

Response to Scrutiny Working Group Report on Access to GP / Dentistry Services

| Recommendation | Comments | Lead | Update – October 2008 |
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| <p>Recommendation 1 That the PCT supports GP practices in developing a mechanism to share models of good practice especially so that GPs that are performing poorly work with GPs that are performing well.</p> | <p>The PCT recognises that there is a wide variability of GPAQ scores across Practices. Some Practices which have scored below average, have already contacted other practices which have received higher ratings and which have similar practice and population characteristics. They have identified the actions that these practices have taken and begun to apply these in their practices. The PCT actively encourages this sharing of good practice, by ensuring that comparative results are made available across all practices. PCT Managers review each Practice's GPAQ action plan at regular practice visits.</p> | <p>Primary Care Development TH PCT</p> | <p>Analysis of the GP practice GPAQ surveys for 2007/08 has shown an improved score on all question areas across Tower Hamlets practices.</p> <p>Practices have been given the comparative results for all practices so have been able to identify practices which are scoring better than they are and to find out which approaches that these practices took were successful.</p> |
| | <p>The PCT will invite practices which received above average scores in the GPAQ survey to describe the methods and processes that exist in the practice which they feel contribute to this positive rating, and if they would be happy to support other practices. Information from these practices will be collated by the PCT into a written guide which will be sent to all practices.</p> | <p>Primary Care Development TH PCT</p> | <p>Most practices (33 out of 36) have now established patient participation or "critical friends" groups. This is a significant increase on last year.</p> |

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| <p>Recommendation 2 That the PCT provide the Health Scrutiny Panel with a comparative analysis of the results of the ‘Your Doctor, Your Experience, Your Say’ with the General Practitioners Assessment Questionnaire Survey results. Furthermore, the PCT use the results of both surveys to identify areas of improvement and improve performance monitoring of services.</p> | <p>The PCT will provide a comparative analysis of the results of both surveys to the Health Scrutiny Panel – GPAQ (results were available in January 2007) and the Ipsos-Mori Survey “Your doctor, your experience, your say” (results were released end July 2007).</p> <p>The results of the Ipsos-Mori survey have now been analysed by the PCT and a Primary Care Access Strategy and action plan for improvement have been developed. An Access Steering Group has been established which will monitor performance of the PCT against the milestones in the action plan. The PCT will provide a progress report to the Health Scrutiny Panel.</p> <p>The Primary Care Commissioning Managers will ask Individual practices to provide an update on their progress with their action plans in response to the results of their GPAQ surveys. Results will be collated into a progress report.</p> <p>The 2007 GPAQ survey is being distributed to patients during August, September and October. Results will be available by February 2008. A summary report comparing these results with the previous year will be made available to the Health</p> | <p>David Groom, Access Re-Design Manager, TH PCT</p> <p>David Groom, Access Re-Design Manager, TH PCT</p> <p>Vivienne Cencora Associate Director, TH PCT</p> <p>Primary Care Development TH PCT</p> | <p>The PCT commissioned a comparison of the GPAQ survey results with the national MORI poll results and this demonstrated a strong correlation. As the ability to access a GP appointment is improving, patient experience as a whole with the practice is also improving.</p> <p>Tower Hamlets PCT is the most improved PCT in the country for the provision of access to GP appointments. The over-all average for patient satisfaction with 48 Hour access went up from 68% to 74%.</p> <p>The ability of patients to get through to their practice on the phone also improved more than another London PCT.</p> <p>All practices now have an action plan in place which aims to reduce demand for appointments, increase supply of appointments and deliver 100% access to appointments within 48 hours.</p> |

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| Recommendation 3 That the PCT reviews the training and guidance provided to GPs and Dental Practice reception staff in particular focusing on Customer Services and understanding the needs of disabled and BME patients. | Scrutiny Panel. | | |
| | <p>The PCT is commissioning training for all front of house staff in General Practice in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer care • Dealing effectively with conflict • Valuing and understanding diversity • Cultural competence <p>For Dental Practices:</p> <p>The PCT will conduct a baseline assessment of training undertaken by reception staff in all General Dental practices in relation to customer care, disability and cultural awareness.</p> | <p>David Groom Access Re-Design Manager, TH PCT</p> <p>Sajid Shah, Dental Development Manager, TH PCT</p> | <p>All practices have now had 3 days of customer care training which included conflict management, valuing diversity and cultural competence. The training incorporated the use of actors and feedback has been excellent.</p> <p>Assessment of training needs for dental practice reception staff has not yet been undertaken. This will take place as part of the dental clinical governance programme later this year and training will be commissioned once the results of the survey are known.</p> |
| | <p>The training modules commissioned for General Practice staff, as described above, will then be made available to dental reception staff.</p> <p>A directory of dental practices is currently being developed which will identify for each dental practice, the languages spoken by staff, and whether the clinical rooms and toilets are accessible for wheelchair users.</p> | <p>Sajid Shah, Dental Development Manager, TH PCT</p> | <p>The directory of dental services has been published and the Find-a-dentist service is now established. This telephone advice service is commissioned by the PCT from LBTH and has received about 100 calls in relation to dentistry per month since it was set up in June 2008.</p> |

