

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:	21 February 2018
Subject:	Alternative Provisions to the Walk-in Centre

Summary:

This report is provided by Lincolnshire West Clinical Commissioning Group (LWCCG) to update the Health Scrutiny Committee on the progress in implementing plans to enhance primary care services and the CCG's public awareness campaign as to the alternative provisions to the Lincoln Walk-in Centre, and to 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 and specifically details the available appointments at practices with patients who were higher users of the Walk-in Centre.

Actions Required:

Members of the Health Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider the progress with regards improved access to General Practice, the development of alternative provisions and the communication and engagement plans of Lincolnshire West Clinical Commissioning Group. The Committee is asked to note the decision of the CCG's Governing Body on the 24 January 2018 and the arrangements associated with the phased closure of the Walk-in Centre during February 2018.

1. Background

The Lincolnshire West Clinical Commissioning Group (LWCCG) launched a public consultation on the future of the Walk-in Centre on 12th June 2017 which concluded on the 18 August 2017. A decision was reached at the CCG's Governing Body meeting on the 27 September 2017 to keep the Walk-in Centre open over the winter period and close only when the Governing Body were satisfied with evidence based reviews to be presented in November 2017 and January 2018 in the key areas of University students, children under five, additional primary care appointments and access for patients requiring treatment at weekends.

NHS Lincolnshire West CCG's Governing Body met on 29 November 2017 and 24 January 2018 and reviewed the details of the status of our alternative provision plans (Appendix 1 Alternative Provisions Plan). These plans addressed 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.

2. Updated Information

Governing Body Decision

The Governing Body met on 29 November 2017 and 24 January 2018 to review the evidence regarding alternative provisions and the communication and engagement strategy required to progress the recommendation to close the Walk-in Centre. On 24 January 2018, Having considered the information provided, the Governing Body was assured and agreed to support the recommendation to close the Walk-in Centre by the end of February 2018 retaining weekend opening only during February 2018.

The Governing Body reviewed the progress of specific actions to strengthen primary care provision and increase capacity, which are summarised within the alternative provisions plans document (Appendix 1) together with a description of each provision in this plan (Appendix 1a). In November 2017 evidence was provided to demonstrate additional capacity of 90 appointments per day would be available across LWCCG from 1 December 2017. In January 2018 it was noted that this would further increase to a total of at least 190 from 1 February 2018. Appendices 2 and 3 provide further detail on the ongoing communication plan, communication messages and the alternative provisions engagement plan.

Communication and Engagement Campaign

The ongoing plans to strengthen alternative provisions including the communication and engagement campaign are focussed on the key groups mentioned above, and the wider

community. Messages to these groups include organising your prescriptions, where to go if your child is ill, pharmacy drop in facilities, online appointment booking and self-care. The key message, in line with the national NHS England direction for urgent care service access, supports 111 and telephone clinical assessment and treatment as the second route for urgent care provision, if for whatever reason there is no core GP availability to provide this.

Reduction in Walk-in Centre Attendances

Current attendance at the Walk-in Centre has significantly reduced in tandem with public promotion of the alternative services in place. Attendances in Quarter 3 2017/18 have seen a 25% reduction from the previous year. The attendances in September 2017 were the lowest monthly attendance of the Walk-in centre for more than 2.5 years.

The University Practice

As students are one of the higher user groups of the Walk-in Centre, LWCCG supported a targeted communications and engagement initiative by the University Practice during Freshers' week in September 2017, to encourage students to register with a GP. The University Practice saw a net increase in registrations of 3,150 students. The University Practice has also increased same day capacity at the start of this term to provide an additional 5 pre-booked daily appointments. The practice has introduced a new phone system. This means that patients do not have to wait for long periods of time to speak to someone to make an appointment. Additionally an online registration system and appointment booking system is operational. This system is also available on a mobile application that will be promoted to students shortly.

Provision at GP Practices

Given 70% of patients attending the Walk-in Centre do not currently approach their GP to check whether there is an appointment available, we have confirmed with our GP Practices that they have arrangements in place to support any potential increase in demand based on current activity at the Walk-in Centre. It is noted that not all patients attending the Walk-in Centre will require a corresponding GP appointment. Evidence is provided demonstrating the availability and provision of additional GP appointments based on the current Walk-in Centre utilisation in a Case Study Summary (see Appendix 4). This summary reports on the "top" seven practices (the practices who have registered patients that are higher users of the Walk-in Centre) where there may be a need for an additional one to two same day access appointments per day on closure of the Walk-in Centre. The data confirms that all other GP practices in the Lincolnshire West area will require less than 1 urgent same day appointment and practices have confirmed they have arrangements in place to accommodate this.

