


Agenda Item 5

		THE HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR LINCOLNSHIRE	
Boston Borough Council	East Lindsey District Council	City of Lincoln Council	Lincolnshire County Council
North Kesteven District Council	South Holland District Council	South Kesteven District Council	West Lindsey District Council

Open Report on behalf of Lincolnshire West Clinical Commissioning Group

Report to	Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire
Date:	13 December 2017
Subject:	Alternative Provisions to the Lincoln Walk-in Centre

Summary:

This report from Lincolnshire West Clinical Commissioning Group (LWCCG) updates the Health Scrutiny Committee on the progress in implementing plans to enhance primary care services and its public awareness campaign as to the alternative provisions to the Lincoln Walk-in Centre and invite the Committee to review and comment.

This report includes a review in key areas of - University students, children under 5, additional primary care appointments and access for patients requiring treatment at weekends. The report sets out the decision of Lincolnshire West Clinical Commissioning Group Governing Body on 29 November 2017.

Actions Required:

The Health Scrutiny Committee is asked: -

- (1) To note the progress with regards improved access to GP, the development of alternative provisions and the communication and engagement plans of Lincolnshire West Clinical Commissioning Group;
- (2) To consider:
 - (a) whether there are any comments on the progress we are making and any areas where the Committee would like any additional information; and
 - (b) whether the Committee consider that the communication and engagement plan addresses the correct issues and uses the right language for patients, staff and the public; and
- (3) To consider the offer of a one-off meeting with the CCG to discuss the initiatives and communication plans in more detail.

1. Background

On 12 June 2017 Lincolnshire West Clinical Commissioning Group (LWCCG) launched a public consultation on the future of the Walk-in Centre which concluded on 18 August 2017. On 27 September 2017, our Governing Body meeting decided to keep the Walk-in Centre open over the winter period and close only when the Governing Body is satisfied with evidence based reviews. The first evidence based review was presented to the Governing Body on 29 November 2017, and a further review will be presented at the meeting on 24 January 2017. The evidenced based reviews will be in the key areas of university students, children under 5, additional primary care appointments and access for patients requiring treatment at weekends.

The ten week public consultation on the future of the Walk-in Centre was extensive and engaged patients, the general public, public bodies, key stakeholders including health care partners and the third sector. The feedback received through the consultation was extremely useful in reaching a decision and shaping the plans to strengthen primary and urgent care.

2. Current Developments

The ongoing plans to strengthen alternative provisions are in six key areas:-

1. GP Appointments and Access;
2. Urgent Care Provision;
3. Clinical Advice and GP Access for Children;
4. University of Lincoln Practice Plans – Students;
5. Homeless and Vulnerable Patients;
6. Communication and Engagement Plans, which also include the communication and engagement campaign which is focused on the key groups mentioned above, as well as the wider community.

Current attendance to the Walk-in Centre has significantly reduced. Walk-in Centre attendances in October 2017 saw a 26.8% reduction from the previous year. The attendances in September 2017 were the lowest monthly attendance of the Walk-in Centre for over 2.5 years and this coincided with the public promotion of the alternative services in place.

We have identified an increased capacity of at least 90 appointments per day across LWCCG from 1 December 2017 as a result of progress in the alternative provision plan (see Appendix A Alternative Provisions Plan). Currently the average daily attendance at the Walk-in Centre is circa 85 per day.

We have provided details of the status of our alternative provision plans in the attached document (Appendix A - Alternative Provisions Plan).

University Practice

LWCCG supported a targeted communications and engagement initiative by the University Practice, during freshers' week to encourage students to register with a GP. The University Practice saw a net increase in registrations of 3,150 students.

Other Alternative Provision

The alternative provisions already in place include: GP same day access arrangements for urgent need; skype access at the University Practice; additional community pharmacists; GP Out of Hours; 111 supplemented by Lincolnshire Clinical Assessment Service (Clinical Assessment Service); pharmacy support of CAS Emergency Medication Service; and Neighbourhood Team implementation progression (Gainsborough and the South of Lincoln areas).

In addition to the above, GP Practices have confirmed that they have arrangements in place to support any potential increase in demand. Please note not all Walk-in Centre utilisation will require a corresponding GP appointment and 70% of patients do not currently approach their GP to check whether there is an appointment available. Therefore we are modelling our GP Practices provision for maximum impact, which is unlikely to materialise in full. The main population using the Walk-in Centre are patients registered with central Lincoln General Practices. Service provision by General Practices in the City Centre has been reviewed and for some services are being extended or improved to accommodate patients who are currently accessing the Walk-in Centre. On average this is approximately 3-10 additional appointments per practice per day.

Children's Hubs

To enhance care for new parents and children the first of eight children's hubs across Lincolnshire will be opening on 4 December 2017. The first is in Birchwood in the Lincoln City area. The children's hubs will be another source of advice and guidance for parents with children under 5 and will include health visitor advice and appointments, wellbeing services, feeding support groups etc. Four children's hubs will be introduced by March 2018.

Information is provided within Appendix A to demonstrate the progress made with associated supporting initiatives.

