

MEETING:	Islington Health and Scrutiny Committee
DATE:	14 September 2015
TITLE:	NHS111/GP Out of Hours procurement update
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1. Purpose of the report

This report provides the Committee with an update on the procurement of an integrated NHS111/GP out of hours service across the North Central London area; an update on national developments and sets out the next key steps in the procurement process

2. Recommendations to the Scrutiny Committee

The Scrutiny Committee is asked to NOTE this update and continues to be invited to comment on the procurement process.

3. Intended impact of the report

The intention of the report is to keep one of the CCG's key stakeholders informed and engaged throughout this complex procurement process and continue to maintain transparency on the work of the CCG.

4. Contribution by community partners to the report

There has been extensive engagement and discussion with community groups and partners over the last two and a half years, initially through the urgent care review and subsequently through the local engagement undertaken on the clinical model for integrating NHS111 with GP Out of Hours. Most of this work has been reported to the Committee already, most recently in May this year.

The Patient Reference Group, which was established in April 2015, continues to meet regularly and has provided comments and input into the service specification development. Members of the group will take a full part in the procurement process through evaluating bids and contributing to the decision making in selecting the new service provider. Four Islington residents sit on this group.

5. Contribution by professional partners to the report

The development of the service specification has been led by clinical leaders across the five CCGs. Locally the draft service specification has been reviewed and commented on by primary care clinical leads across the borough, led by Dr Jo

Sauvage and Dr David Davies; both local GPs in Islington. Final approval of the service specification will be through the Governing Body of the CCG.

6. Key issues, challenges and risks and their management

There has been a delay to the timetable as set out to the Committee earlier in the year which has meant that we are not yet in a position to bring the final service specification to the Committee, as intended, at this stage.

All CCGs received a letter from Dame Barbara Hakin, Director of Commissioning Development at NHS England in early July 2016 setting out the national expectations for NHS111 and GP Out of Hours services. The letter is appended to this report (Appendix 1). The direction of travel indicated in the letter is that services should be commissioned as an integrated model; that they should be commissioned across a wider geographical footprint than single CCGs and that collaboration between providers within a lead provider arrangement is encouraged. This national guidance is in line with the preferred approach being taken by the five CCGs in north central London. All NHS111 and GP Out of Hours procurements nationally have been suspended pending the release of revised commissioning standards for integrated services. These are expected at the end of September although we do not anticipate this to significantly alter our intentions or plans as they are already congruent with national thinking.

A further period of engagement was undertaken during July, restating the CCG's case for commissioning the integrated service across North Central London. There was a low response rate to this engagement with 28 responses received across the five boroughs. There are obvious limitations in the data in view of the sample size but a report outlining the engagement and summarising the responses is attached as Appendix 2 for those Members interested in the detail. It is important to note that this was the latest phase of a long period of engagement on our plans. Committee members will remember receiving a report in May this year, outlining the extensive engagement undertaken in Islington which included open meetings, targeted meetings with specific user groups as well as an on-line survey.

Whilst we await the publication of the national standards the development of the Service Specification continues. The draft specification has been widely circulated for comment. In order to encourage as many responses as possible the period for commenting has been extended to 19 August. The document is available on the CCG website, along with information about how to comment. A further version of the specification will be developed following this engagement period and is likely to be available for final approval later in September, subject to any amendments necessary following the publication of the national guidance.

A second market event was held on 5 August, to talk to interested bidders about the service model and how it will fit in the local system. There is interest from a wide range of providers including GP collaborative organisations, NHS Trusts, social enterprises and the private sector with more than 20 separate organisations attending the event. As the Committee is aware, we are especially looking for potential providers to demonstrate how they would work together to deliver an integrated service and we know that providers are already looking at ways to work together.

7. Intended impact on reducing inequalities and improving health, wellbeing and value for money

As previously reported to the Committee the integrated NHS111 and GP Out of Hours service will have a range of health benefits for individual patients as well as supporting improvements in the wider urgent health care system. Patients accessing the service are more likely to be seen by the right clinician earlier in the process; there will be fewer transfers between services as people progress through the system; there will be improved equity of access to out of hours services across North Central London and individuals should only have to give their information once. The use of different healthcare professionals in the service model, combined with more timely access to a GP will support the urgent care system, individuals will be directed to the most appropriate service that meets their medical needs and should mean that they are less likely to have to wait around at a busy A&E. These changes will significantly benefit families with young children and people living with long term conditions in Islington; two groups we know are regular users of the current NHS111 and GP Out of Hours service.

8. Legal implications

In relation to the procurement for the integrated NHS111/GP Out of Hours Service the CCG is required to abide by the relevant legislations that govern the award of contracts, specifically EU Procurement Regulations and Public Contract Regulations. We continue to take advice on this complex procurement from North East London Commissioning Support Unit.

9. Resource implications

None in relation to this report.

10. What success looks like, measuring success and targets

The finalisation of the service specification will be the successful outcome of this stage of the procurement process. As indicated, we hope this will be later in September although it is partially determined by the release of the national guidance. We will ensure that the Committee receive the final version of the service specification.

11. Next steps, next month, six months and a year

Key dates in the current timetable are as follows:

- September 2016 – service specification finalised
- October 2015 – procurement starts
- March 2016 – procurement ends
- April 2016 – contract awarded to successful provider
- October 2016 – new service starts, allowing 6 months for smooth transition