

8th January 2009

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Councillor Denise Cobb
Chairman
Health Overview Scrutiny Committee
Brighton and Hove City Council
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Dear Denise

GP Led Health Centre

I wrote to you in July to update you on progress we were making on the GP led Health Centre and I said I would be in touch at the end of the year with a further update.

As you know the interim report *Our NHS, Our Future* by Lord Darzi made a commitment to providing more access to primary care services. This commitment included additional GP Practices in under doctored areas around the country and for every PCT to procure a GP Led Health Centre. Brighton and Hove is not considered to be under-doctored. As with all other PCTs in England, we were required to procure a GP Led Health Centre based on an open and transparent tender process by the end of December 2008.

The PCT completed the tender in November and we chose Care UK as our preferred provider in December. The evaluation was rigorous and in line with best practise, the law and the agreed evaluation plan. Care UK was selected as the preferred bidder on the basis of the quality of the service they plan to provide, the cost of the service and the value for taxpayers' money this offers. The quality of the service the PCT requires was set out in the invitation to tender and enshrined in the contract.

Care UK is now working to mobilise the service, as required by the PCT, by July 2009. They will be submitting planning applications for two central Brighton properties and are beginning to make contact with the various stakeholders in the city to ensure the service meets the needs of the city.

People will be able to remain with their local GP practice and see a GP or nurse and health promotion services at the health centre. There will be a mix of booked appointments and walk-in services, and the centre will be open from 8am to 8pm, seven days a week – a service not currently offered in the city.

The health centre will increase choice for local people and provide a much needed service to our city's many visitors who often end up being seen inappropriately in Accident and Emergency. We expect that the service will grow steadily over a number of years reaching around 6,000 registered patients; we anticipate that the walk-in services will be popular with patients and will be heavily used.

Chair: Julian Lee Chief Executive: Darren Grayson

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However, this is just one among many developments in primary care – others include increasing the number of other practices providing extended opening hours (around 75% of local people are registered with practices that have increased their opening times – some including Saturday mornings) and new or re-developed facilities in Whitehawk, Saltdean and Lewes Rd – this a significant improvement in the accessibility and responsiveness of GP services.

I will continue to keep you and your colleagues on the Health Overview Scrutiny Committee informed as we near opening in July. Should you require any further information of course please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,


Darren Grayson
Chief Executive

cc: Giles Rossington
Julian Lee
Jane Simmons