



Committee report

Committee	POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH
Date	MONDAY, 16 JULY 2018
Title	SANDOWN MEDICAL CENTRE
Report of	PAUL THISTLEWOOD, SCRUTINY OFFICER

SUMMARY

1. To consider the background to the temporary closure of the patient list at Sandown Medical Centre together with concerns raised with the IW Clinical Commissioning Group.

BACKGROUND

2. The Manager of Healthwatch IW drew the attention of the chairman to Sandown Medical Centre's application to the IW Clinical Commissioning Group, to close its practice list of patients to new registrations for a period of one year.
3. As the result of this a letter was sent to the IWCCG on the 15 May 2018 stating the following :-

"Whilst accepting that GP surgeries on the Island, like many other areas across the country, are experiencing difficulties with the recruitment of GPs and other key staff the chairman is concerned about the impact that this proposal may have.

In addition to the questions that have already been asked by Healthwatch the chairman would wish to have a response to the following :-

1. Can you confirm that you are satisfied that the Medical Centre has looked at all options in an attempt to relieve the difficulties encountered about its open list, what these were, why were they rejected and the level of success in implementing any remedial actions?

2. Has the Medical Centre discussed with its own patients, and in particular the Patients Participation Group, the difficulties being encountered and have their views been formally recorded?
3. Will the CCG be monitoring the Medical Centre's action plan to ensure that it can re-open its patient list after the 12 month period?
4. Has the views of the IWNHS Trust been sought?
5. How was the anticipated number of new patients who may have requested being placed on the Centre's patient list during the year calculated?

Can you also confirm who will be making the final decision and what the expected date for this is?"

4. A further letter was sent on 16 May 2018 stating the following :-

"In notifying the local Isle of Wight Councillors of this matter I have been advised that the Medical Centre has already refused to register new patients who have moved into the area within the past few months. This is in advance of the formal request to close its list and is of concern to the Chairman of the Policy and Scrutiny Committee for Adult Social Care and Health.

It is recognised that in addition to the formal list closure procedure all practices have the contractual right to decline to register any new patients without having to go through the formal processes and without needing to obtain the CCG's permission. However a practice can only decide not to register new patients provided it has 'reasonable and non-discriminatory grounds for doing so', (such as protecting the quality of patient services.) In such cases, the regulations allow a practice to refuse to register new patients (Schedule 6, Part 2, paragraph 17 of the National Health Service (General Medical Services Contract) Regulations 2004.

I believe that the Medical Centre did not need to make an official declaration of its intention to refuse to register new patients. It must, however, provide the patient with a written notice as required in paragraph 3 of the above Regulations. Can you confirm the number of patients that have been refused registration over the past six months and that in each case the patient has been provided with a written notice? In such instances has the CCG asked the practice to justify the decision not to register a patient?

This will provide an assurance that its actions did not discriminate between patients on the grounds of the applicant's race, gender, social class, age, religion, sexual orientation, appearance, disability or medical condition.

In addition has the practice got a written acceptance policy that would enable it to refute any suggestion of improper rejection of any application?

I also note that under The National Health Service (General Medical Services Contract) Regulations 2004 paragraph 29 schedule 6 part 2 the list of patients shall reopen before the expiry period if the number of registered patients falls to the number specified in the closure notice. No doubt if the CCG gives formal approval to the closure of the list it will closely monitor the numbers so that if existing patients move from the area or pass away then new patients can be registered. Can you confirm that this will be the case?"


5. A response was provided by the IWCCG and a copy is attached.
6. As the result of this, and discussions with the chairman, a further letter was sent to the IWCCG. A copy is attached. A response is awaited at the time of writing this report and will be circulated to the committee once received.
7. The proposal does not come within the nationally recognised guidance on substantial variations, or reconfigurations in health services. The role of health scrutiny is however is to ensure that functions are discharged in a transparent manner and that changes in one service does not impact upon the quality and safety of the wider health and social care service.

RECOMMENDATION

8. THAT the Committee and the IW Clinical Commissioning Group consider what lessons can be learnt from this current application that may assist in any future instances.

APPENDICES ATTACHED

9. [APPENDIX 1](#) – letter from the IWCCG
[APPENDIX 2](#) – letter to the IWCCG

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