Report on extending patient choice (Any qualified provider)

Executive summary

1 Introduction
The Government made a commitment under the NHS reforms to extend the choices people have over their healthcare, as part of its vision of patients and the public being at the heart of the NHS. By extending the choice of provider they expect to drive up quality, empower patients and enable innovation. Extending choice from ‘Any Qualified Provider (AQP)’ is also a way to improve access, address gaps and inequalities and improve quality of services where patients have identified variable quality in the past.

2 The engagement process
There was engagement with clinicians, the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, the LINks, staff and the general public using a variety of methods. Methods used included newsletters, direct mailings, Talking Health (the Cluster on line engagement tool), presentations at meetings and paper questionnaires.

3 Key finding from the consultation
Key findings have been grouped under four main headings as follows:

- Overall approval
  Most respondents to the engagement indicated an overall approval of the introduction of AQP.

- AQP concerns
  Concerns about AQP were raised by a number of respondents and also by the Oxfordshire CCG.

- Understanding of AQP
  There is not a clear understanding of what AQP will mean.

- Care closer to home and more choice
  Both these are important to respondents and so any planning should consider whether these are actually delivered by the options chosen.

4 Next steps
- The report will be publicised to the general public and in particular to those who responded to the engagement.
- The report has been submitted to the SHA for information and inclusion in national feedback.