

Update for Overview and Scrutiny Panel requested for March meeting GP Health Centre

Background

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel Chair was briefed in November 2010 about the submission of the GP Health Centre provider's resignation, prior to the release of the media statement explaining the reasons. A fuller briefing was presented to OSP on 7th January 2011.

The briefing identified the three areas of patient care that would be affected by the provider's termination of service and the actions taken by NHS Plymouth to ensure continuity of care provide immediate access to other existing service options, and to assess options for future provision of these services:

- Registered patients
- Walk-in patients
- Outreach services for people who are homeless and offenders

LINKs was also briefed prior to the press release and two articles have subsequently been prepared for the early and late winter LINKs newsletters.

Registered patients

All registered patients (approximately 1100) have been informed of the GP Health Centre service ceasing on 28th February 2011 and advised on how to reregister with one of the other 42 GP practices in the city. To date there have been no complaints received by the PCT or the practice on the closure.

A small number of patients have indicated that they will chose to move practice, but the majority to date have indicated that they will reregister with the co-located Mount Gould Primary Care Centre. This practice's catchment boundary covers the whole city so provides optimal flexibility for former GP Health Centre patients.

Capitation and associated payments will follow each individual patient from the GP Health Centre's allocated budget. All GP practices have the capacity to register more patients at present.

Two-thirds of non-registered patients attending the GP Health Centre are already registered with another GP practice in Plymouth and are able to access the following existing services for advice and treatment if their own practice is closed after 28th February:

- NHS Direct – 24 hour service
- Choice of 51 Community Pharmacies in the city – 42 of these pharmacies open on a Saturday, 7 on a Sunday. 18 pharmacies after 6.00pm during the week and 2 open for 100 hours each week.

- Urgent primary medical care services out of hours
- Minor Injury Unit – open every day 8.30am to 9.00pm
- Emergency Department
- Accessing urgent care dental advice and treatment if their own dental practice is closed, via the Dental Access Centre or urgent care out of hours service

To date, one informal complaint has been received from a non-registered patient.

Outreach Services

It has been agreed that this primary medical service should continue to be provided on an interim basis via the Mount Gould Primary Care Centre. This will ensure continuity of care to about 60-65 people who use this service. During 2011 the service will be reviewed by local authority and health commissioners in the context of the overall plans and strategic priorities in the city for people who are homeless and also offenders in liaison with the Probation Service.

NHS Plymouth has agreed that the existing level of resource and service provision will continue until 31st March 2012, pending outcome of the review.

Next Steps

A report is being prepared for NHS Plymouth's Professional Executive Committee and Board for later in March 2011 on the options for future service provision and recommissioning decisions. Clinical commissioners representing Plymouth Pathfinder Commissioning Group, Sentinel, will be represented at these discussions.

The report will be structured around the 3 areas of patient care affected by this change and will look at:

- Patient choice
- Access to services for urgent and non-urgent advice, treatment and care
- Quality of services
- Value for money
- Patient responses on the change

The report will also take into consideration the emerging Urgent Care Review and the plans being developed for 24/7 care in Plymouth, and the letter published by the Department of Health on 3rd February 2011 (Gateway reference 15419) on options to recommission or decommission aspects of GP Health Centre services once a contract ends.

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7th February 2011