

# HOSC/42/10

**Committee** Health Overview and Scrutiny

**Date** 1 September 2010

---

**Non substantive service variations**

**Report by:** Graham Redgwell, Secretary

---

Five such variations have been discussed with the Secretary since the last meeting. Four relate to GP provision, but the circumstances in each case differ considerably. GP practices are, of course, private businesses and may make changes at short notice. The Committee's main concern in such instances has always been to ensure that patients continue to receive an appropriate level of service following any change.

The Committee is asked to note the following changes.

**NHS Hertfordshire**

The Amwell Street surgery in Hoddesdon is closing its sub-branch in Roydon, which currently opens on one afternoon a week. The premises are inadequate and do not meet current standards for health protection and privacy. A higher standard can be provided at the main surgery, which is a short distance away by road.

Confirmation has been received from the PCT that all users of the Roydon premises (173 are registered) are aware of the proposal. Many already use the main surgery as well. No patients will be removed from the practice's list unless the patient wishes to change voluntarily.

Local stakeholders, such as the Epping Forest District Council, Roydon Parish Council and the local County Councillor have been involved in the process.

(Contacts – Linda Dent and Heather Aylward)

## **NHS Mid Essex**

The PCT has recently undertaken a procurement process for a provider to take over the operation of the New Surgery in South Woodham Ferrers. The PCT must no longer involve itself in the running of the Surgery and must dispose of it as part of the purchaser/provider split. A number of bids were received and a preferred provider has been identified. Some unsuccessful bidders have expressed concern that there was no consultation about this process.

In this instance no consultation was required. There was a legal requirement upon the PCT to take this action and the process it must follow in seeking a provider is clearly defined by statute. The PCT has confirmed that all legal requirements placed upon it have been met. It is also clear that the surgery will remain open and that the level of provision for local residents will not be worsened (and may well improve).

(Contact - Georgina Howard, Primary Care Manager)

## **NHS Mid Essex**

Dr Ahmed, who has run a single handed practice in Witham Health Centre for some time, has indicated that he will be retiring on 30 September 2010, although he will remain on the Performers List as a locum.

The PCT considered the following options on how the current patient list (1,656 at 1 April) should be handled:-

- (a) Take over and manage the practice direct.
- (b) Advertise the vacancy with a new contract.
- (c) Disperse the list.
- (d) Transfer the list.

The option chosen is (c). All patients are being contacted and advised of the alternative practices available (this work started in July). Any patients who have not acted by 30 September will be automatically deregistered and it will then be up to them to reregister with another practice.

(Contact – Georgina Howard)

## **Princess Alexandra Hospital (PAH)**

The Hospital currently runs an Ophthalmology Service each weekday, for both emergency and planned appointments. Out of hours, there is a rota of staff who may be called in for an emergency. In reality, the numbers of patients requiring such help are very limited (four/five per annum). These are for penetrative eye injuries. In reality, most of these injuries occur alongside another trauma (i.e. in a car accident) and in those circumstances the patients are handled by the local A&E Department, for holistic treatment. Only one of the three rota ophthalmology staff is qualified to undertake surgical procedures.

The Hospital proposes to end this arrangement, which is limited and not cost effective. Any patients requiring assistance for an eye injury only will, after assessment, be conveyed by ambulance to the Moorfields Eye Hospital (about a 25 minute journey) for treatment.

The money saved will be used to fund two hour sessions at the PAH on Saturday and Sunday mornings, for use by emergency patients.

(Contact – Darren Leach)

## **NHS West Essex**

The Walk in Centre at Wych Elm in Harlow is primarily a nurse led centre but has had a GP on site as part of a pilot scheme. The GP's role was specifically to deal with children aged under two years.

In practice, there has been little demand for this service and the GP has spent much of their time undertaking other work which can be fulfilled by a nurse practitioner.

In these circumstances, when the pilot scheme ended on 1 August it was decided not to implement it as a permanent change. Any children aged under two will now be met by a nurse practitioner and either redirected to primary care (with assistance given to arrange an appointment) or streamed through A&E if necessary.

(Contact Catherine O'Connell)

---