

Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING:	Wellbeing Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel
MEETING DATE:	Friday 20 th September 2013
TITLE:	Urgent Care Update
WARD:	All
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM	
List of attachments to this report: No attachments	

1. THE ISSUE

To provide the Panel with an update on urgent care.

2. RECOMMENDATION

The Panel is asked to note this report.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications in relation to this update.

4. THE REPORT

In November 2012, the Panel agreed the proposal recommended by the PCT and CCG to relocate the GP-led Health Centre to the RUH to create an Urgent Care Centre (UCC) following a public engagement process on the plans to redesign urgent care services.

One of the key messages from the public engagement process in 2012 about the proposed changes was GP access, in particular the ability for patients to get through on the phone to their GP practice and to get a same day appointment.

As a result the CCG implemented an urgent care incentive scheme (known as a local enhanced service) which each practice in BaNES agreed to take part in. The scheme enables practices to gain additional non-recurring funding for delivering improvements in the way they respond to patients with urgent care needs over and above their core contract funding.

This incentive scheme, which started in October 2012 and finishes at the end of March 2014, is aimed at making sustained changes in urgent primary care access. The scheme has required practices to take part in the Primary Care Foundation's audit tool which has enabled them to analyse performance on a number of key factors for managing access and urgent care, including:

- ease of access by phone

- consultation rates
- patient experience
- balance of same day and book ahead appointments
- use of telephone consultations
- home visits
- workload by staff group and;
- variation in response by the reception team.

The first six months of the incentive scheme required each practice to undertake the audit and develop action plans in response to the findings. It also required them to complete a baseline patient survey about access with a final survey to be completed in March 2014 to compare the results and the impact of any changes made. Overall the plans have a strong focus on appointment availability and telephone systems.

Subsequently the CCG invited Dr David Carson from the Primary Care Foundation to the BaNES GP Forum Plus meeting in June to present the audit findings as well as share his expertise and knowledge about the importance of primary care in the urgent care system. Dr Carson, who was a GP for ten years and spent four years developing GP out of hours services and emergency care policy and performance for the Department of Health, is well known for a number publications, including 'Raising Standards for Patients: New Partnerships in Out-of-Hours Care' (known as the 'Carson Report') and 'Urgent Care in General Practice.'

His presentation was thought provoking as it challenged some preconceived views and ideas. It also challenged some misconceptions about the management of urgent primary care all of which stimulated discussions in the practice clusters during the meeting resulting in some of the practices revising their action plans.

During July and August 2013 practices were asked for a brief update on progress with their plans. Every practice reported changes to their current systems in line with their actions. However, it is still too early to demonstrate the impact of these changes on patient satisfaction with primary care access.

The Panel may also be interested to note that in August 2013, NHS England launched a 'Call to Action' to stimulate debate in local communities about the future of general practice and how best to develop general practice services. NHS England has published an on-line survey on their website which is open for comments and feedback until 10th November 2013.

Urgent Care Centre Update

At the beginning of May 2013, the CCG, with the support of Central Southern Commissioning Support Unit, published the tender advert for the UCC on Supply2Health. The tender also included the re-commissioning of other BaNES urgent care services on the basis that the contract for these services ends on 31st March 2014.

- GP out-of-hours home visiting service
- GP out-of-hours face to face consultation service at Paulton Hospital
- GP out-of-hours medical cover to Paulton Hospital and St Martin's Hospital run by Sirona Care & Health CIC
- The homeless primary care service based at Julian House.

The CCG is currently in the procurement process and as such cannot disclose any information about who will run the services as it is commercially sensitive. However, the contract is expected to be awarded in November.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

A risk assessment is not necessary in respect of this update report.

6. EQUALITIES

An equalities impact assessment is not warranted in respect of this update report.

7. ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

All practices are engaged in taking forward the incentive scheme which requires them to undertake patient surveys.

8. ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN REACHING THE DECISION

Not relevant.

9. ADVICE SOUGHT

It wasn't necessary to seek advice from either the Council's Monitoring Officer (Council Solicitor) or the Section 151 Officer (Strategic Director – Resources & Support Services) on the contents of this update report.

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Background papers	Primary Care Foundation, <i>Urgent Care: a practical guide to transforming same-day care in general practice</i> , May 2009 NHS Bath & North East Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group's <i>Integrated Commissioning Plan</i> , September 2012
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	