

Non-Executive Report of the: Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee 30 th April 2019	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Tower Hamlets CCG, Jenny Cooke	Classification: Unrestricted
APMS (Alternative Medical Provider Services) Contracting Strategy	

Originating Officer(s)	Jenny Cooke, Deputy Director for Primary and Urgent Care, Tower Hamlets CCG
Wards affected	All wards

Summary

Tower Hamlets has a number GP practices that operate under APMS (Alternative Provider Medical Services) contracts. These contracts are time-limited (up to 10 years) and require re-procurement at the end of the contract term.

In some cases, the APMS re-procurement is directly linked to practice reconfiguration under our estates strategy. In all cases there will be some change to the service being delivered, and a potential change in the clinical team delivering the services. The APMS re-procurement process however does allow opportunity to purposefully commission primary medical services to best meet the needs of the local population, including the improvement of access and utilisation of digital technology.

Recommendations:

The Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee is recommended to:

1. Review and note the proposals for the procurement of APMS contracts in the borough.

Introduction

APMS contracts are one of the contracting routes commissioning organisations can use to secure primary medical services. Unlike GMS or PMS contracts, they are time-limited contracts that can be provided by a range of providers. Also, unlike the nationally negotiated GMS contracts, APMS contracts allow local service specification development and procurement.

Tower Hamlets CCG currently has 7 GP surgeries that operate under an APMS contract. There is significant variation between each contract's list size, service offering, contract value, and contract tenure.

A number of the Tower Hamlets APMS contracts are due expire over the next two years, which offers the CCG an opportunity to review the service provision and re-commission primary care services that meet the needs of the local population.

Practice Overview

The following GP practices are contracted through an APMS contract:

Practice Name	List Size (1st January 2019)	Contract End Date
East One Health	11356	09/08/2020
Whitechapel Health	11922	30/09/2024
St Andrews	13429	31/08/2020
The Barkantine	22298	31/08/2020
St Pauls Way	13121	31/03/2023
Pollards Row	4867	01/04/2021
Island Medical Centre	8285	31/03/2023

Our approach to each of these APMS contract is based on a range of factors including list-size, forecast growth, premises reconfiguration, and local needs assessment.

Equalisation Process

Since 2014 there has been a national move toward the 'equalisation' of service provision and funding between all GP contracts. This approach is based on the principle that all patients should have access to the same range of services, regardless of what type of contract their practice holds.

The APMS procurement process will support a move toward the equalisation of service provision and funding between GMS and APMS, and between the individual APMS contracts. In most cases, this will result in an overall reduction in core hours to the standard GMS offer of 8am-6:30pm, Monday to Friday. However, all patients will continue to have access to primary care services on evening and weekends through various extended-hours services that are continuing to expand in their opening hours and locations across the borough.

East One and Whitechapel Health Centre

The East One Health Centre:

- Is a GP practice located in Deancross Street, London, E1. It is open 8am – 8pm Mon-Fri and 9-1 Saturdays.
- The current services are provided by a local GP Partnership under a single APMS contract for Primary Medical Services to a registered patient list of 11,356

The Whitechapel Health Centre:

- Is a GP Practice located in Hessel Street, London, E1. It is open 8-6.30pm Mon-Fri and 9-1pm Saturdays.
- The current services are provided by AT Medics under a single APMS contract for Primary Medical Services to a registered patient list of 11,922
- The APMS contract commenced in October 2014 for a period of ten years with an option to extend for a further 5 years.

A new purpose-built health centre is being developed at the nearby Goodman's Field. The site will be purpose built, utilise modern technology, funded via Section106.

The CCG therefore intend to procure East One Health with a move of this practice into the nearby Goodman's Fields site in September 2020. This procurement and the subsequent contract will reflect the intention to merge with neighboring Whitechapel APMS contracts, following the expiry of that contract in October 2024. This will allow the CCG to achieve the long term strategic aim of a single practice in the Goodman's Fields site, through a single APMS practice contract, thus leading to efficiencies of scale in a new purpose-built premises that will provide a financially viable practice that can cater for the existing registered population, with room for expansion.

The move of these two lists to Goodman's Fields will also free up capacity at Deancross Street, a modern purpose built health centre, allowing two neighboring GMS practices to move into these premises. The neighboring GMS practices, Brayford Square and City Wellbeing are currently operating from unsuitable premises in poor condition. The move will allow these practices to expand their service offer and increase their registered list size.

The Barkantine and St Andrews Health Centres

The Barkantine practice is a GP practice located on West Ferry Road, Isle of Dogs. St Andrews practice is a GP practice located on Hannaford Walk, Bow. Both surgeries are open 8am – 8pm, Monday – Sunday.

Both services are currently provided by local GP Partnerships under APMS contracts for Primary Medical Services. Both APMS contracts also include provision for a separate 'primary care hub', offering pre-bookable and on the day primary care services to all Tower Hamlets patients.

Barkantine is the largest practice in Tower Hamlets. It also serves a catchment area with the highest forecast growth in the borough. St Andrews is also a rapidly growing practice in a high area of growth.

Further work is required to fully scope the new service requirements. The CCG is also exploring the option of piloting new contracting models following the national pilot of 'Primary Care Home'. 'Primary Care Home' is an innovative approach to strengthening and redesigning primary care, a true care community coming together to improve the health and wellbeing of their local population. It incorporates the total care needs, costs and outcomes of the population. Although there are over 200 test sites across England, there is no contractual form for Primary Care Home. Tower Hamlets is keen to pilot a contract for this model of care. Further modelling market engagement is required to develop this approach.

Primary Care Hubs and Extended Access Services

Tower Hamlets Primary Care Hubs allow patients registered in Tower Hamlets to access primary care medical services at eight locations in the borough. The services are offered during the day, over the weekend, and up to 10pm in the evening. They offer a range of services from GP, nurse and HCA appointments for both routine and acute needs. Patients can access this service via their own practice, or be directed from NHS 111 or the Royal London Hospital.

The current hub service is operated by three separate providers, St Andrews, Barkantine, and the GP Care Group, under three separate contracts, with a single operating model. Following the expiration of the Andrews and Barkantine contracts, the service will be reviewed with the intention to secure the service under a single contract for Tower Hamlets.

As operating hours of practices are gradually standardised throughout the APMS procurement process, funding will be recycled into hub services ensuring that there is equality in extended access provision across the borough.

St Pauls Way, Pollards Row, Island Medical

The remaining APMS contracts have a longer lead in time, and a more detailed plan will be developed ahead of the procurement process.

Patient Consultation

In advance of the formal procurement process commencing for each practice all registered patients are invited to comment on the proposals for the new contract. Drop-in sessions are held at the practices to allow patients to comment and ask questions. The feedback forms an important part of the business case and the Invitation to Tender documents.

Risks and Opportunities

The procurement of the APMS contracts provides an opportunity to purposefully design general practice services that meets the needs of the local population and the broader system challenges.

However, the procurement process may result in new providers delivering GP services, causing disruption to the continuity of care between existing GP partners and their patients, and to relationships within the Primary Care Networks.

Some of the procurements may result in reduced contract values, which may make it challenging for both incumbents and external providers to bid. Where there are increased premises costs this will provide an additional challenge to bidders. There are examples in London of APMS procurements where there have been no bidders interested in submitting a tender, due to the unaffordability of the service.