

May 2008

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DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Locality meetings have been arranged where we plan to update you and seek your views on primary care mental health services and diabetes. The dates are:

Somerset Coast Area - Tuesday 13 May at Taunton Road Medical Centre, Bridgwater

South Somerset Area - Thursday 15 May at Ryalls Park Medical Centre, Yeovil

Taunton and Wedge Area - Tuesday 20 May, Post Graduate Centre, Musgrove Park Hospital, Taunton

Mendip Area – To be confirmed

These meetings will commence at 7pm. Agendas will be circulated nearer the time. Refreshments will be available from 6.30pm.

PBC APPROVALS COMMITTEE

The PCT's Practice Based Commissioning Approvals Committee met on 7 May and approved the six initial schemes that we submitted for 2008/09. These were:

- Healthcare for Homeless People – this will be focused on Glastonbury
- Management of Oral Nutritional Supplements (SIP Feeds) in the Community – initially centred for the Frome area but potentially could be rolled out across the county
- Community Dietetics Service – this scheme should bring equity to the seven practices in South Somerset who have not previously received a community service
- Somerset Community Acute Eye Referral Service – this scheme will provide GPs the opportunity to refer patients with acute eye problems to a local optometrist rather than them being referred to ophthalmology outpatients as an urgent referral
- Enhanced Community Palliative Care Service – this is a local scheme commissioned by the Porlock practice
- Enhanced Clinical Care for Patients in Specialist Residential Care Beds – this scheme is proposed as a pilot to improve the clinical management of this specific population in two residential care homes.

Further work is continuing on a range of schemes to present to the next PBC Approvals Committee for later in the summer which will include a number of interface and diagnostic services.

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Please remember to check the website. Your feedback will be appreciated.

CLINICAL LEADS

We are involved in a number of workstreams to improve patient care pathways and the PCT has organised a meeting on 4 July in Taunton for clinicians, both secondary and primary care to discuss a number of clinical pathways with the intention of identifying opportunities to improve the patient experiences. We would be keen to hear from GPs who would be interested in attending this event who have a specific interest in any one of the following:

- Gynaecology
- ENT
- Dermatology
- Diabetes
- Musculoskeletal
- Urology

Please contact Lisa Hulford (lisa.hulford@wyvernhealth.nhs.uk) for further details.

WH.C MEMBERSHIP AGREEMENTS

At the beginning of April all practices who had signed up to the Consortium in 2007 were sent copies of a membership agreement for 2008.

If you haven't yet returned a signed copy of the agreement and you wish to remain with the consortium in 2008 please send to Lisa Hulford at Priory House, Priory Health Park, Glastonbury Road, Wells BA5 1XL as soon as possible.

PRACTICE BASED COMMISSIONING FOR A NEW DIABETES SERVICE

We are progressing with the development of a commissioning proposal county-wide community based diabetes service in conjunction with the PCT, secondary care providers and primary care. Last month we asked for feedback to help further shape the services. Practices were asked to provide some feedback about the proposed model and in particular views on the following:

1. Do you see any omissions in the three level model proposed?
Please note the model is currently focusing on adults with diabetes. Further work will need to be done around interfacing with paediatric services.
2. What do you see as the main gaps in diabetes services currently provided to your patients?
It would be helpful to know what the local issues are that prevent achieving a higher standard of care to your diabetic population. This could be poor provision of structured education, training of practice nurses, poor access to insulin conversion services etc.
3. Regarding the Level 2 service proposed, as a practice do you have any aspirations to provide some, all or none of the listed elements?
The expectation is that all practices will provide Level 1 element of the service but some may wish to provide elements of Level 2. To have some feedback as to individual practice's capabilities and aspirations would be helpful in the forward planning.

A pro forma was attached to the letter.

If you haven't already done so, please return your Practice's pro forma to lisa.hulford@wyvernhealth.nhs.uk as soon as possible.

FEEDBACK FROM WH.C SURVEY ON PRIMARY CARE ACCESS TO DIAGNOSTICS & OTHER SERVICES

Firstly a belated thanks to the 56 practices who kindly responded to the above questionnaire earlier this year. Having gone to the trouble to complete the survey, it was felt important to give some feedback and bring you up to date with the work WyvernHealth.Com is doing on this issue.

As you will recall the questionnaire was based on best estimates for waits and experiences of diagnostic services and, in particular, the local availability of direct access services where patients did not need to be seen initially by a specialist.

Practices seemed to have given a wide degree of consideration to preparing their responses (difficult to interpret a row of ticks from one practice!) but there were some useful conclusions to be drawn, in particular;

1. There is definite variance to direct access to some diagnostic services between the east and west of the county e.g. direct access Echocardiography.
2. Not all practices in a locality seemed to be aware of which diagnostic services are 'direct access' locally.
3. There are particular difficulties with direct access to:
 - Echocardiography
 - 24 hr ECGs
 - Orthotics / Surgical Appliances
 - Urodynamics
 - Neurophysiology
4. There was general dissatisfaction about the Audiology and Podiatry services in particular about the waiting times and quality of reporting.
5. A significant number of concerns were raised about the quality and delay in receipt of reports from some services provided both by secondary care and by the PCT.

WyvernHealth.Com has met with the Director of Secondary Care Commissioning and a plan has been drawn up to address many of the issues raised.

In particular the PCT has undertaken to ensure Echocardiography and 24hr ECG services are made available as 'direct access' services consistently across the county as an initial priority. They have agreed to audit waiting times where we have raised concerns and will be feeding back formally in May.

The PCT is reporting having met a maximum waiting time of six weeks for accessing all diagnostics for Somerset residents (two weeks for urgent Echos). If any member practice has evidence where this is not being delivered, please let the WH.C office know so this can be taken up with the PCT. WH.C will be working with the PCT to deliver a maximum waiting time of two weeks for all diagnostics.

To address the issue of GP awareness of local direct access services it is hoped to develop with the PCT a system (probably web based) listing direct access diagnostic services which could also enable referral forms to be accessed.

If you want to see the complete data collected from the questionnaires returned, please ask Lisa Hulford at the Wyvern Health.Com office on 01749 836709.