

REPORT TO THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Access to Primary Care in Barnsley

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Received by SSDG:
Date of Report:

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of access arrangements to primary medical care in Barnsley.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Health and Wellbeing Board members are asked to:-

- Note the contents of this report and the access arrangements for Primary Care in Barnsley.

3. Introduction

In November 2015 an issue was highlighted by Councillor Gollick, on behalf of people living in the Dearne, which detailed that people were struggling to access their General Practice. Healthwatch Barnsley published a report in 2016 which had been developed following engagement with patients and service providers in the Dearne on the above issue. The purpose of this report is to highlight what initiatives Barnsley CCG has implemented to improve access overall to General Practice.

NHS Barnsley Clinical Commissioning Group represents 33 Member GP practices and over 250,000 patients. We have responsibility for commissioning healthcare for the population of Barnsley which includes delegated commissioning for Primary Medical Services.

Public satisfaction with general practice remains high overall, but in recent years patients have increasingly reported, through the [GP Patient Survey](#), more difficulty in accessing services including a decline in good overall experience of making an appointment in general practice. Historically, access to General Practice has been defined on how long it takes to get an appointment with a GP but General Practice and General Practice access is much wider than just GP appointments. In line with

General Practice Forward View, General Practice has changed to incorporate a wider range of healthcare professionals to meet the needs of the patient population through new roles and additional staff training. Barnsley CCG recognises that good access is not just about getting an appointment when a patient needs it. It is also about access to the right person, providing the right care, in the right place at the right time.

Barnsley CCG and its 33 Member GP practices have implemented a number of initiatives to ensure all registered Barnsley patients have good access to Primary Care at the right time, an overview of the initiatives is provided in this paper.

3.1 Core contract

The Core Contract is the main contract held with GP practices and comes in the form of three contract types; General Medical Services, Personal Medical Services and Alternative Provider Medical Services. All of the three contract types have within them the same arrangements for core hours summarised as 'The practice is to provide essential primary medical services between 8:00 and 18:30 Monday to Friday'.

This means that the practice retains responsibility for ensuring that the care provided during core hours is appropriate to meet the reasonable needs of its patients and that all practices should be open for routine appointments during core hours.

GP practices are required to make an annual e-Declaration that they are compliant with their core contract and core hours and the CCG is currently undertaking a mapping exercise, based on practices December 2017 Annual Contract e-declaration to identify if all practices are meeting the core contract requirement.

3.2 GP Patient Survey – comparison

The GP Patient Survey is an annual independent survey run by Ipsos MORI on behalf of NHS England. The GP Patient Survey is designed to give patients the opportunity to feed back about their experiences of their GP surgery and is sent out each year in January.

The survey results for 2017 were published in July 2017 and are included at Appendix 2. Although the results of the survey are already publically available, the CCG has undertaken an analysis to compare the results from the survey from 2016 to 2017.

The results of the survey have been shared with GP practices and where there are recurrent themes, these have been discussed directly with individual practices. The information has been presented in a locality format so that this can also help to gain a picture of access across Barnsley but also to facilitate conversations and strategic planning for access improvements.

The information from the GP Patient Survey is used to support planning and delivery of access initiatives through the CCG's General Practice Forward View plan. The GP Patient Survey Results help practices determine when to open up for extended hours and also feed into the locally commissioned care navigation and capacity and demand training which is described in the sections below in more detail.

3.3 Extended Hours DES

Direct Enhanced Services (DES) are defined as primary medical services other than essential services, additional services or out-of-hours services. Practices have a choice of whether or not to take part in a DES but would usually base this decision on the needs of their patients and by utilising the patient survey results discussed above.

The extended opening hours DES give practices the opportunity to offer more appointments outside of the core contract hours linked to additional payments, this would mean that patients could access appointments before 08.00, after 18.30 or on weekends. The Extended Hours DES supports one of the recommendations from the Healthwatch report which was to 'Consider introducing workers appointments'.

The additional period of the routine appointments provided by the practice must, as a minimum, equate to weekly extended hours access of 30 minutes per 1,000 registered patients. The hours should be set according to the needs and wishes expressed by patients and practices are asked to submit evidence that their extended hours meets the needs and requests of their patients by providing evidence when they sign up to the DES or make a request to change their extended hours. Practices are also asked to consult their Patient Participation Group or Patient Reference Group when agreeing or changing extended opening hours.

