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Paul Thistlewood
Scrutiny Officer
Democratic Services
Isle of Wight Council
Newport
Isle of Wight
PO30 1UD

Dear Mr Thistlewood

APPLICATION TO CLOSE PRACTICE LIST: SANDOWN HEALTH CENTRE

Thank you for your letter of the 15th and 16th May regarding the temporary 'suspension of registrants' and then the subsequent application for list closure by Sandown Medical Practice. Can I firstly apologise for the delay in response and I hope we are able to answer your questions to your satisfaction.

It may be useful to cover the concerns that have been raised by the Chairman of the Council's Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Adult Social Care and Health in the second letter initially. It should be noted that we are grateful that that the Chairman accepts that GP surgeries on the Island are experiencing difficulties with the recruitment of GPs and other key staff.

Temporary Suspension of list

Sandown Medical Centre took the decision to temporarily suspend their list to new patients. They did so because the level of workload for the practice was jeopardising their ability to provide safe care for their registered patients. As the Chairman notes, this is permitted by the National Health Service (General Medical Services Contracts) Regulations 2004.

The practice followed a seven step process in order to ensure they had undertaken the appropriate course of action (please see: <https://www.bma.org.uk/advice/employment/gp-practices/quality-first/quality-first-guidance> for further information on process).



The Chairman also asked if we could confirm the number of patients that had been refused registration over the last 6-months. This information is held by the practice and they are keeping appropriate records, which will be discussed at the monthly monitoring meetings. Patients are provided with a letter by the practice advising them of the reasons for non-registration.

The practice has been made aware by the CCG of their contractual requirements in this situation, including assurance that its actions do not discriminate between patients on the grounds of race, gender, social class, age, religion, sexual orientation, appearance, disability or medical condition.

The temporary suspension occurred in advance of a formal request to the CCG to close its list. However, during this time the CCG worked with the practice to support them to exhaust all possible avenues before the decision apply for list closure was made.

List closure application

Sandown Medical Centre made a formal application to close its list for six-months to the CCG; which was taken to the Isle of Wight Primary Care Committee on Thursday 14th June 2018 and approved.

Due to the sensitive nature of the detail in the application, this was heard in Part II of the committee and therefore in private.

In answer to the Chairman's specific points raised in his letter of the 15th May:

- The CCG can confirm that the practice considered all options to manage workload within its practice team. They have worked closely with the Wessex Local Medical Committee who have provided them with confidential advice and support.
- The CCG and the practice are also working with NHS England to include this practice on the national "Resilience Programme".
- The CCG have advised the practice of the requirement to consult with their patients on the list closure application. We have confirmed with the practice manager that they have consulted with their patients and explained to them issues around workload and their ability to provide safe care.
- The CCG is working with the practice on their action plan, meeting them on a monthly basis to ensure they can reopen as soon as possible. The CCG has agreed a six-month closure but will support the practice to reopen its list before that time if they are able.
- The views of IW Trust were sought. The Trusts 111 service refers patients under the out-of-area scheme. Sandown has confirmed that they will continue to see out-of-area patients.
- In terms of patient data, the CCG can view this only at the highest level. However, it is clear there is approximately a 7% turnover per year. It should be noted that a closure is not just about a rise in patient numbers; it is also about the availability of GPs and other clinical staff and the ability to fill vacancies.
- NHS England and the CCG are aware of the Island's specific issues around recruitment and retention and as a priority continue to work on ways to increase stability in the primary care system.

We also received an email on 14th June 2018 where further concerns were advised to us by NHS England.

In response we can confirm that the practice and the CCG has worked closely with the two neighbouring practices, Shanklin and Beech Grove (Brading). Beech Grove practice have a branch surgery in Lake, (5 Sandown Rd, Sandown PO36 9JL) and Shanklin Pat 1 Carter Rd, Shanklin PO37 7HR. Both practices are supporting the Sandown Practice by accepting patients during this period of firstly temporary suspension of list and list closure application.

We are working with all three practices to ensure the appropriate information is available on respective websites.

It has also been requested that senior members of the CCG are in attendance at the Council's Policy and Scrutiny Committee; we can confirm that Loretta Outhwaite (Deputy Chief Officer), Gillian Baker (Director of Strategy and partnerships), Melanie Rogers (Director of Nursing & Quality) and Tracy Savage (Deputy Director of Quality and Medicines Optimisation) will be available to attend.

To discuss primary care resilience in more detail we would also like to propose a private session of the scrutiny committee and would be very pleased if Jo Smith from Healthwatch could be invited to attend.

Can I finally thank you for your correspondence and hope you agree that a private session would be a helpful way to discuss the issues raised in more detail.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tracy Savage". The signature is written in a cursive style and is enclosed in a light grey rectangular box.

Tracy Savage
Deputy Director of Quality and Head of Medicines Optimisation
Isle of Wight Clinical Commissioning Group

Encl. Frequently Asked Questions