not applied consistently. The NHS Institute has therefore used best practice and detailed co-production with PCTs to create a guide on the simple, effective and usable steps required in project delivery.

Our guide supports the project lead by providing information on the activities undertaken during each of the five major steps of a project.

- **Get Ready** deals with creating the project team including issues of project sponsorship and clinical leadership.
- **Start** discusses how to build a clinical case for change, scope the project and begin working with stakeholders.
- **Plan** tackles the practicalities of deciding on the details of the new pathway design and how to measure success.
- **Do** moves into the actual change process, incorporating team communications, action planning and risk management.
- **Keep Going** addresses the closing tasks of translating a project into business as usual.

Each step is separated by a gateway review where progress is checked against key criteria before proceeding to the next step. The overall approach can therefore be fitted neatly within local governance and programme management arrangements.
How do I know it works?

Project Delivery for Commissioners was developed following extensive co-production with five health communities involved in 14 projects in the latter half of 2006. It builds upon a review of these projects by the University of Birmingham’s Health Services Management Centre (published as Beyond Projects). This research identified a range of key success factors that have been incorporated into the design of the guide.

The approach outlined in Project Delivery for Commissioners is consistent with PRINCE2 (the UK Government’s standard approach to project management), with a focus on doing what works in the simplest way possible in order to make pathway redesign projects a success.

Since its original launch (as Steps to Success) the guide has been used to support a range of project managers. The new version of the guide incorporates the learning from this experience and provides a closer link between the commissioning and project management processes.

What else might be useful?

Project Delivery for Commissioners fits into a logical approach to pathway commissioning:

**Step 1:** Identify potential pathway opportunities across the health economy

**Step 2:** Prioritise and agree the pathways to maximise health improvement

**Step 3:** Explore and agree what needs to happen and structure a work programme

**Step 4:** Implement and review your work programme

Our guide helps with Step 4 of this approach.

Two other key NHS Institute products are available to help you follow this approach, these are:

1. Prioritise Commissioning Opportunities is a guide to a simple yet effective process for selecting a balanced portfolio of pathway redesign projects. It can be applied in steps 1 and 2.

2. The Commissioning Patient Pathways Guide is a simple matrix that explores the commissioning functions and the activities involved in pathway redesign including a wealth of hints and tips. It can be applied in Step 3.

About the NHS Institute

The NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement supports the NHS to transform healthcare for patients and the public by rapidly developing the spreading new ways of working, new technology and world class leadership.

Where do I go for help?

Explore our range of guides and supporting resources at: www.institute.nhs.uk/commissioning.

Please contact the NHS Institute Commissioning for Health Improvement team with feedback and any questions you have by e-mail: commissioning@institute.nhs.uk.