

Partner briefing: Community health services



**With you.
For you.**

Community health services in West Lancashire

Briefing for partners: February 2016

Overview

NHS West Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is currently re-procuring adult community health services, as a result of its current contract with Southport & Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust coming to an end in April 2017. As well as community health services, this procurement also includes some aspects of urgent care such as GP out of hours, walk in centres and the Acute Visiting Service.

All NHS contracts are awarded for a specified period of time. This ensures that services are continually reviewed to ensure they offer patients the best possible care. Ahead of a contract's expiry date, commissioners are obliged to review and re-tender those services so they can be assured that healthcare services are the best they can be for the populations they serve.

As local healthcare commissioners, the CCG knows it is currently on a burning platform and that to 'do nothing' is simply not an option. We can see that:

- There is an increasing demand for services; an ageing society with greater health and social care needs
- The cost of drugs and new technology is rising
- There is a significant impact of a rapidly changing world and pace of life on the population of West Lancashire's mental health
- There are differences in how long you live and what your quality of life is just because of where you live or social circumstances
- We need to get the best value for money in our health services dictated by the current financial climate

Background

In July 2015, West Lancashire CCG's Governing Body formally agreed to begin a re-procurement exercise for adult community health services. This decision followed an extensive programme of work with the current provider and Southport and Formby CCG to inform the CCG's commissioning intentions. This programme of work - *Facing the Future Together* - provided the trust with an opportunity to work collaboratively with the respective CCGs of West Lancashire CCG and Southport & Formby CCG and improve against several key criteria.

The decision to re-procure was informed by the views of local GP practices, which form the membership of the CCGs, and the following additional considerations:

- When a contract for a NHS service comes to an end, commissioners have a duty to review those services to ensure they will meet the changing needs of their population in the future and are in line with their 5 year strategies for

improvement, whilst at the same time continuing to provide the highest possible standards of quality and value for patients.

The existing community services contract with Southport & Ormskirk Hospital was set to expire in March 2014 (which included two one-year extensions to allow for the integrated care model to be fully developed). The decision to re-procure was made after assessing all the evidence and information available to the CCG, in particular its statutory duties and procurement law.

As local healthcare commissioners, the CCG will continue to improve community health services and ensure they meet the needs of the local population, by working closely with existing provider of community services Southport & Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust up until the contract expires in April 2017.

With regards to listening to the population of West Lancashire, the CCG continues to speak to local people about their experiences of community services and what they expect from these services in the future. These views will be considered as part of this process and next steps.

Developing community health services

Improving how community services work for patients is critical to making the NHS more effective and efficient. Across the country these services are often not well developed or co-ordinated with other services, causing patients to receive care that is fragmented and of variable quality. Every healthcare system is experiencing challenges in meeting demand, coping with rising costs and new technological advancements while striving to deliver quality treatment and care.

Going forward, the CCG intends to focus on outcomes for patients, rather than being driven by numbers of contacts and targets. When considering outcomes, healthcare commissioners first need to understand which outcomes are most important for patients and to then develop indicators to measure whether those outcomes are being met. The CCG has already gathered crucial patient and staff insight in order to develop the outcomes for this tender process. This participation will continue to do so as the procurement process continues.

Aspects of urgent care including GP out of hours, the walk in centres and the Acute Visiting Service have also been included in the procurement. We want to offer a reliable, comprehensive and safe alternative to A&E and for services to work together to provide integrated care avoiding fragmentation and duplication.

Commissioners now have an important opportunity to commission community services in a way that will support this shift towards joined up care for patients closer to home.

Many contracts are expiring giving commissioners an opportunity to;

- Move to new ways of working or new models of care
- Test which providers are most likely to achieve transformational change

The CCG needs to be satisfied that any new provider of care is the most capable of improving the quality and efficiency of services and adding value to patients' lives. Generally, rolling over contracts indefinitely without considering these factors is not in the best interests of patients and is not consistent with legal procurement regulations. Community services have a number of objectives, including promoting health and healthy behaviours, supporting people to manage long term conditions and providing treatment in a person's home or community setting. Two-thirds of CCGs surveyed by Monitor reported that they are reviewing and redesigning some or all of their community services. CCGs reported that 9 to 18 months were needed to engage with stakeholders and decide how services should be improved.

Joined up care – what we expect from all services in the future

Community services have a fundamental role in the CCG's 5 year strategy for improving healthcare. The CCG believes that all local health services need to provide more joined up care, in order to provide patients and carers with appropriate quality services.

Joined up care is about hospitals doing what hospitals need to do and community services, GPs, social care, the third sector and other partners working closely together to deliver the best services for our local populations, closer to home. The CCG is committed to providing as much healthcare as possible as locally in the community as possible, working closely with patients, carers, GP practices, and a range of other care professionals, so hospitals can concentrate on providing more specialist care.

What this means for staff and patients

Patients can still expect to have access to high quality community services throughout the procurement process and beyond, and the professionals who provide their care will not change as a result of this procurement beginning.

The CCG greatly values the skills, local knowledge and experience of community service staff and have listened to their views which will inform the future model of care. The CCG is keen to ensure that the new model of care is both informed by and built upon this strong and committed workforce. The CCG continues to liaise with the incumbent staff impacted by this procurement process.

In addition, it is important to note that all re-procurement exercises are subject to stringent NHS workforce regulation and employment laws. These provide existing staff with certain safeguards in respect of their employment.

Further reading

- [5 year strategy](#)
- [Vision for joined up care](#)
- [Building For The Future – clinical strategy](#)

All resources are available on the CCG's dedicated webpage:

<http://www.westlancashireccg.nhs.uk/have-your-say/community-health-services/>

Get in touch

If you would like further information about this process, please contact the CCG
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