

Cllr Daniel Yates
Chair
Brighton and Hove Health and Wellbeing
Board
Daniel.Yates@brighton-hove.gov.uk

NHS England
18-20 Massetts Road
York House
Horley
RH6 7DE

england.primarycare.southeast@nhs.net
Tel: 01293 729298

10 March 2016

Dear Daniel,

Re: Update regarding care of patients from The Practice Group's GP surgeries in Brighton and Hove

I am writing to update you on our work to secure ongoing care for patients who use the five local GP surgeries that are currently managed by The Practice Group.

After the last Health and Wellbeing Board meeting on 2 February 2016, we committed to provide an update to the Board at your meeting on 15 March. We hoped to be able to confirm ongoing arrangements for patient care at this point.

Our priority is to secure ongoing care for all affected patients and we are doing everything we can to achieve this, in response to the challenging circumstances we face in needing to respond to The Practice Group's decision. We also recognise that this is a difficult period for patients and are very mindful of this in working to secure alternative arrangements for their future care.

Due to the further important work we need to do to make sure we reach a sustainable solution for all patients, we are not yet able to confirm final arrangements for patients from all five GP surgeries.

This follows the local commissioning panel meeting you attended on 1 March (alongside other local community representatives) where we discussed the challenges involved in making sure we get the right solution for patients from each surgery.

In the meantime, we have secured an extension to services at each of the five GP surgeries, to ensure that patients can continue to get the care they need at this point.

We have also agreed a plan to secure the long-term care of the vulnerable patients who use the Brighton Homeless Healthcare Surgery.

Our priority is to make sure we can secure the long-term care of all other patients who use the Practice Willow House, Practice Hangleton Manor, Practice North Street and Practice Whitehawk surgeries.

This letter explains the current position and our ongoing work to achieve this.

Extension of services

Following the decision by The Practice Group to give notice on their contract just before Christmas, we have been working to determine how we can ensure sustainable, ongoing care for patients who use each of the five surgeries.

This is a complex process, involving engagement with local patients and community representatives and discussions with other local GP practices.

Under national regulations, The Practice Group was required to give NHS England six months' notice of their intention to stop providing care at each of the five surgeries. It would have been difficult for us to put in place new arrangements for the care of patients from all five surgeries within this limited timescale.

At our request, The Practice Group has agreed to continue providing services at each of the surgeries beyond their required notice period. This is to make sure we have as much time as possible to put in place new care arrangements for all affected patients and to ensure a smooth transition for them.

The Practice Group will now be continuing to provide services at four of the surgeries, in accordance with the extended timescales set out below:

- The Practice Willow House (Practice Group will continue to provide services until the end of September 2016)
- The Practice Hangleton Manor (Practice Group will continue to provide services until the end of September 2016)
- The Practice North Street (Practice Group will continue to provide services until the end of September 2016)
- The Practice Whitehawk Road (Practice Group will continue to provide services until the end of November 2016)

Brighton Homeless Healthcare Surgery

We recognise the specialist service the Brighton Homeless Healthcare Surgery provides to this vulnerable group of people within the city. NHS Brighton and Hove Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) feels that providing a dedicated service for the homeless, tailored to their complex needs and circumstances, can support the best possible health outcomes for them and also help reduce any unnecessary demand on local A&E services.

The importance of this service has also been stressed by a number of local organisations that support the homeless.

We are able to confirm that following our discussions with local stakeholders, we have been able to reach a solution which will see this dedicated primary care service for the homeless re-procured.

The Practice Group has agreed to extend the remaining period during which they will continue to provide services at the surgery, until 31 January 2017. This will allow sufficient time for the NHS to conduct the necessary procurement process.

NHS Brighton and Hove CCG and NHS England will be working together on the procurement exercise to develop the new service.

We are putting in place arrangements to communicate this outcome to patients who use the homeless service, with the support of the Morley Street surgery and local support organisations.

Care for patients at The Practice Willow House, The Practice Hangleton Manor, The Practice North Street and The Practice Whitehawk

While facing challenging circumstances, it is important to make sure we get the right solution for patients from each of the other four Practice Group surgeries. We must have confidence that the final decisions we make will deliver the best possible outcomes for them.

Over the coming weeks, we will be completing an impact assessment and seeking further assurances in order to ensure we have fully understood how the situation affects patients. We also need to determine if we can address any of the concerns that some patients have raised.

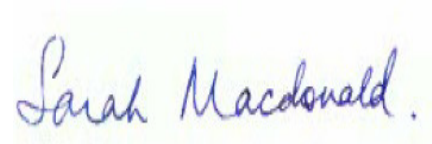
Following this process, we will ask the local commissioning panel to reconvene by the end of April, to agree a final set of recommendations for NHS England to consider for approval. This will then enable us to confirm ongoing care arrangements to patients and to give them the clarity we know they want.

We are writing to patients registered at each of the four surgeries to update them on the current situation. While we are not yet in a position to confirm their final future care arrangements, we feel it important they know about the extension to existing services we have been able to put in place for them while we carry out this further important work.

I look forward to attending the Health and Wellbeing Board meeting next week, to discuss this further.

I am sharing this letter with other local stakeholders so that they are also aware of the current situation.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sarah Macdonald." The signature is written in a cursive style and is set against a light green rectangular background.

Sarah Macdonald
Director of Commissioning
NHS England South (South East)