

## **QUESTION AND ANSWER FOR CONSULTATION ON PCT MANAGED PRACTICES**

This document answers some commonly asked questions about the PCT Board decision to allow its directly managed GP practices and associated staff to become independent of the PCT.

It has been designed for patients of All Saints, Barkantine, East One Health and Whitechapel Health practices.

### **Why is the PCT undertaking this process at my practice?**

Your GP Practice is currently managed by the PCT which is unusual as most other GP practices are managed independently. The goal is for your practice to become independent of the PCT and manage itself in the same way as other GP practices in Tower Hamlets.

### **Why is it better to be managed independently?**

PCTs do not have expertise in managing general practices as they are usually managed independently of PCTs by partnerships or other independent arrangements. The normal job of the PCT is to manage the GP contract, not the services itself.

Directly managing your GP practice is therefore not an appropriate long-term arrangement for the PCT, or the practice itself. Furthermore, clinicians working at your practice have said they are interested in gaining independence

### **So how will my practice become independently managed?**

Achieving independence is a complex process. It is important to make sure that the team at each practice has the knowledge and skills to manage the practice effectively. We set standards that we wanted each of the teams at the practices to achieve. We want to see them achieve these standards before the take over the management of the practice. Your practice did well enough for us to be able to consider transferring management of the practices to the staff working there.

### **Can you tell me more about this process?**

There are three stages of process which are:-

#### Stage One

This stage has already taken place and was designed to identify those practices that are providing an acceptable standard of care, are working well with the PCT to make further improvements, have a clear development plan and are committed to achieving standards equivalent to some of the best performing practices in Tower Hamlets. Your practice passed this stage.

### Stage Two:

Your practice has been invited to take part in a trial period of 12 months to prove that it can operate and develop their services. The progress of each practice is being monitored quarterly to determine that services have not been adversely affected by the changes and that they are making good progress towards the model of services the PCT aims to reach.

### Stage three:

For practices that successfully pass stage two and an assessment in March 2009, the practice management team will be invited to submit a business case to take over the practice. The PCT Board will decide whether to continue to process towards independence or seek alternative ways of enabling the practices to become independent.

### **So what does it mean for me, as a patient?**

This process offers your practice the opportunity to improve the future shape and scope of the services it delivers to you, and you will therefore see a positive difference to the care that you receive.

### **Will I have an opportunity to have my say as a patient?**

Questionnaires will be delivered to the practices in mid January and they will ask you your opinion on the process of transferring the management from the PCT to the staff. This questionnaire will ask you to what extent you agree or disagree with the decision, how satisfied you are currently with the team, services and service and whether you would like to see any improvements.

### **Where can I find out more information?**

For further information about this process or your practice please call our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 0800 389 3093.