

HEALTH SCRUTINY PANEL
28 MAY 2014
GP PRACTICE CHANGE - THE PRACTICE NIRMALA
REPORT OF HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

1. **Purpose**

- 1.1 To provide information on GP practice changes - The Practice Nirmala, Bulwell.

2. **Action required**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to consider the information provided.

3. **Background information**

- 3.1 NHS England Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Area Team has advised of changes to a GP practice in Nottingham - The Practice Nirmala, Bulwell. A report outlining the changes and plans for future arrangements is attached.
- 3.2 It is not intended that a representative of the NHS England Area Team will attend the meeting to discuss the changes outlined in the report. If a Panel member has a particular issue that they wish to raise in relation to this change they should contact Jane Garrard, Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinator as soon as possible in advance of the meeting.

4. **List of attached information**

- 4.1 The following information can be found in the appendices to this report:

Appendix 1 – The Practice Nirmala – Briefing Overview 15/05/2014 from NHS England Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Area Team

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

None

6. **Published documents referred to in compiling this report**

None

7. **Wards affected**

All

8. **Contact information**

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Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire Area Team

**The Practice Nirmala – briefing overview:
15/05/2014**

Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire Area Context:

Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire Area Team directly commissions Primary Medical Service for approximately 2 million patients. Specifically, the Area Team contracts with 277 GP practices across the two counties, each with an average of just over 7000 patients. National benchmarks indicate that each full time GP manages a list of 1800 to 2000 patients.

Within the Nottingham City area there are currently 61 GP practices with an average of 5800 registered patients per practice. The lower average list size is due to the higher proportion of GPs working in single GP practices within the city.

Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire Area Team has been working with each of the 10 local Clinical Commissioning Groups within the area to help build a Primary Care Strategy to ensure that primary medical services in the area are sustainable and effective.

Many of the themes identified by the Clinical Commissioning Groups indicate a move to having fewer practices with a greater number of patients per practice. Having a greater number of patients in each practice enables a robust infrastructure within the practice.

Growing pressures on General Practices has made it increasingly difficult for smaller practices to offer the same range of services as larger practices as well as contribute to and deliver on national programmes made available to practices through Enhanced Services contracts. This includes work on areas such as Patient Participation and Extended Hours Access. Services such as Patient Participation, Extended Hours Access and the new Avoiding Unplanned Admissions Enhanced Services require a high level of administration, clinical and practice management support to deliver which is not achievable by smaller practices.

The Practice Nirmala:

The Practice Nirmala is located in Bulwell and has a registered list of 2090 patients. The practice operates on the national General Medical Services (GMS) contract which the Area Team contracts for with The Practice PLC. The practice has generally been regarded by the Area Team as an achieving practice on quality measures however it is not always able to participate in the full range of Enhanced

Services offered by NHS England and does not currently offer Extended Hours Access to patients whereby practices open outside of normal working hours of 8am - 6pm to offer patients greater flexibility of appointments.

For the past three and a half years the service has been run by a national organisation called The Practice PLC; the organisation also trades under the name 'Chilvers Mcree'. The Practice PLC holds contracts for over 50 GP surgeries and GP-led Health Centres nationally.

The regular salaried GP, Dr Khondaker, left The Practice Nirmala in February 2014. The Practice PLC has informed the Area Team that the clinical staff (one GP and one Practice Nurse) working in the practice are engaged on a temporary/locum basis and are not employed by The Practice (salaried).

The practice registered list peaked in 2009/10 and has been declining since. In the past 12 months the practice has had a net loss of 75 patients, reducing the list size by 3.6%. The practice is now the 10th smallest of the 61 in Nottingham City. The decline in patient numbers is the 10th highest rate in the city. It is the view of the Area Team that the rate of decline on the small list size is not sustainable for the practice.

Notice of termination:

In April 2014 The Practice PLC gave notice to the Area Team to terminate the contract for The Practice Nirmala with a 6 month notice period. In giving notice, The Practice PLC cited the practice was no longer commercially viable as the reason for the terminating the contract.

Future arrangements consideration:

Following receiving the notice of termination of the practice contact by The Practice Plc, the Area Team has undertaken a review to determine the course of action for the registered list of patients. The review included the status of the practice, local population demands and the wider availability of services nearby.

In reviewing the current arrangements, the Area Team had regard for the large number of practices within the locality; these include four smaller than average practices. The Area Team also had regard for the practice views on the ability to accommodate new patients.

In considering the potential future arrangements, the Area Team sought the views of Nottingham City Clinical Commissioning Group for how the arrangements for the fit with the local aspirations as outlined by the Clinical Commissioning Group for the local Primary Care Strategy. Nottingham City Clinical Commissioning Group is supportive of a proposal not to replace this provider and to enable patients to choose from the range of alternative practices that are currently within the area.

