

The Pioneer Programme

1. The Department of Health announced in October 2013 the appointment of 14 “pioneering initiatives [to transform] the way health and care is being delivered to patients by bringing services closer together than ever before”¹. Tower Hamlets Council and CCG submitted a bid, based on the existing plans for integration, to be a Pioneer, as part of a wider programme across WELC (Waltham Forest, East London and the City) and were successful and are one of the 14 pioneers across England.
2. This programme brings together the three boroughs of Waltham Forest, Newham and Tower Hamlets and the three CCGs (matching the footprint of Barts Health), Barts Health and the two Mental Health Trusts in East London who also provide community health services to two out of the three boroughs. It is therefore a highly complex programme and the approach taken is to look to maximise commonality and economies of scale in work on the “enablers” – things like information sharing, ICT strategies, evaluation and outcomes, organisational development – but to recognise the need for local flexibility for service design on the ground.
3. The 14 areas chosen are expected to be trail blazers, pioneering new ways of delivering coordinated care. This means “health and social care services working together to provide better support at home and earlier treatment in the community to prevent people needing emergency care in hospital or in care homes”².
4. There are no additional cash resources that accompany the designation of a Pioneer but there is access and fast tracking to expertise, and government departments to try to assist. An example of this where WELC has already seen benefits is in the area of information governance.

¹<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/integration-pioneers-leading-the-way-for-health-and-care-reform--2>

² Ibid