

HEALTH SCRUTINY PANEL
25 JULY 2012
ANY QUALIFIED PROVIDER – TENDERING PROCESS
REPORT OF HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

1. Purpose

The report provides information on the work being undertaken by NHS Nottingham City Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and the Nottinghamshire PCT Cluster on the implementation of Any Qualified Provider (AQP) in respect of podiatry, direct access Ultrasound and Psychological Therapies. Dawn Smith, the CCG's Chief Operating Officer and Teresa Cope, Director of Contracting, Quality and Performance will introduce the report.

2. Action required

- 2.1 The Panel is asked to note the update provided by CCG colleagues, and to consider the information received in the context of continuity and quality of service, and the patient experience.

3. Background information

- 3.1 The Department of Health issued guidance on Extending Patient Choice of Provider in July 2011, requiring health service commissioners to identify 3 or more community or mental health services in which to engage with the Any Qualified Provider process. Following local stakeholder engagement, the services chosen in Nottingham City were Psychological therapies, diagnostics (ultrasound) and podiatry.
- 3.2 At its meeting on 25 January 2012, the Panel received a presentation on the 'Transforming Community Services' initiative, which referred to impending changes to service delivery under AQP. Appendix 1 to this report provides up-to-date information on the progress of the tendering process in respect of the three services.

4. List of attached information

None.

5. Background papers, other than published works or those disclosing exempt or confidential information

None.

6. Published documents referred to in compiling this report

Presentation to and minutes of the Health Scrutiny Panel meeting 25 January 2012

7. **Wards affected**

All

8. **Contact information**

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16 July 2012

Health Scrutiny Committee Overview Paper Any Qualified Provider (AQP).

1. Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to provide the Health Scrutiny Committee with an update on work undertaken by NHS Nottingham City Clinical Commissioning Group and the Nottinghamshire PCT Cluster on Any Qualified Provider (AQP).

2. Background

The Department of Health issued guidance on Extending Patient Choice of Provider on 19 July 2011, which set out proposals for a phased implementation of AQP, treating 2012/13 as a transitional year, starting with a limited set of community and some mental health services. The guidance required commissioners to identify 3 or more community or mental health services in which to implement AQP from April 2012, and following local patient engagement, the services chosen were:

1. Podiatry
2. Psychological Therapies
3. Diagnostics (Ultrasound)

3. Governance Arrangements for AQP

The PCT cluster is responsible for co-ordinating the approach to AQP and a cluster wide Programme Board has been established to oversee the implementation of AQP. Within NHS Nottingham City CCG, each AQP area has a lead manager and a lead member of the GP Executive .

4. Service Specifications

National Service Specifications has been produced for each AQP area, which have been reviewed by the CCG AQP leads, working collaboratively with AQP leads across Nottingham County and the wider East Midlands to ensure there is consistency of approach. The national specifications for each AQP service have been approved by the Clinical Commissioning Executive Committee.

5. Evaluation of Providers

The evaluation of AQP submissions is undertaken in 3 parts. Part 1 is undertaken by the Department of Health and Parts 2 and 3 are undertaken by Regional Qualification Centres with input from local commissioners and clinicians.

6. Update on AQP Evaluations

Podiatry

The tender window closed on the 22nd June with a total of 7 organisations submitting tenders for Nottingham City. The second stage evaluation will commence on the 22nd July which is being led by EMPACT (the Regional Qualification Centre) with commissioner and clinician input from Nottingham City CCG.

Whilst some delays have occurred at the first stage of evaluation, it is anticipated that it will be possible to complete the full evaluation process within the timescales, sign contracts and achieve mobilisation of at least some of the services by the end of September.

The patient pathway for AQP Podiatry will include the ability for patients to self refer into 'core' podiatry services with a commissioned maximum waiting time of 8 weeks from referral to treatment.

Ultrasound

The tender window closed on the 1st June with a total of 5 organisations submitting tenders for Nottingham City. The first stage of evaluation has been completed by the Department of Health and the second stage will commence in late July. The new AQP service requires providers to have an average waiting time of 10 working days and a maximum waiting time of 20 working days from referral to scan.

Psychological Therapies

The service has now been advertised, with a closing date of 27th July. Evaluation of bid submissions will take place during August. There is some concern over the tight timescales for the mobilization of new services, however this is partially mitigated by further advice from the DH which outlines that providing contracts are signed by the end of September, a later mobilization date can be agreed with providers if this is felt necessary to support safe service transition / mobilization. The AQP Psychological Therapies service includes self referral and a wider range of commissioned services, including specialist service for adults with chronic physical health problems and patients with substance misuse issues.

7. Communication Strategy

A communication strategy has been drafted by the AQP Board. General information on AQP is currently being distributed to all GP practices which will be followed with service specific information in August and September.