Staffing

We have been working in partnership with Lincolnshire Community Health Service (LCHS), who provide the Walk-in Centre service. Through this partnership, LCHS have confirmed that all staff have secured alternative employment. The majority of the team will be taking up posts within essential urgent care services.

Following review of the level of demand, confirmation that alternative provisions are now available and a requirement to have staff working within areas with greatest need (eg. our Emergency Departments and urgent response services). It was agreed that staffing resource will be reduced initially to provide weekend cover only in February, with full closure of the Walk-in Centre by the end of February 2018. For a short period from March to mid-April (post Easter) there will be additional GP Out of Hours provision in place (i.e. GP urgent appointments via 111) over the weekends in order to ensure the alternative service provision is working effectively.

A&E Attendances

A&E attendances will continue to be kept under careful review during this process as the numbers attending the Walk-in Centre fall. In tandem the CCG will continue the extensive 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, promotes the utilisation of alternative services such as pharmacies, their GP and 111. Also if they are unsure which alternative service to access that they can call 111 for advice.

Lincolnshire West's Governing Body actively monitor data and performance of A&E. In recent months the Governing Body has explicitly reviewed data to determine whether changes to the Walk-in Centre have impacted on A&E attendances. The data included an analysis of A&E attendances by age and arrival mode (see Appendix 5) for October 2017 to December 2017 (Q4, 2017) and compared this to January 2017 to September 2017 and for 2017 compared to 2016.

In summary the evidence demonstrates that the significant reduction in attendance at the Walk-in Centre has not impacted A&E attendance. The average monthly A&E attendances in October 2017 to December 2017 (Q4) have dropped when compared to average monthly A&E attendances January 2017-September 2017 (Q1-Q3), and 2017 attendances are less than 2016. There is a greater reduction in self-presenting attendance versus ambulance for these periods, again demonstrating that patients who might have attended the Walk-in Centre did not go to A&E.

The data by age shows that only under 4's attendance increased slightly Q4 on Q1-3, 2017 and other older age groups which are not high users of the Walk-in Centre. This increase in under 4's attendance is via ambulance arrival mode and not self-presentation. This ambulance conveyance (i.e. sick children needing ED) will likely be associated with winter flu virus which effects the very young detrimentally and the very frail and elderly. A&E attendance of under 4's however is reduced year on year (comparing 2017 to 2016). We will continue to monitor data and performance and work with the Lincolnshire A&E Delivery Board to ensure that any potential future impact is quickly identified and plans to mitigate are implemented.

3. Consultation

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

4. Conclusion

The plan agreed by LWCCG's Governing Body on 24 January 2018 that the Walk-in Centre provides weekend cover only in February and closes at the end of February 2018, is now being implemented.

The CCG will continue the roll-out of the entirety of alternative provisions identified through the supporting documents to this paper including the continuation of the full communication and engagement plan as outlined.

Several of the existing remaining staff will be redeployed to bolster more essential emergency and urgent care services.

The CCG will support, post closure, a period of additional General Practice Out of Hours provision at weekends (from 1 March 2018 to 8 April i.e. post Easter). This will be a safeguard to ensure that effective and safe transition to the alternative services has been achieved.

5. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix 1:	Lincoln Walk-in Centre - Alternative Provisions Plan 2017
Appendix 1A:	Lincoln Walk-in Centre Consultation 2017 – Alternative Provisions Description
Appendix 2:	Lincoln Walk-in Centre Consultation 2017 - Alternative Provisions Communications Review
Appendix 3:	Lincoln Walk-in Centre Consultation 2017 – Alternative Provisions Engagement Plan
Appendix 4:	Lincoln Walk-in Centre Consultation 2017 – GP Practice Case Study Summary
Appendix 5:	Lincoln Walk-in Centre Consultation 2017 – A&E (Lincoln) Activity Summary for Lincolnshire West CCG Patients

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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