

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Herefordshire

Overview of the West Mercia PCT Cluster By Eamonn Kelly, Chief Executive

Background

The West Mercia Cluster is a clustering of four Primary Care Trusts (PCTs); NHS Herefordshire, NHS Worcestershire, NHS Telford and Wrekin and Shropshire County NHS. Together the Cluster represents 57% of the West Midlands geographical area and 22% of its population.

The Cluster has been working together since early 2011, but was formally established under a single Board, with Joanna Newton as Chair, on 17th January 2012. Due to the fact the Cluster comprises three distinct healthcare systems, and as such relatively discrete patient flows within these systems, the Cluster has adopted a place based approach. This means it has focussed on maintaining local focus, relationships and ownership through the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and locality leads.

Quality

The Cluster's vision is one where quality is the driving principle for change and challenge in West Mercia. As such the Cluster has developed four ambitions to drive forward its work and its support of the local health systems;

- Eliminate unwarranted variation
- Stimulate a patient revolution
- Develop a cohort of transformational clinical leaders
- Do the ordinary things extraordinarily well

Using quality as our driving principle, it is clear that across all sectors of health and social care, strong leadership and clinical engagement are key tools for delivering improvements. As such the development and support of the new architecture for the NHS is also a key part of the Cluster's work.

Building New Structures

The PCT Cluster will be abolished on 1st April 2013 and in its place will be a new system for commissioning led by GPs. During 2012 we are moving towards this new system with the aim of having the new organisations in 'shadow form' within the coming months.

Across West Mercia there will be six CCGs, four Health and Wellbeing Boards and one National Commissioning Board Office. Locally in Herefordshire, there is one CCG which covers 24 GP Practices and is being led by Dr Andy Watts.

Each of our CCGs:

- Are a subcommittee of their PCT with delegated authority for commissioning
- Are leading the local QIPP planning process with their own priorities for improvement;
- Have identified their three priorities for 11/12 for Any Qualified Provider services;
- Are members of their local Health and Well Being Board and engaged with them on local system reform.

Supporting Staff

During this time of transition it is essential we support our staff, as it is their hard work and dedication that ensures we continue to deliver high quality patient care. Recognising that the transition has created uncertainty and anxiety we have developed a range of staff communications and a suite of support mechanisms. These include a monthly Chief Executive's newsletter, internal staff surveys, open Q&A sessions with the Executive Team and a programme of one-to-ones.

Moving Forwards

The six CCGs are all proceeding through the authorisation process and over the coming months will increasingly take on greater responsibility and more staff. We are in discussion with CCGs regarding what commissioning support will look like across West Mercia, and we are also engaging with our staff to discuss developing the wider system. The continued support of our Local Authorities underpins excellent patient care for today and tomorrow.

The day to day running of our healthcare services must always be our focus, and we must continue to improve those services for our populations.

Action/Recommendation

The OSC is asked to note the presentation for information.