

**Health Libraries Group
HLG Policy Panel**

National Service Framework

Value:

- an opportunity to develop and demonstrate good practice
- Ensure that services are cost effective
- Ensure services are giving value for money.

NHS Librarians have a variety of responses to the NSF.

- Some are implementing the Framework. This may be particularly true where there is a tradition of Helicon accreditation.
- Some see it as the responsibility of the Strategic Health Authority to implement the NSF, which begs the question as to whether it is National at all, and as such are awaiting decisions about where it stands within local SHA priorities. As a result some may only partially implement the Framework.
- Some are awaiting the results of local pilots aimed at assessing the practicality, in terms of time and workload, and the validity of the process.
- Some see it as imposing upon local libraries responsibility for things which are beyond their control (e.g. Trust human resources policies).
- Some see the standards as irrelevant to 'real life' activities which differentiate libraries and against which they can benchmark.
- Some see it as not fit for purpose (e.g. overloaded with criteria which it would take far too long to gather evidence for and which may be irrelevant anyway).
- Some see it as a 'tick box' exercise which attempts to deny the value of professional judgement.
- Some await the allocation of funding for implementation of the NSF.
- Some are ignoring it because they don't see themselves as having anything to do with the National Library for Health, providing a local service for local people.

Suggestions for improvement

- Await the results of pilot studies
- Assess elements of the NSF on a rolling programme
- Look at alternative, less onerous Frameworks (e.g. the Scottish NSF).

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