

31 May 2013

Cllr. Peter Eddis, Chair
Portsmouth Health Overview Scrutiny Panel
Portsmouth City Council
Civic Offices
Guildhall Square
Portsmouth
PO1 2AL

Dear Councillor Eddis

This is the first quarterly update letter that I am providing for you, on behalf of NHS Portsmouth Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG.)

As you will know the CCG formally came into being on 1st April this year and took up full responsibility, after a year of operating in shadow form, for commissioning a range of local health services for people who live in Portsmouth. Our commissioning responsibilities cover services including:

- Elective hospital care (going into hospital for a planned surgical procedure)
- Rehabilitation care
- Urgent and emergency care
- Most community health services
- Mental health and learning disabilities.

We share a commissioning team with our neighbouring CCGs – South Eastern Hampshire, and Fareham & Gosport – to ensure we get the best possible value for our patients and NHS resources. All GP practices in the city are members of the CCG and five local GPs represent their clinical colleagues on the governing board:

- Dr Jim Hogan – Clinical Lead and Chief Clinical Officer
- Dr Tim Wilkinson – Chair of Governing Board and Clinical Executive
- Dr Dapo Alalade – Clinical Executive
- Dr Elizabeth Fellowes – Clinical Executive
- Dr Linda Collie – Clinical Executive

We also have Consultant and Nurse representation from outside of the Portsmouth area from:

- Dr Tahwinder Upile – Secondary Care Specialist Doctor
- Dr Julie Cullen – Registered Nurse

They are joined by other senior executive and lay members with many years' NHS experience and expertise. Together, the governing board makes the planning and spending decisions about local health services on behalf of patients registered with GP practices in the city.

Obviously it is our intention to develop and maintain productive working arrangements with the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel and its members.

With that in mind, I am aware that members have asked us to update the Panel on three specific issues in this letter, and these are set out below.

Progress through transition

Whilst acknowledging that there is much work still to do, we are generally encouraged by the way that the new organisation is 'bedding down' after quite a complex transition process. One of our main challenges has been to ensure that activity around commissioning and contracting locally has not been disrupted during this period of transition and we are pleased to report that progress in agreeing all our contracts with local health providers, including Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust and Solent NHS Trust, has been good and we are expecting the majority of contracts to be signed by the end of May.

We will of course be monitoring performance against all our contracts and we will use our Governing Board meetings as the main public focus for this. Dates for these meetings are available on our website: www.portsmouthccg.nhs.uk

Many of the support functions for commissioning are now provided by the NHS South Commissioning Support Unit and we are currently in the process of working with this new organisation to ensure that we get the services we need to support us.

There will be a number of challenges facing us as commissioners of local health services over the coming months. As many of these will be around the way services are provided in and out of hospital it makes sense for us to be doing some of the work around this jointly with our neighbouring CCGs for Fareham and Gosport and South Eastern Hampshire, given that we all work with Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust as a main hospital provider. This enables us to bring expert clinical leads from all three organisations together to work on a shared commissioning approach for some services which we hope will ensure that we can deliver better services for people locally.

Clearly one of the priorities for us as a CCG will be to engage with people locally about health services. We will be using work we are doing locally to promote the work of the organisation to encourage people to let us have their feedback about recent experiences of using health services. Alongside this we have also held a number of events for local stakeholders and recently had a meeting with representatives of patients from a number of local practice participation groups, to explore with them ways in which we can seek their views on services.

CCG priorities

We have now published our Commissioning Plan 2013-2016 and this sets out our priorities over the next three years. The document can be found on our website: http://www.portsmouthccg.nhs.uk/Al10%20Commissioning%20Plan%202013_16%20GB170413.pdf

We have attached to this document a summary of the plan, which although a little testing to the eyes, does provide a useful overview of our priorities, plans and vision for the future.

Attention on urgent care, 111 and out of hours services

Members will be aware that urgent care services generally in the NHS have come under a lot of scrutiny over the past few months, particularly within the national media. You will appreciate the challenges involved in trying to manage demand for these particular services whilst planning ahead to try and develop the right model of care for the future. Locally our focus has been on reducing avoidable admissions and this has been successful with a drop of 3%. However nationally and locally we have seen Emergency Department (ED) attendances rise by 7% for minor conditions (this preceded the launch of 111 and has happened in all areas including those where GPs retained responsibility for out of hours care).

ED would appear to be the destination of choice for more of our population despite campaigns to educate them to use other services, hence our primary focus is now on redesigning the ED front door to meet this primary care need by creating an integrated urgent care centre, which we hope to have up and running before next winter.

In addition a proposed 'blue print' for future services for the frail elderly has been received from our three local NHS providers working in collaboration. This blue print is now under consideration by the three local CCGs.

In the meantime it is important that we continue to try and use every opportunity to promote the choice of urgent care services available so that people can have confidence in their local services but also use them appropriately.

At present it is not clear whether the Choose Well campaign will be continued nationally – this, as you know, has been the focus for much of our campaign work around urgent care over the past few years in the local NHS. We need to ensure that we have effective materials available locally that point people in the right direction of urgent care. Efforts over the past few months have focused on promoting the new 111 service, and whilst nationally there have been concerns over its ability to cope, the signs locally have been more encouraging in terms of the way the service has been running. We will continue to use opportunities as they arise to promote 111, the St Mary's NHS Treatment Centre, out of hours and advice from local pharmacists as suitable and effective alternatives to attending the Emergency Department.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jill Hogan', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Chief Clinical Officer and Clinical Lead
Portsmouth Clinical Commissioning Group