The Area Team considered the information provided by the incumbent provider, that the practice is not currently commercially viable. In understanding this information, the Area Team has reflected that the viability of a practice directly impacts on the ability of a provider to ensure that a clinically safe and effective number of GP and practice nurse appointments are available for patients to access.

The Area Team's Primary Care Panel met to consider the options for the future of The Practice Nirmala's patients on 17 April 2014. The Primary Care Panel heard the views of the Local Medical Committee for Nottinghamshire who advocated for dispersing the list of patients.

The Primary Care Panel decided to support the option to disperse the registered list of patients by 30 September 2014 when the existing GMS contract terminates. This decision was made subject to the undertaking of engagement with relevant stakeholders including patients and neighbouring practices prior to list dispersal.

Engagement process:

The Area Team and The Practice PLC are working together to ensure that all stakeholders are fully informed on the changes; a full Stakeholder Engagement Plan has been developed to ensure that stakeholders are considered and appropriate communications are provided.

Current status:

The Area Team is currently working with The Practice PLC to implement the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and work through the agreed Exit Plan for The Practice PLC to ensure that services remain stable and safe through the exit period and that patients are fully supported in finding a new practice.

**Stakeholders of The Practice Nirmala
Engagement Period: 1 April 2014 – 30 September 2014**

Key aims of the engagement:

1. To ensure all affected parties are aware of the change.
2. To create a mechanism for receiving feedback on the change.
3. To address any key concerns raised by stakeholder and assess if these are viable to be incorporated into any future plans.
4. To establish a basis of concerns and aspirations on which to feedback to stakeholder groups following the merger.

Stakeholder group	How we plan to engage with the group:	How / when completed
Registered Patients of The Practice Nirmala	The Practice PLC will engage practice staff and the Patient Participation Group to be able to relay accurate information to enable patients to be informed verbally. Key concerns to be captured and fed back to the Area Team. Staff and PPG to be briefed ahead of the planned mailshot.	Planned 1-15 June 2014.
	The Area Team will write to each household with details of the closure and information to support patient choice in finding a new practice with practices in the proximity of Nirmala. Wider information to be supported by use of NHS Choices and patients to be enabled to feedback to the practice or to the Area Team via a selected email address.	Planned 15-23 June 2014.
	The Practice PLC will follow the mailshot by providing the information materials to patients through the practice website, displaying within the reception area of the practice and including messages on the footer of prescriptions.	Planned 23 June 2014 – 30 September 2014.
	The Area Team will undertake a second mail shot to households that have not registered at a new practice to provide a follow up letter with details of the closure and information to support patient choice in finding a new practice.	Planned 18 August 2014 – 01 September 2014.

	The AT will undertake an assessment to consider any final actions to inform patients of the closure. The assessment will consider factors such as the number of patients who have remained on The Practice Nirmala following receipt of the initial and follow up letter. Potential actions could include a further letter, targeted telephone calls or press release.	Planned 15 September 2014 -19 September 2014.
Practice staff	All affected practice staff have been fully briefed and engaged.	Completed 28 April 2014.
Patient Participation Group	The Practice PLC will meet with the PPG and/or the PPG Chair (depending on availability) to discuss the proposals including support mechanisms for patients.	Planned 19-23 May 2014.
Councillors / Nottinghamshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	The Area Team will contact the Nottingham Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to provide details of the termination notice by The Practice PLC and the proposed engagement process. The Area Team will attend the 28 May 2014 Committee date if required. Following the Committee date the Area Team will write to the Councillors identified through the Nottingham City Council portal: Brian Grocock, David Smith, and Michael Wildgust.	Planned 28 May 2014 – 4 June 2014.
Nottinghamshire Local Medical Committee	The Area Team will seek the views of Nottinghamshire Local Medical Committee in making arrangements for the registered patient list of Nirmala. This will be done through the Primary Care Panel on 17 April 2014.	Completed 17 April 2014.
Local MP	The Area Team will contact Graham Allen MP to provide details of the termination notice by The Practice PLC and the proposed engagement process. <i>Update: meeting scheduled 23 May 2014.</i>	Planned 28 May 2014 – 4 June 2014 23 May 2014
Healthwatch Nottinghamshire	The Area Team will provide information to Healthwatch with information relating to the closure and to provide copies of the communication to each household (with details of the closure and information to support patient choice in finding a new practice).	Planned 1 June 2014.
Health and Wellbeing Board	The Area Team will write to the Health and Wellbeing Board to provide an overview of the changes.	Planned 1 June 2014.
Neighbouring practices / other constituent practices of Nottingham City	Practices in close proximity of The Practice Nirmala will be initially contacted informally for capacity verification.	5-9 May 2014.
	The Area Team will inform all Nottingham City GP practices.	Planned 1 June 2014.

Local community pharmacies	The Area Team will inform all Nottingham City Community Pharmacies.	Planned 1 June 2014.
Any other local health providers as applicable	The Area Team will inform the range of providers within the local health economy in line with normal procedures for change.	Planned 1 June 2014 – 30 September 2014.