

REVIEW:	GP Services in Herefordshire	
Committee:	Health Scrutiny Committee	Chairman: Councillor Kay Swinburne
Lead support officer:	Sara Siloko	

SCOPING

Terms of Reference

This review assesses the service levels and subsequent performance of General Practitioner (GP) services in Herefordshire, with particular focus on the provision of extended practice hours and the provision of preventive intervention measures and screening initiatives for their registered patients.

Desired outcomes

- To assess levels of overall service provided to Herefordshire residents by GPs under the Herefordshire Primary Care Trust (PCT) contract in order to:
 - seek assurance that the county's residents are receiving the level of service they need and deserve
 - identify and analyse any particular areas for improvement in the county's GP service provision
- To ascertain the current level of access to GP services across Herefordshire with particular emphasis on identifying issues pertaining to access to out-of-hours across population groups and localities
- Given the increasing emphasis on lifestyle choices and population wellbeing the review will examine GP involvement in preventive activities particularly for the major causes of disease and premature death in the county
- To ascertain the governance arrangements for performance managing and changing the service when necessary
- To ascertain the level of involvement of GPs in planning services

Key questions

- Do all population groups in Herefordshire enjoy a similarly high level of satisfaction as suggested by the overall figures from recent surveys?
- Are there specific population groups dissatisfied about their experience of GP services in Herefordshire.?
- Do all population groups and localities enjoy equitable access to GP services in the county?
- Is access to GP services outside normal working hours similar across rural and urban parts of the county?
- Are there specific areas or population groups experiencing difficulties with accessing GP services in the county?
- Are there specific areas or groups in the county that are disadvantaged by the current arrangements for extended opening hours for GP services?
- Are there national targets relating to preventive services, and if so what are they?
- How are Herefordshire GPs involved in delivering effective preventive actions aimed at reducing diseases and premature deaths due to cancers, stroke and diabetes?
- What specifically are GP practices throughout the county doing to support the effort to reduce smoking, promote sensible alcohol use, and reduce the levels of obesity and sexually transmitted infections?
- How are local GPs currently engaged in the delivery of services such as social care and mental health in their communities?
- What impact will ongoing and planned changes in health and social care service provision - such as the push to reduce numbers in residential care, individualised budgets, etc - have on GP services?
- To what extent are local GP practices involved in identifying and meeting the extended needs of the patient population they serve by using the opportunities offered by Practice Based Commissioning?
- How do GPs in the county interact and support the community hospitals, nursing homes and Intermediate Care Units in their locality?
- How, and how often, do the commissioners of the service assess the needs of the county's population for GP services?
- How are resources to meet these needs allocated to GP surgeries in Herefordshire and how does this process compare with national guidelines?
- What is the process for meeting needs above and beyond those identified in the basic GP contract?
- How are local GP services financed, and how is that money allocated to basic services and

other services?

- What criteria have to be met in order for a GP surgery to agree to provide a new service?
- How does the PCT ensure and monitor that there is equitable access to services for all?
- How does the PCT measure the outcomes for Herefordshire patients?
- Are there any plans locally or nationally (intended or already under way) which will change the preventive and/or screening services provided by GPs for Herefordshire? What are these plans, and when and how will they be implemented?
- Are there any plans intended or already under way to change extended hours GP service provision for Herefordshire? What are these plans, and when and how will they be implemented?
- What feedback do GPs receive from the PCT regarding the results of its annual patient survey?
- If there are discrepancies in service levels in different parts of the county, what action do GP surgeries take, or propose others take, to ensure that more equitable and efficient services can be achieved?
- How does the PCT interact with the Local Medical Council (LMC) and ensure involvement of the local GPs in the planning of future services?
- How could communication between GP providers and the commissioners of services be improved?

Links to the Community Strategy

The review group will identify how the outcome of this review contributes to the objectives contained in the Herefordshire Community Strategy, including the Council's Corporate Plan and other key plans or strategies.

Links to the PCT commissioning of GP services

The review will include questioning of the PCT management on the level of commissioning for GP services and their evaluation of the service provider.

Proposed Methodology

- Desk based review of evidence, data and source documents
- Evidence review sessions and briefing from key informants
- Briefing from expert witnesses, officers, and selected informants
- Identification, collation, analysis and interpretation of locally available data
- Visits to model GP practices of renowned excellence outside the county
- Visits to a selection of GP practices in the county
- Focus group discussions with key informers, community members, patients and selected groups
- Obtaining the views of all GP practices directly via written response

Timetable	
<i>Activity</i>	<i>Timescale</i>
Agree approach, programme of consultation/research/provisional witnesses/dates	By Friday 10 April 2009
Brief review group	By Friday 24 April 2009
Collect current available data	By Friday 1 May 2009
Collect outstanding data	By Friday 15 May 2009
Analysis of data	By Friday 29 May 2009
Final confirmation of interviews of witnesses	By Friday 15 May 2009
Carry out programme of interviews	During first two weeks of June 2009
Agree programme of site visits	By Friday 15 May 2009
Undertake site visits as appropriate	During June 2009
Final analysis of data and witness evidence	By Friday 10 July 2009
Prepare draft report including options/recommendations	By Friday 17 July 2009
Test assumptions with informants	By Friday 31 July 2009
Prepare final report	By Friday 14 August 2009
Present final report to Health Scrutiny Committee	On 25 September 2009
Implementation of agreed recommendations	
Members	Support Officers
Expressions of Interest have been received from Councillors A Seldon, PJ Watts, P Jones, GA Powell, G Lucas and PGH Cutter.	Sara Siloko