

## **Appendix 1 - Guildhall Walk Healthcare Centre report for Health and Wellbeing Board July 2021**

### **Introduction**

This paper provides an update to the Health and Wellbeing Board following a requirement from the Health Overview Scrutiny Panel for the CCG to work with the Health and Well Being Board and Guildhall Walk patients and practice to secure alternative provision for patients in the event of the practice closure.

### **Background**

The CCG's Primary Care Commissioning Committee made the decision not to re-procure the APMS contract currently held by Partnering Health Limited (PHL) for the Guildhall Walk Healthcare Centre. The contract will cease on 30 September 2021. A key factor influencing this decision was uncertainty about the future of the building, the Landlord has recently served notice for the practice to vacate the building by 4 September 2021. An extension is being sought until the end of September, though it was always planned for patients to move to new practices ahead of Guildhall Walk closing to allow for a smooth transition.

The Guildhall Walk Healthcare Centre is located close to the city centre, with a list size of 8,400 patients. A project plan has been developed to support the closure of the practice and to secure alternative provision for all patients currently registered with the practice.



### **Patient engagement**

Patients have now received three letters regarding the closure. The first informed them of the decision to close the practice; the second invited them to engagement events held by the CCG to

provide more information; and the third letter gave people the opportunity to choose a new practice from a list specific to their home address.

Three engagement events were held between the 21<sup>st</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> April at different times of the day to help ensure there was an option that would work for patient's varying availability. Given Covid restrictions these were online events but in the letter a phone number was given so that anyone without online access could dial in. Questions were invited ahead of these events and there was also chance to raise these during the sessions.

Approximately 50 patients attended these events and the feedback was positive. A presentation was used which went through why the practice was closing, the process for patients being moved to a new practice and answering some questions that patients might have. After each session, any new questions raised by patients, either during the event or received via email/phone, were added to the presentation. These included questions around repeat prescriptions, access to online systems e.g. E-consult, the Covid-19 vaccination programme and what would happen if you were moving house shortly. A copy of the presentation has been included (Appendix A). The frequently asked questions and answers were added to the CCG website: <https://www.portsmouthccg.nhs.uk/guildhall-walk/faq/>. The link for this was included in the third patient letter inviting them to choose a new practice.

In all letters issued an email address and phone number were provided in case patients had questions.

### **Supporting patients to find alternative provision**

In the letter inviting patients to make a choice of new practice they'd like to attend, a link and QR code were provided to an online survey so they could register their choices. For patients without online access a phone number was provided for them to make their choice by telephone. Thirty five patients used this telephone option. Patients initially had just over two weeks to make their choices. A text message reminder was sent out on 26 May which extended the deadline for responding from 31 May to 2 June to give patients additional opportunity to make their choices. This text message also served to help reach any patients who may not have received the letter as they hadn't updated the practice with a change of address. A small number of patients got in touch following the text reminder. The letter outlined that if you didn't wish to make a choice then you would be assigned to a practice within the boundary of your home address, where people didn't make a choice the allocation is usually to the practice closest to their home address.

1,075 patients responded expressing a preference of which practice to move to with 6,547 choosing not to complete the survey and to have the allocation done for them. During this patient engagement process we identified that approximately 700 patients on the Guildhall Walk Healthcare Centre register had left the practice or moved out of area, meaning the list size of the practice is smaller than originally thought.

Around the end of June a letter will go to patients confirming their new practice. Any patient who didn't express a choice of new practice to move to and may subsequently be unhappy with the practice they've been allocated can of course choose to move themselves to an alternative practice which has availability. Patients will be able to do this by completing a registration form online through a practice's website or by making direct contact with the practice to obtain such a form.

At the outset of this patient engagement work we looked to work with Guildhall Walk Healthcare Centre's patient participation group but were informed that there wasn't an active group within the practice.

## **Practice engagement**

The CCG held initial discussions with practices across the city prior to any decision being made and received assurances that there was capacity with regard to premises and workforce to accommodate the Guildhall Walk patients. Now that we have received responses from patients on which practice they want to move to, and allocated those who didn't make a choice, more detailed discussions with individual practices have taken place. From these discussions the CCG has gained further assurance on the numbers that can be accommodated and the support that may be required so that the transfer of patients can be accomplished in a safe and managed way.

We are assured that practices are in a position to accommodate the first choice for all patients who gave their ranking of preferred practices.

The CCG is supporting the receiving practices in taking on these new cohorts of patients. This is largely through a funding scheme which allows additional time for managing the transfer and dealing with on-going health and care needs over a short period of time.

## **Timeframe for transfer of patients to alternative primary care provision**

The transfer of patients to their new practice is to be undertaken by the end of August at the latest with an aim of trying to achieve this by the end of July. The Guildhall Walk practice is starting to lose some of its workforce and whilst mitigations are being put in place, this alongside the notice from the Landlord, means it may be sensible to move patients across slightly earlier than originally intended. This has been discussed and agreed with the receiving practices.

## **Support for vulnerable patients during the transfer to a new practice**

The CCG, in conjunction with the practice, completed an Equality Impact Assessment (see Appendix B for a final draft undergoing approval) to draw out the potential impact on patients and any mitigation that can be implemented. Vulnerable patients that may need additional support when moving practice have been identified as below –

- Shared Care prescribing patients = 55 patients
- Homeless = 70
- Housebound = 6
- Cystic Fibrosis = 2
- Care Homes = 5
- Mental health issues and other vulnerable patients that require regular appointments = 98
- Safeguarding concerns = 32
- Learning Disabilities = 20
- Cancer Patients = 34
- TOTAL = 324

The CCG and the practice will ensure these patients are offered additional support. A number of patients have also been identified that will require on-going care, such as wound dressings, and this will also be flagged to the receiving practices. A meeting has been arranged to for mid-June to

firm up the support that patients may require and this includes learning any lessons from another practice closure that occurred previously in the city and how this was managed.

