The Health and Sport Committee issued a call for written views on the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Bill on 3 June 2013.

The Bill was introduced in the Parliament on 29 May 2013 and the Health and Sport Committee has been designated by the Parliament as the lead Committee.

The stated policy objective of the Bill is:

“to improve the quality and consistency of services for patients, carers, service users and their families; to provide seamless, joined up quality health and social care services in order to care for people in their homes or a homely setting where it safe to do so; and to ensure resources are used effectively and efficiently to deliver services that meet the increasing number of people with longer term and often complex needs, many of whom are older.”

There are three key parts to the Bill. These are described briefly below.

**Part 1 - Integration**

The main proposal in the Bill is to require NHS boards and local authorities to create an integration plan which would bring together the two organisations under one of two broad models of integration. The two models are:

- The lead agency model – where the functions of one organisation (or parts thereof) are delegated to the other
- The body corporate model – where both organisations delegate functions to a joint integration board

NHS boards and local authorities would be required to do this for adult services but the Bill contains no restrictions on extending integration to children’s services.

**Part 2 – Shared services**

This part of the Bill proposes to enable National Services Scotland to extend its services to other public bodies. The functions of National Services Scotland include legal services, counter-fraud services, procurement, IT services and information and statistics.

The Bill also proposes to extend the NHS’ indemnity scheme (known as CNORIS – the clinical negligence and other risks scheme). CNORIS meets the expenses arising from any loss or damage to property and any liabilities to third parties for loss, damage or injury. The Bill proposes to allow local authorities and joint integration Boards to participate in the scheme.

**Part 3 – Health service – functions**

This part of the Bill proposes to give NHS boards powers to form corporate structures for joint venture purposes, such as the management and disposal of property and assets. Local authorities already have such powers.

The Bill also proposes to allow NHS boards to exercise their functions on behalf of other boards. One method used by the Scottish Futures Trust to attract revenue finance is to ‘bundle’ a number of capital projects together, within or across health board areas. The policy memorandum explains that this power would allow one board to contract on behalf of another and act as a lead for the whole project.
Call for written evidence
The Committee is issuing a call for written evidence to run over the summer recess. Stage 1 oral evidence will commence in September.

The questions we would like you to address are:

- Do you agree with the general principles of the Bill and its provisions?
- To what extent do you believe that the approach being proposed in the Bill will achieve its stated policy objectives?
- Please indicate which, if any, aspects of the Bill’s policy objectives you would consider as key strengths
- Please provide details of any areas in which you feel the Bill’s provisions could be strengthened
- What are the efficiencies and benefits that you anticipate will arise for your organisation from the delivery of integration plans?
- What effect do you anticipate integration plans will have on outcomes for those receiving services?

We would be grateful if you can submit your views in Word format on not more than four sides of A4 by Friday 2 August.

The email address for responses is HealthandSport@scottish.parliament.uk