

## Primary Care Trust Charter

### Briefing for EDCM supporters

### What is the EDCM Primary Care Trust Charter?

The Charter is a set of voluntary commitments that primary care trusts (PCTs) can make to show that disabled children and their families matter. The Charter should be signed by PCT Chairs. It commits PCTs to providing a range of services within one year of signing, and also to addressing the needs of disabled children in their strategic planning. Currently, the Charter only covers English PCTs, reflecting the differences in the UK nations following devolution.

You can use the Charter as a starting point to drive up the standard of health services for disabled children and their families in your area. This factsheet will give you some ideas about how to do this.

### What can EDCM supporters do to promote the Charter?

#### 1) Contact your PCT Chief Executive directly:

EDCM supporters in England can lobby their PCT to sign up to the Charter. The Charter must be agreed and signed by the **PCT Chair** and sent back to the campaign.

The easiest way to do this is through the online action on the EDCM campaign website – go to [www.edcm.org.uk/pct\\_charter](http://www.edcm.org.uk/pct_charter). The action allows you to email your PCT Chief Executive directly, asking them to pass the Charter to their Chair to sign.

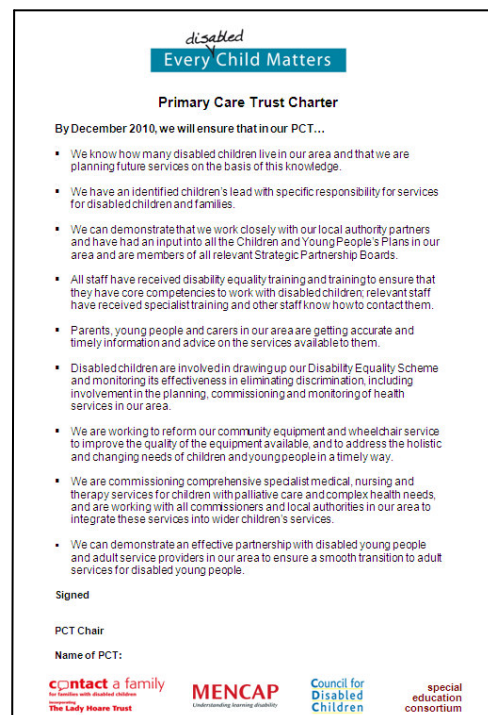
Alternatively, you can find out the name of your primary care trust by going to [www.nhs.uk/servicedirectories/Pages/ServiceSearch.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/servicedirectories/Pages/ServiceSearch.aspx). Enter the name of your area or postcode in the 'find health services' search engine and search for NHS Trusts. You can then find the name of your PCT Chief Executive on your PCT website, and contact them directly.

#### 2) Create pressure locally for your PCT to sign:

A range of key local decision-makers can influence whether or not a PCT signs up to the Charter. The names and titles of professionals and services will vary between local areas, but some of these will include:

- PCT children's lead officer
- Manager of Child Development Centre
- Manager of Children's Community Nursing Service
- Manager of Children's Therapy Services

Senior local authority decision-makers, such as the Director of Children's Services, are also likely to be able to influence whether a PCT signs up.



There will also be key professionals within children's services in similar roles, for example social care and education services, and in bodies that bring agencies together such as children's trusts and children and young people's strategic partnerships.

Actions you can take to encourage your PCT to sign up include:

- Arrange a meeting with a group of local parents to discuss what elements of the Charter are most important in your area, and make a plan to show how you think the PCT can deliver those elements. This is particularly helpful if Chief Executives are being advised by officers that the Charter is too ambitious.
- Write to your Chief Executive to highlight other PCTs near you who have signed up. The names of these PCTs are on the EDCM website ([www.edcm.org.uk/pctcharterlist](http://www.edcm.org.uk/pctcharterlist)).
- Arrange a meeting with the PCT Chief Executive or lead officer for children's services, to discuss the Charter and explain the need to prioritise disabled children. EDCM has a template campaign presentation that we can send you – email [info@edcm.org.uk](mailto:info@edcm.org.uk)
- Try to get the Charter onto the agenda for a meeting of the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Board, or another relevant meeting. You, or a professional you trust, could talk the Board about the Charter.

Other actions you might want to consider include:

- Talk to local media contacts about the Charter and why your PCT should sign – but always remember that the media has their own agenda, so think about how they might present your story. Consider local newspapers, TV and radio stations.
- Get parent and voluntary organisations to put articles about the campaign and the Charter in local newsletters. EDCM has sample text – email us as [info@edcm.org.uk](mailto:info@edcm.org.uk)
- Talk to your local Councillors. They can put pressure on the PCT to sign up.
- Approach your MP to ask them to support the campaign and lobby your PCT to sign the Charter. You might want to arrange to meet them at their local surgery.
- Get children and young people's voices heard – perhaps through a group meeting or making a DVD.

We have found that parent groups tend to get a more positive response from local agencies if they offer to work constructively with them to see what steps they need to take in order to be able to sign the Charter.

This need not require much of your time – possibly an initial meeting to share ideas, with a follow-up meeting a month or two later. You could also point out to your PCT that if they sign up to the Charter, EDCM can help them with press releases that will generate positive publicity.

### **3) Once signed up, support your PCT to deliver on their commitments**

This is the tricky part – and of course the most important part. It can be (relatively) easy to persuade PCTs to sign up to charters and other voluntary commitments. The hard part is making sure that they deliver on these commitments.

If (when!) your PCT signs up after all your work to persuade them, make clear to the people you have been in contact with that you will be expecting to see genuine steps taken to deliver the Charter commitments.

The Charter has a deadline for implementation of within one year of signing. But of course, by signing up the authority is accepting in principle that these objectives are correct – so you can and should expect to see your PCT acting according to the spirit of the Charter from the moment they sign up.

Actions you can take to make sure that your PCT delivers on their commitments include:

- Putting out a press release when your PCT signs up so that local media highlight this new commitment – email [info@edcm.org.uk](mailto:info@edcm.org.uk) for a template media release.
- Write to your PCT Chief Executive or Director for Children's Services asking if the PCT will produce a delivery plan for the Charter. If there is a delivery plan, ask if it is a public document, or if not, if you can share it in confidence locally and with the EDCM team.
- Try to get the Charter as a standing agenda item on any local planning boards you may be involved with, asking Officers to report to the board on progress towards delivering the objectives.

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### **Local Authority Charter**

EDCM have also produced a Local Authority Charter which should be signed by Lead Members for Children's Services. The Local Authority Charter is a set of voluntary commitments that local authorities can make to show that disabled children and their families matter.

EDCM wants every local area to sign both Charters to show that health, education and social care services are working together to improve the lives of disabled children and their families. The PCT Charter includes a commitment to joint working with local authority partners.

If your area has already signed the Local Authority Charter, you can use this as an extra incentive for your PCT to sign the Primary Care Trust Charter, and vice versa.

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This briefing has been produced with the help of parents attending EDCM workshops. The EDCM team would welcome feedback on the briefing and any other ideas to promote sign-up and delivery of the Charter. For feedback or more information, contact Lara at [info@edcm.org.uk](mailto:info@edcm.org.uk) or on 020 7843 6082.