Transition Planning

We have been working in partnership with Lincolnshire Community Health Service (LCHS), who provide the Walk-in Centre services, to ensure we have an effective plan to facilitate transition. This transition plan incorporates the introduction of triage as a method to direct the public to the appropriate provision for them and provide education to the alternative provisions available.

Through this partnership LCHS have highlighted that a number of staff have secured alternative employment and that over the coming months the number of staff in post will reduce significantly. Following reviews of the level of demand and confirmation that alternative provisions are now available and the significant cost of agency staff should we have to cover shifts, we have recommended that the executive leads from LWCCG and LCHS review opening hours of the Walk-in Centre so that the staff resource is deployed to cover periods of peak demand.

A&E Attendances

A&E attendances are being kept under careful review as the numbers attending the Walk-in Centre fall in tandem with public promotion of the alternative services in place. This communication reiterates that patients should only be presenting to A&E when it is an emergency and that if they are unsure to contact 111.

We are actively monitoring data and performance associated to the changes to the Walk-in Centre and A&E performance. We continue to work with the A&E Delivery Board to ensure that any adverse impact is quickly identified and plans to mitigate are implemented.

Push Doctor

The Committee is asked to note that a Push Doctor app is promoting its online 'walk-in centre' services to patients in the Lincoln area. This issue has been brought to the attention of NHS Lincolnshire West Clinical Commissioning Group. This is not a service that has been commissioned by Lincolnshire West Clinical Commissioning Group and we have had no interaction or conversations with the company behind the app. This is a purely commercial venture based in Manchester and has no links with our CCG. We have released a statement to this effect and highlighted that patients should be aware the service comes with a cost and as always, our advice for anyone who needs medical attention but whose condition is not A&E necessary is to try your GP, visit your local pharmacy or call NHS 111.

Decision of the Lincolnshire West Clinical Commissioning Group Governing Body

LWCCG Governing Body met on 29 November 2017 and was assured by the progress made regarding the use of the Alternative Provisions to the Walk-in Centre and agreed to the recommendations detailed in the Walk-in Centre paper.

The Committee is asked to note that the Executive Nurses of LWCCG and Lincolnshire Community Health Services (LCHS) will be closely monitoring the demand and staff availability. Should the risks of maintaining access to the Walk-in Centre escalate, the LWCCG's Governing Body will convene an extraordinary meeting to review the risks and outline plans to mitigate these risks. Should this situation arise, representatives of LWCCG will liaise directly with the Chairman of the Health Scrutiny Committee to consider the arrangements for members' consideration of the issues.

The Governing Body noted the significant reduction in current attendance at the Walk-in Centre and data regarding A&E attendance and considered that the evidence suggested that the public awareness campaign was encouraging patients to make use of alternative provision. The increase in student registrations and services, together with increased primary care capacity was also evidenced and discussed. Governing Body members had sought independent views on progress of the alternative plans prior to the meeting and were able, therefore, to share this and validate the evidence reported.

The detail of the Public Awareness Communication and Engagement Campaign was also considered. It was acknowledged that this programme would be ongoing but the Governing Body was positive about the numbers of the patient population reached through the use of different media.

The Governing Body was assured of the progress of the alternative provision plans and approved the following recommendation relating to Lincoln's Walk-in Centre:

- The Executive Team continue to manage the roll-out of alternative provisions – namely; Out of Hours GP access, NHS 111 and Clinical Assessment Service (CAS), Community hubs, increased primary capacity across LWCCG, use of local pharmacy walk-in facilities, and local surgery walk-in services.
- To further reduce demand on the Walk-in Centre through continuation of full communication and engagement plan.
- To support the continued implementation of the transitional plan to enable the Walk-in Centre service to close at the end of the winter period.
- That the Executive Nurses of LWCCG and LCHS would review opening hours of the Walk-in Centre by continuously monitoring demand and staff availability. The Governing Body made it clear that if the balance of managing demand and staffing resources escalates and that the risk assessment suggests that the risk of maintaining access to the Walk-in Centre is high, then an extraordinary meeting, in public, of the Governing Body would be convened to review the risks and outline plans to mitigate these risks.

3. Consultation

This is not a direct consultation item. The Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire responded to LWCCG's consultation on the Walk-in-Centre in August 2017.

4. Conclusion

The Health Scrutiny Committee is requested to note the progress with regards improved access to GP, the development of alternative provisions and the communication and engagement plans of Lincolnshire West Clinical Commissioning Group. The Committee is asked to consider whether there are any comments on the progress we are making and any areas where the Committee would like any additional information; and whether the Committee consider that the communication and engagement plan addresses the correct issues and uses the right language for patients, staff and the public. Finally the Committee is asked to consider the offer of a one-off meeting to discuss the initiatives and communication plans in more detail.

5. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A:	Alternative Provisions Plan
Appendix B:	Alternative Provisions Description
Appendix C:	Communication Plan
Appendix D:	Communication Initiatives Description
Appendix E:	Alternative Provisions Engagement Plan

6. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

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