



Safeguarding Policy and Practice in GP Practices - Brighton and Hove

This document summarises a short desk top review of safeguarding and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) issues in GP practices undertaken by Healthwatch Brighton and Hove (HWB&H).

The CQC routinely shares inspection reports with HWB&H which are reviewed by its Intelligence Committee. Members of the committee (which includes staff, board members and the HWB&H Chair), identified a pattern of findings relating to safeguarding policy and practice in GP practices. The team were therefore tasked with reviewing published reports and highlighting safeguarding issues.

Information in the table below was collated on 25th September 2015, and was accurate on the day of recording according to information published on the CQC website. It was produced by examining publically available CQC inspection reports for GP surgeries in Brighton and Hove. Clinics which specialise specifically in cosmetics, skin conditions, travel treatments and slimming treatments were excluded from the analysis¹, because it was deemed that they did not provide a general practitioner service.

Thirty reports were reviewed in total, one from 2013, twenty from 2014 and nine from 2015. HWB&H is aware that some of these reports therefore relate to inspections undertaken some time ago and the reported circumstances may well have changed – we have asked the CQC for updated information but they have been unable to provide it at this stage. Five practices are currently being inspected and/or awaiting report release. (Please note that the CQC did not start rating practices until October 2014. The CQC started to inspect GPs from April 2013 as a pilot exercise, and did a further wave in May 2014).

The initial finding of the work is that of all practices visited as at September 2015 over half were flagged as having some element of action required on safeguarding policy or practice. We have therefore produced this report to share with the Adult Safeguarding Board, Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS England, the Care Quality Commission and local Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC). Alongside OSC, the Adult Safeguarding Board will discuss the report at a future meeting.

HWB&H is concerned about the implications for patient safety and potential non-compliance with the Care Act. We have therefore asked relevant parties to investigate further and will be seeking reassurance that the issues raised are being dealt with in a timely and adequate manner. To date we have received positive responses from the CCG and NHS England in this respect and we understand that further information will be provided in due course.

¹ 'Head Quarters' Brighton Intergrated Care, National Slimming Centres (Brighton), Brighton Laser Clinic, Vision of Hope, Sussex Travel Clinic, Clinic Nine, Hove Skin Clinic, Brighton Skin Surgery, The Health Company LTD,