In Barnsley 20 practices currently offer the extended hours DES meaning that their practices routinely open up to offer more appointments outside the core hours of 08.00 to 18.30. [NHS Choices](#) details all practices current opening times including Extended Hours.

3.4 Extended Access

The [General Practice Forward View](#) (GPFV) published in April 2016 set out plans to enable Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) to commission and fund additional capacity across England to ensure that by 2020 everyone has improved access to GP services, including sufficient routine appointments at evenings and weekends. Prior to the GPFV, Barnsley CCG and its member practices came together to look at how improved access could be delivered to all Barnsley patients through Primary Care 'at scale'.

All practices came together to submit a bid to the Prime Ministers Challenge fund which received £2.5m to deliver extended access to Primary Care for Barnsley patients and in 2015 the i-HEART Barnsley Service was launched.

i-HEART Barnsley is designed to help patients access same day appointments during the evening and weekends. The service created additional ways for patients to receive medical advice outside of core GP surgery opening times. The service is open for appointment booking and advice between 08.00 – 18:30, Monday to Friday and 09:00 – 13:00 Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays. Appointments are available at Woodlands Drive GP Surgery and Chapelfield Medical Centre between 18:00 – 22:00 Monday to Friday and 10:00 to 13:00 Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays. Appointments are also available at the Primary Care Centre, Barnsley Hospital between 07:00 – 23:00 Monday to Friday and 09:00 to 23:00 Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays.

The i-HEART service pre-dated the General Practice Forward View however funding from the GPFV set out the funding trajectory for this work to continue ensuring that all patients could continue to receive extended access to Primary Care outside core hours.

NHS England set a national target to ensure that 100% of registered patients had access to extended primary care services by 2020 and this was achieved in Barnsley in 2015, 5 years before the nationally agreed target. This means that Barnsley residents live in one of very few areas across the country where 100% of residents are able to access same day appointments during the evening and at weekends.

The i-HEART service receives positive feedback from patients and very low number of patient complaints. It is operated and managed by Barnsley Healthcare Federation.

3.5 Out of Hours

Barnsley Healthcare Federation is also the provider of the GP Out of Hours service for the whole of Barnsley and was awarded this contract by the CCG in July 2017. This enabled the provider to launch i-HEART 365 which amalgamated the pre-existing i-HEART service with the Out of Hours services giving patients an integrated experience and continuity of service from extended hours to out of hours.

Barnsley Healthcare Federation provide clinical triage and home visits and access to GP and ANP appointments across the Out of Hours sites in Barnsley, between the hours of 18:30 to 8:00, Monday to Thursday, and then from Friday 18:00 through to Monday 8:00 including Bank Holidays

Access to i-HEART 365 is managed seamlessly after a patient has called NHS 111. Patients receive an initial assessment before referred to the GP Out of Hours service.

3.6 Primary Care Streaming

Barnsley Healthcare Federation provides a GP Streaming service within the Accident and Emergency Department at Barnsley Hospital. The Federation works in partnership with the A & E team and initial assessments are undertaken by qualified clinicians. If patients attending A & E require Primary Care services, they are

directed to the GP service which is located next door to Accident and Emergency. This supports patients to receive treatment quicker and also supports the A & E Department in ensuring that patients needing Primary Care have access to a Primary Care service on site.

Recent figures provided by Barnsley Healthcare Federation indicate that 25% of people attending A & E were streamed to the GP service.

3.7 Care Navigation

As part of the General Practice Forward View, a fund was created to contribute towards the costs for practices of training reception and clerical staff to undertake enhanced roles in active signposting for patients. This is to ensure that patients are seen by the right practitioner in a timely manner.

Evidence has shown that this innovation frees up GP time, releasing about 5 per cent of demand for GP consultations in the majority of practices. It also makes more appropriate use of each team member's skills and increases job satisfaction for receptionists.

Barnsley CCG wanted to ensure that every GP practice had the opportunity to train their staff to undertake the enhanced roles to improve access to Primary Care and therefore the CCG commissioned a Care Navigation training package called First Port of Call Plus. This package was designed to be bespoke to each practice and this training has been delivered to numerous sites by Barnsley Healthcare Federation. In support of this work, a number of group sessions have been held which trained a wider cohort of staff, for example, Practice "My Best Life" (social prescribing) Champions and Dementia Champions so that all parts of the system can be connected and navigation undertaken successfully.

