

Making Time for Everyone – Engaging with the public about extending access to routine GP practice services in North Lincolnshire

Briefing for North Lincolnshire Health Scrutiny Committee 26th June 2017

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Background

The CCG in conjunction with NHS England will be procuring a new provider of the Market Hill practice, which is based in the Ironstone Centre, from 1st April 2018. Market Hill is the only practice in North Lincolnshire that currently offer 7 day access to GP services 8.00am – 8.00pm.

In line with national strategic direction the CCG are required to offer extended and enhanced access to GP services, 8.00am – 8.00pm, 7 days a week, across North Lincolnshire by 1st March 2020.

The CCG propose to re-commission the Market Hill practice on 10 year contract that is aligned to core General Medical Servicesⁱ offering core hours (8.00am – 6.30pm, Monday-Friday). In addition, the CCG will offer a schedule to the contract to provide extended and enhanced primary care across North Lincolnshire that meets the national requirement of extended access for the entire population.

In effect, Market Hill registered patients will continue to have access to extended hours, so there will be no reduction in service. This approach will also provide extended access to the rest of North Lincolnshire's registered patients.

The proposed engagement exercise described below will ensure that the model developed for extended and enhanced access to primary care reflects the needs of North Lincolnshire's registered patients.

What are we doing?

NHS North Lincolnshire CCG is looking for the views and experiences of local people to contribute to designing a new service specification for a contract to operate extended access to GP practice services from April 2018. This is not about urgent care, which is served already by the GP Out of Hours Service.

Why are we doing it?

Patients tell us that they sometimes find it difficult to get an appointment. Please see Healthwatch's 2016 Report "Access to GP Appointments in North Lincolnshire". While most of their respondents (78%) were either very satisfied or satisfied with the opening hours of their surgery, 18% of service users were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied and most of these patients were working people. Some of these people commented that they would like to see more flexible and accommodating opening hours.

This is reflected in engagement carried out by the CCG at its Health Matters events.

GP services are getting busier. Like most areas of the country, there are difficulties in recruitment and retention of GPs and practice nurses with a significant number approaching retirement age.

Additionally our population is ageing and more people are now managing one or more serious long term health conditions so need to see GPs or nurses more often.

The Government has committed to improving and enhancing access to general practice services by 2020, with a vision of 8-8 access to routine appointments 7 days a week. However, it would not be affordable or practical to open up all of our GP practices seven days a week, especially given the current pressures under which they are providing services, as outlined above.

Emerging evidence for Vanguard sites suggests that 8.00am -8.00pm, 7 days a week is not necessarily required to meet local need, for example there is little evidence to suggest that people utilise general practice services on a Sunday.

We need to ensure that the model of extended and enhanced access to GP services is developed and designed to meet local need and demand. To achieve this we will be undertaking a comprehensive engagement exercise to gather the views of local people.

What are we asking people?

We will be talking to people about ways that might make it easier and more flexible to get routine (non-emergency) advice or treatment from a GP practice, taking the pressures described above into account.

This includes:

- Exploring what times of day and days of the week people would like to be able to book routine appointments
- Exploring whether people are willing to travel to another GP centre for routine appointments outside of normal hours – if so, how long would they be willing to travel?
- Exploring whether people would be willing to see appropriate healthcare professionals other than a GP – for example, a practice pharmacist (if their appointment is about medication) or a physiotherapist (if their appointment is related to something musculo-skeletal).
- Exploring how people feel about using technology – this might be face to face appointments over Skype or using mobile phone apps or online symptom checks to help people feel more confident about making decisions about their family's health.

Timescales

Scoping of past/current engagement on GP services	June 2017
Public engagement work	17 th July to 15 th September.
Analysis and findings report	October 13 th
Conscious considerations of engagement	

Planned Activities

- Survey – online and paper copy distributed widely
- Patients given the opportunity to go through the survey over the phone
- Engagement with Primary Care via Practice Managers
- Public/Patient Outreach sessions
 - Ironstone Centre (Market Hill/Birches)
 - Medical centres
 - Wellbeing hubs
 - British Steel
 - Children’s Centres
 - Area of high footfall – Supermarkets/Town Centre
 - Colleges (Fresher’s Week)
 - Focus Groups via Community Voice (seldom heard groups)
- PPG Chairs Forum
- Suggested Public Meetings/Events include:
 - NLC Adult Partnership board
 - Scunthorpe Mosque – community meeting
 - NLC Experts by Experience (LD/PD)
 - MS Group at Lodge Moor Community Centre
 - Carers Advisory Board
 - Ongo residents forum
 - Seniors Forums – Brigg/ NL
 - International Day - Crosby Together
 - Cross Sector Provider Group (NL) EDC
- Analysis and feedback to be presented at the NHS NL CCG Health Matters event in October

Appendix 1

Draft Leaflet, ***Making Time for Everyone***

Appendix 2

Draft Survey, ***Making Time for Everyone***

ⁱ All other North Lincolnshire practices are aligned to core GMS hours and rates. Core Hours are currently 8.00am to 6.30pm, Monday –Friday. Practices also have the option to offer extended hours, based on their registered list size, through a Directly Enhanced Service offered by NHS England. NHS England fund this service.