

WHYBURN MEDICAL PRACTICE

Briefing for the County Health Scrutiny Committee – February 2019

Background

In the latter half of 2018, NHS Nottingham North & East CCG (“the CCG”) and NHS England (North Midlands) Primary Care Team (“NHS England”) worked with Whyburn Medical Practice to help support and address some of the concerns that were being raised by the practice partners.

The principle concern of the partners has been in relation to the tenancy in Hucknall Health Centre and the liabilities in relation to non-reimbursable premises costs. The dispute with NHS Property Services is in common with a significant amount of other NHS Property Service tenants both locally and nationally. Since the inception of the organisation as part of the Health & Social Care Act 2012, changes to historic tenancy arrangements have been implemented including updated charging policies between landlord and tenants and a move from local administration to a national system. The practice tenancy was undocumented which left the practice vulnerable to fluctuating charges and without security of tenure.

In conjunction with the premises dispute, the practice experienced workforce pressures which led them to successfully apply for a temporary list closure in October 2018. In comparison to the position in June 2016, the practice was routinely down a total of 19 GP clinical sessions due to GPs leaving the partnership and sick leave. In addition, a practice nurse left the practice and the practice was unable to recruit to this role. The practice Business Manager was also on long term sick leave. All of which led the practice to state that they were struggling to maintain clinically safe services to patients and struggling to manage the increased administration workload.

A significant amount of CCG and NHS England resource was dedicated to supporting the practice through the dispute for property charges incurred up until 31 March 2018 with NHS Property Services. A fair and reasonable offer was secured from NHS Property Services that would have enabled the practice to be in a position to move on to lease negotiations for 2018/19.

In relation to the workforce pressures, the practice was supported with the GP sickness absence in line with the Regulatory provisions for reimbursement of locum charges. The practice was also given practical support in the management and administration of claims for payments and the identification of historic lapses in claiming where the practice had not maximised its income.

At the end of October 2018, the practice agreed to participate in a financial review under the locally agreed Hardship Policy. The practice submitted its annual accounts for the past 5 years as part of this process however did not submit the remainder of the information requested. This allowed a limited amount of analysis to be undertaken but the conclusion on the basis of this analysis was that the underlying business was viable.

Following a meeting with the practice on 20 November 2018, the practice put forward a request for additional financial support across a range of issues. The practice was advised this would be put to the Committee for consideration on 12 December, however exercised its right to terminate the contract on 30 November 2018. The contract will accordingly cease on 31 May 2019.

Actions To Date

The relevant Primary Care Commissioning Committee considered the options around securing continuity of provision for the patients registered with Whyburn Medical Practice on the 12th December 2018.

The following practices are within 2 miles of Whyburn Medical Practice:

PRACTICE NAME	DISTANCE FROM WHYBURN	RAW LIST SIZE AT 1/10/18
The Om Surgery	0 miles	2,122
Oakenhall Medical Practice	0.3 miles	7,234
Torkard Hill Medical Centre	0.4 miles	15,316
St. Albans Medical Centre	2 miles	7,282

Given the size of the Whyburn Medical Centre list (the practice list size at the 4th December 2018 was 11,908 patients, the list is closed to new patients until 2 April 2019) and the difficulty that neighbouring practices would experience in absorbing this volume of patients the decision was taken to seek a new provider.

A range of options were considered as to how that new provider could be secured and the decision was taken to carry out a mini-tender for a caretaker provider on an initial contract for 12 months with the option to extend the contract for a further 12 months. This will allow time for a process to be carried out to secure long term provision for the patients registered with Whyburn Medical Practice.

A procurement exercise has been initiated and the CCG and NHS England are working with Whyburn Medical Practice and NHS Property Services to ensure that all the information is available to allow that exercise to be completed successfully.

The CCG and NHS England have been working with other stakeholders to ensure patients are aware that there is no need for them to register at another practice and that they can expect to continue to receive care from the same premises.

Indicative Timeline

Item	Action	Planned Date
1.	Release invitation to tender	1 st February 2019
2.	Invitation to tender closes	15 th February 2019
3.	Announcement of successful bidder	22 nd March 2019

4.	Service commencement date	1 st June 2019
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