As part of the training sessions, staff are educated in discussing a patient's needs and they are given access to a directory of service information in order to effectively direct patients to the most appropriate source of help or advice. This may include services in the community as well as within the practice. Benefits of this approach should ensure that it is easier for patients to get an appointment with the GP when they need it and shortens the wait to get the right help.

In Barnsley, there are currently 100 GP practice staff who are trained Care Navigators working across 14 practices. The CCG has an ambition to roll this out across all 33 GP practices to ensure 100% coverage by the end of March 2019.

The Care Navigation training builds on the First Port of Call (FPOC) training programme which was delivered to all practices in 2016. This initial programme developed receptionists with the aim of harnessing the significant untapped potential within this element of the Primary Care workforce. The FPOC approach is based upon the premise that reception staff are the first point of access in General Practice and that they should have a positive influence upon the start of the patient journey by being:

First – **FRIENDLY**
Port – **POLITE**
Of – **ORGANISED**
Call – **COMPASSIONATE**

3.8 Workforce

Expanding the Primary Care workforce to ensure that patients have access to the right person at the right time has been another successful area for Barnsley CCG.

Clinical Pharmacists:

A Clinical Pharmacist programme has been rolled out to all Barnsley CCG practices to integrate the role into General Practice. The programme has seen 15 Pharmacists supported by a strategic support team of 6 (1 Manager and 5 Administrators) employed to work within GP practices across Barnsley. The aim of the programme is to increase the capacity of GP's and Practice Nurses through the principle of patients being treated by the right clinician at the right time. The addition of Clinical Pharmacists also increases quality and safety in prescribing; maximising cost effective prescribing and reduce prescribing queries, complementing and enhancing the existing successful medicines management team.

The data below highlights the impact that the Clinical Pharmacist Programme has had on General Practice in Barnsley (*Full year data October 16 – October 2017*):

- Clinical Pharmacists have undertaken 4119 Medication Reviews which has reduced the GP workload by approximately 687 hrs.
- 6037 Patients medicines have been reconciled which has reduced GP workload by approximately 1006 hrs.
- 2322 Requests for medication and queries have been actioned which has reduced GP workload by approximately 290 hrs.
- The programme has saved 11898 GP appointments which has allowed GP's more time to focus on complex needs and increase access to primary care.

HCA Apprentices:

The CCG has rolled out a Health Care Assistant Apprenticeship programme aimed at encouraging administrative staff to become Health Care Assistants and for Health Care Assistants to receive further clinical skills training. This has seen the development of a locally commissioned Apprenticeship Programme in co-operation with Barnsley College to increase clinical capacity and skill mix to support Primary Care. This initiative also supports changes in roles currently undertaken in practice to improve alignment of the existing skill base ensuring the right people are delivering the right care interventions. The CCG currently has 14 apprentices on the programme.

International Recruitment of GP's:

The GP Forward View committed to strengthening the primary care workforce and to support this, NHS England is delivering an international GP recruitment programme. The programme has recently been scaled with a view to recruiting up to a total of 2,000 overseas doctors nationally by 20/21.

The South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw Integrated Care System (ICS) has submitted a joint bid in which Barnsley confirmed that it would like 12.5 GPs to strengthen the Barnsley GP workforce. This number was agreed by engaging with our Member Practices to gain the commitment that the GPs would be employed within practices. Practices are required to fund the salary of the GP once any necessary training is completed, just as they would any other doctor employed by the practice.

The scheme recruits doctors from the European Economic Area where GP training is recognised in the UK and there is automatic recognition to join the GMC's GP Register. The recruitment, training & support and relocation of recruited doctors will be co-ordinated nationally and fully funded by NHS England. The ICS bid included funding to ensure that GPs will be integrated into the local community and to support the retention of the recruited GPs.

Doctors recruited will meet the highest standards of practice and speak good English. NHS England will be bound by the World Health Organisation's Global Code of Practice on International Recruitment of Health Personnel. Those countries with the best choice of affordable supply will be targeted.

