

INTERIM UPDATE REPORT BY NHS HEREFORDSHIRE**Mental Health Procurement**

The first stage of the process to find a suitable strategic partner to deliver mental health services in Herefordshire has just ended. The process being followed is "competitive dialogue" because this will enable us to purchase the best range of services at best value for people in Herefordshire.

In this process we have produced a Memorandum of Information which describes the services we currently offer and the core values we will need to sustain. These values include local service delivery, innovative and wider range of services, increased access to services. An advert to invite expressions of interest produced 5 bids which are currently being evaluated on technical and professional, governance, information management, and financial grounds by our professional staff. It is anticipated that some bids may not be pursued into the dialogue stage that will begin in early December with a 'bidders event' where they can meet key staff from commissioning and providers services and ask questions.

Scrutiny will be kept informed of the progress of this project and will have the opportunity to contribute to the evaluation process. The PQQ questions can be provided on request

Dental Procurement

As part of a national programme to improve access to dentistry, and in line with the PCT's strategic direction, the PCT has launched a procurement to provide care to, approximately, an additional 6,000 patients who wish to access dental care in Herefordshire. The advert to invite expressions of interest, alongside the Memorandum of Information, was issued at the beginning of November. The two stages of evaluation will take place in January and March. It is planned that the contract will be awarded at the end of April with a view to commencement of a service around October 2010. This will be dependent on the lead time of the successful bidder in providing appropriately furnished premises.

A briefing will be available to the Overview and Scrutiny committee on the outcome of the procurement on completion. Further information is available from the PCT's website or on request.

Choose and Book

- All Herefordshire GP practices are using Choose and Book and we are currently achieving 66% C & B utilisation. This places us 4th out of 17 PCTs in the West Midlands and is above the current Regional and national averages.
- We have a plan in place to achieve full roll out of C & B by March 2010 and then to "mainstream" the project during 2010/11.
- We are leading the Region in the progress we are making to use C & B for PCT provider services – podiatric surgery, children's audiology and musculoskeletal physio. are all live, podiatry and Community Mental Health teams planned to go live in December
- Also in December we shall be starting to use C & B for 2 week wait suspected cancer referrals to HHT
- We believe we are the first health community other than the national pilot sites to offer help and support to patients around Choice and C & B via. public libraries and Council Info. Shops

Role of the GP in Accident and Emergency Unit

The role of the GP in A&E has been reinstated since 16 October this year to support the Hospitals Trust in managing increased demand for urgent care.

The GP works in A&E, not in triage, providing primary care knowledge and experience to support the management of patients who may not need admission. They are currently demonstrating a slightly lower admission rate for the patients they see than for A&E as a whole. This is a short term urgent measure to tackle the problem of demand but will inform longer term plans to improve the management of urgent care demand, including the Equitable Access Centre, primary care out of hours, primary care access and management of patients in A&E.

November 2009