

10 Principles for LPC Restructuring

We are aware that many LPCs are considering the future and how they should change in order to be fit and ready to embrace the challenges ahead. With this in mind, some LPCs are considering mergers with neighbouring LPCs and by combining, will become stronger and ready for the future.

We are supportive of such mergers and would indeed encourage LPCs to actively seek such opportunities. We would, however, want to see the 10 principles listed below to be considered carefully when going down the merger route.

1. Proportionality of representation is maintained

The CCA worked hard in previous years to ensure LPCs represented the contractors within their jurisdiction by ensuring representation was proportional – we do not want to see this diminished.

2. Boundaries of merged LPCs are co-terminus with PCT clusters

This makes sense as it will allow meaningful interaction with the local NHS. We do, however, understand that this is an ever-changing situation and that LPCs may need to reconsider their boundaries.

3. The merged LPC should represent 400-500 contractors

This figure is a nominal one and we recognise that geography may not allow this. We would, however, encourage LPCs to look to reach a scale where they become extremely effective.

4. There is a maximum of 15 representatives on the merged LPC

We do not want to see committee numbers proliferate and by setting a maximum number of committee members will ensure this, whilst maintaining proportionality.

5. The LPC continues to hold daytime meetings

Holding meetings during working hours ensures they are conducted in a business-like manner and also facilitates guests to attend. This is the current practice in the majority of LPCs and we would want to see this continue.

6. Non pharmacist members are allowed to become LPC representatives

Again this is within the current model constitution for LPCs and many have adopted the practice. We would want to see this continue.

7. Locality subgroups should be adopted to ensure contractor voices are heard

Some LPCs currently use locality subgroups to ensure contractors have a recognised route for their voices to be heard. The practice has been successful and when properly planned, does not add to the administrative burden for LPCs. We would like to see this practice adopted more widely when LPCs consider mergers and would recommend the subgroups are formed on the basis of geography and/or contractor numbers.

8. Mergers should be cost neutral or reduce costs

We do not want to see the financial burden on contractors increasing as a result of LPC mergers. The bottom line is that the merged LPC should be cost-effective and deliver real results for those it represents.

9. Employment rights of individuals must be respected

We understand that where LPCs merge there is the potential for employed individuals in the constituent LPCs to become redundant. We would recommend that the employment rights of such individuals are respected and dealt with in a business-like manner. We would also expect that those employed in the merged LPC have fit and proper employment contracts from the outset.

10. Financial matters are in order before LPCs merge

LPCs considering mergers will have their own sets of financial accounts and we would recommend that these are in order before any merger takes place. Any excess funds should be dealt with prior to merging to avoid any complications.

By following the simple principles above we believe LPCs will be able to merge with confidence and be fit to tackle the many challenges which lie ahead. If you have any specific questions about mergers please do not hesitate to contact the CCA.

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