Neighbourhood Working:

The GP Forward View commits to developing locality working to support general practice in becoming more resilient and providing additional capacity. In 2017/18, Barnsley GP practices began to meet with their neighbouring GP practices across 6 neighbourhoods which map broadly to the local area council profiles and exactly with the neighbourhood nursing model. The focus of the meetings has been to enable GP practices to come together, agree joint priorities for their neighbourhoods and to explore the potential of working 'at scale'. This new way of working is presenting opportunities to address localised health issues which will form Neighbourhood plans to address the specific health needs of that neighbourhood. Barnsley is at the start of a journey in neighbourhood working and realises the potential positive impact that this could have on GP practice resilience and patient care. The CCG will continue to support neighbourhood development as a priority within 2018/19.

3.9 System Resilience & Demand

The CCG works with member partners such as Barnsley Healthcare Federation, the A & E Delivery Board and NHS England to anticipate peaks in demand across the

whole care system and where possible, provide additional capacity to meet the demand.

Over the 2017/18 Christmas period i-HEART Barnsley opened up an additional hub located within the A & E Department to support the additional demand on the service and provide additional capacity to patients requiring Primary Care treatment. The CCG will continue to work in this way when additional demand is required to deliver a whole system approach to ensure patients have access to the right service at the right time.

Barnsley GP Practices, through Barnsley Healthcare Federation, have access to a Capacity and Demand Tool. The tool helps the practice team to gain a better understanding of their current demand and how the available capacity (i.e. workforce) can be better used to manage this locally. The tool is now live in four practices and the CCG is encouraging other practices to take part in utilising this tool to aid their future resilience and planning.

3.10 Patient Online Access

Patient Online is designed to support GP practices to offer and promote online services to patients. These services include:

- Booking and cancelling of appointments
- Ordering of repeat prescriptions
- Viewing of their GP record (which includes coded information about allergies, immunisations, diagnoses, medication and test results).

The Healthwatch report about patients who DNA their appointments in the Dearne, highlighted and recommended the use of electronic appointment systems to be considered as part of the work to improve access to GP practices. It was felt that using an online or telephone based cancellation service would offer more opportunities for patients to cancel an appointment and would also free up telephone capacity. If patients utilise online services to book or cancel their appointments, staff time could be utilised on other tasks within the practice or manage increasing demand more effectively. The CCG is working with all GP practices to support them in promoting the patient online service to their patients.

One Barnsley GP Practice, Hillbrow Surgery in Mapplewell, currently has 43% of its patients registered to use patient online services. The practice has seen a significant increase in the number of appointments booked online and repeat medications ordered. The practice estimates that this has saved around 118 days of administration staff time within the last year which allows staff on the telephone to effectively navigate patients to the most appropriate service.

3.11 Patient Partner

In 2015 Barnsley CCG rolled out the Voice Connects system called 'Patient Partner. The Patient Partner system allows patients to book, change, cancel appointments and order repeat prescriptions via an automated system connected to the practices

main telephone line. The system is accessible 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. The patient partner system is live across 21 Barnsley GP Practices and is extremely well utilised by patients. The February 2018 utilisation figures below highlight the impact that the system is having in general practice:

February 2018 figures across 21 Barnsley GP practices:

1205 appointments were booked
650 appointments were cancelled
827 appointments were checked
1259 repeats were requested
1805 repeats were reviewed

This resulted in approximately 368 hours of staff time being saved.

This system also supports the reduction in DNA appointments as it gives patients the opportunity to easily cancel their appointment at any time in the day.

4. Conclusion

Access to General Practice remains a national and local priority and Barnsley CCG has implemented a number of initiatives to support this locally with the engagement of GP practices. GP practices have developed their own internal processes for DNA appointments and also for triaging patient calls to ensure timely access, these are developed at practice level to ensure that they meet the needs of the practices' registered patients. The CCG's Primary Care Development Workstream group continues to look at initiatives within the GP Forward View and continually look at how access could be improved further. This involves wider work around the workforce delivering primary care and also delivering primary care at scale.

5. Appendices

5.1 Healthwatch Barnsley Report - 'Did Not Attend' Appointments at GP Surgeries in Goldthorpe Thurnscoe and Bolton upon Dearne

5.2 GP Patient Survey Results 2016 – 2017 comparison.