The Medicines Optimisation Team will support both PHL and receiving practices with the process of transfer including disposal of any controlled drugs as required and ensuring an extended repeat prescription period to enable receiving practices time to action new requests.

The CCG project team is working to ensure that other services, either provided by PHL or by others at the Guildhall Walk premises, are available by alternative means in a timely manner. This includes the Safe Space service which provides an all-round health and wellbeing service as well as a safe place for anyone who is looking for a short respite on a night out and can help individuals contact friends and or family if they have any health or safety concerns. The provision of this service is being reviewed in terms of its scope and potential new location, and there are two viable options for an interim solution if required.

### **Homeless services**

There are around 100 homeless patients registered at the Guildhall Walk practice. The existing outreach service in the city will be in place until September and a business case is being developed by a local Primary Care Network (PCN - group of GP practices working together) for a revamped and enhanced service. At the same time, three practices have been identified within that PCN that are located close to the existing homeless accommodation in the city. Homeless patients registered at Guildhall Walk will be re-registered at one of these practices unless they have specifically chosen somewhere else. This will mean that the PCN and the practices within it will be able to collectively manage the majority of homeless patients, sharing knowledge and using peer support to offer the best service possible. The CCG is also developing a local add-on to contractual requirements for practices in the city to support homeless patients. This will reflect proactive and enhanced care above core contract requirements, including but not limited to the following –

- the proactive promotion of health services to the local homelessness community ensuring that they are aware of the services available to them
- flexible registration procedures allowing for permanent registration to anyone who wants it
- flexible appointment systems including walk in surgeries and longer appointment times for people with multiple needs
- the provision of training to appropriate practice staff (such as care navigators) ensuring an understanding of and sensitivity towards the particular problems faced by homeless people.
- As well as the issues associated with health and homelessness, training should provide staff with a general understanding of the range of problems faced by homeless people, eg access to appropriate housing and problems with benefits
- appropriate referral to counselling and CPN services if applicable

The CCG is confident that homeless patients will not experience a reduction in service as a result of the closure of the Guildhall Walk surgery and subsequent need for patients to transfer to an alternative practice.

It should also be noted that some of the homeless patients registered with Guildhall Walk may already be receiving support through some other initiatives, for example the Homeless Healthcare Team located in Hope House Hostel and the mobile van that was used to deliver Covid-19 vaccines to the city's homeless residents.

### Special Allocation Service

The Guildhall Walk practice, through PHL, currently provides this service for patients that have been removed from other practices in the city for violent or threatening behaviour. Advanced discussions have been held with PHL to continue providing the service for Portsmouth and other parts of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, utilising the appropriate workforce within PHL. The intention is to use digital solutions where appropriate and operate from strategic sites for face to face appointments (including one in or close to Portsmouth). It is therefore anticipated that the service will continue seamlessly.

### Project plan

An extract from the project plan detailing some of the key steps is provided below.

Action	Start Date	End Date	Progress
Primary Care Commissioning Committee made decision not to re-tender APMS contract but to disperse patient list	28/01/2021	28/01/2021	Completed
First patient letter to be sent outlining closure & process for moving to new practice.	02/03/2021	02/03/2021	Completed
Speak to all practices regarding potential patient numbers	04/03/2021	30/03/2021	Completed
Process for patient transfer confirmed	15/03/2021	19/03/2021	Completed
Identify most vulnerable patients and agree how transfer is going to be managed	15/03/2021	31/05/2021	Identification completed. Work with receiving practices on-going
Development and implementation of preliminary EIA	16/03/2021	30/04/2021	Completed
All practice boundaries to be confirmed	18/03/2021	23/04/2021	Completed
Stakeholder correspondence sent to all relevant parties	22/03/2021	26/03/2021	Completed
Second patient letter to be sent providing engagement event details	01/04/2021	01/04/2021	Completed
Special Allocation Scheme re-provision	01/04/2021	31/08/2021	In progress
Safe Space re-provision	01/04/2021	31/08/2021	In progress

Patient engagement event - 21/4/21	21/04/2021	21/04/2021	Completed
Patient engagement event - 28/4/21	28/04/2021	28/04/2021	Completed
Patient engagement event - 29/4/21	29/04/2021	29/04/2021	Completed
Development and implementation of full EIA	26/04/2021	30/04/2021	Completed (awaiting approval)
Third patient letter to be sent inviting patients to choose a new practice	12/05/2021	12/05/2021	Completed
Patient survey closes	02/06/2021	02/06/2021	Completed
Analysis of patient survey results and assessment against agreed capacity per practice	02/06/2021	18/06/2021	Completed
Fourth patient letter to be sent informing them of their new practice and the date they will be registered with this practice from.	28/06/2021	30/06/2021	Planned
Transfer of patients and supportive measures	01/07/2021	31/07/2021	Planned

Unfortunately, due to Purdah, we have been unable to actively engage with the Health and Wellbeing Board in its full capacity until this meeting. However, the new Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Social Care, Cllr Jason Fazackarley, who is also joint chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, has previously been briefed about the decision and process for the transfer of patients.

## Conclusion

The CCG has worked closely with patients and practices in the city to secure alternative provision for all patients of the Guildhall Walk surgery, following the decision not to re-procure the contract. We are in a position to accommodate the expressed wishes of those patients who made a choice of preferred new practice and plans are in place to support vulnerable patients.

The project plan is on track to help ensure that patient transfers are conducted in a timely and seamless fashion.

The Board is asked to note the update briefing.