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| <p>Recommendation 4 That the Primary Care Trust works with local schools, GPs and community organisations to begin compilation of data about local peoples oral health and improve uptake of dental services.</p> | <p>The PCT already has information about children’s oral health at ages 5 years and 12 years. The PCT Community Dental Service provides dental inspections for children in primary and secondary schools, where parents have given consent, as part of the national epidemiological study into children’s dental health.</p> <p>The Community Dental Service is also piloting a new service in September in two primary schools with the highest numbers of children identified with levels of dental decay. This pilot will involve the dentists and link workers from the Community Dental Access Project working closely with each school to develop parental understanding of the role of the screening in identifying children with disease and what they need to do to access suitable care. It will also offer application of fluoride varnish 2-3 times per year, to all children aged 5 or under, whose parents consent to this treatment. Following the school screening, the team will work with families to make sure they are fully supported in getting treatment.</p> <p>The PCT Dental Public Health Department is collecting data on the proportion of residents in each LAP who access dental care and will analyse trends</p> | <p>Ursula Bennett Head of Dentistry, TH PCT</p> <p>Ursula Bennett Head of Dentistry, TH PCT</p> <p>Desmond Wright Consultant in Dental Public Health</p> | <p>The pilot programme in two primary schools (“Happy Teeth”) ran for the academic year. Lessons have been learned from the pilot and will be used to roll out a screening and fluoride application programme in other schools in Tower Hamlets during this school year for nursery and reception children.</p> <p>A survey of oral health in 300 adults aged over 16 years has been undertaken in Tower Hamlets during the period March to July 2008. Surveys were undertaken in people’s homes and, with their consent, a clinical examination was undertaken by a dentist. The survey is now completed and the results are being analysed. Results will be available in November 2008.</p> <p>An epidemiological survey has also been undertaken with 3 year old children in Tower Hamlets> Results are being analysed and a report will be available in November.</p> |

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| | <p>in uptake, reporting in March 2008. The PCT does not have a comprehensive oral health screening programme for adults and older people and it is therefore not possible to systematically assess their oral health needs. However, the Community Dental Access Team, through use of mobile dental clinics does undertake screening and initial treatment for those who use the mobile service and will provide a report on the oral health needs for the population who are using this service.</p> | <p>Ursula Bennett Head of Dentistry, TH PCT</p> | |
| <p>Recommendation 5 That the Primary Care Trust undertakes a comprehensive review of the impact of the new dental contract and charging system and reports the finding to the Health Scrutiny Panel. In particular the Trust is asked to work with Dental</p> | <p>The PCT dental commissioning team monitors NHS contracts with Dental Practices to check for any changes in the types of patients being seen or in the treatments being provided. Information is available to the PCT on Units of Dental Activity undertaken by each practice, patients charges collected and any variances between expected and actual achievements. During mid-year and annual review meetings with Dental Practices, the PCT has taken the opportunity to explore issues of access and availability. The PCT is also working with the complaints department and PALS to get a better understanding of patient experience. A review of these findings will be reported to the Health Scrutiny Panel.</p> | <p>Sajid Shah, Dental Development Manager, TH PCT</p> | <p>The Department of Health has recently published the findings of patient responses to questionnaires about dental services for 2007/08. Two key indicators were patients' satisfaction with the dentistry received and patients' opinion about time taken to get a dental appointment. Around 83% of patients in Tower Hamlets were satisfied with the dentistry received compared to 88% in London. Sixty nine percent (69%) of Tower Hamlets patients were able to get a dental appointment as soon as was necessary compared to 82% in London.</p> <p>There has been an increase in the number of</p> |

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| Practices that do not work with NHS patients and are currently just working with private patients. | The PCT does not have a commissioning role with private dental practices and therefore has no legitimate way of working with them. A number of dental practices have NHS contracts to provide NHS care only to those patients who are exempt from paying charges. Where an opportunity arises to renegotiate these contracts, the PCT will include NHS charge-paying patients. The PCT will report on any changes in the review mentioned above. | Sajid Shah, Dental Development Manager , TH PCT | <p>patients accessing NHS dental services commissioned by Tower Hamlets over the past 2 years, but there is still more work to do to improve access.</p> <p>Currently 5 practices (out of the 28 dental practices in Tower Hamlets) only provide NHS care to those who are exempt from paying NHS charges. Where possible these contracts will be renegotiated to include fee-paying patients.</p> |
| Recommendation 6 | The PCT will ensure that information is made widely available about dental practices which currently | Sajid Shah, , Dental Development | Patients with disabilities are able to access the Community Dental Service and an |

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| <p>That all disabled patients without an accessible dental practice near their home be offered the option to be referred to the Mobile Dental Unit.</p> | <p>have wheelchair access.</p> <p>The PCT will publicise the route whereby patients can be referred to the dental mobile service or, depending on their specific needs, to the PCT domiciliary dental service.</p> | <p>Manager , TH PCT</p> | <p>appointment can be arranged in special surgeries equipped to provide better care for people in wheelchairs.</p> <p>In addition, domiciliary visits can be arranged if necessary via the Community Dental Service.</p> |
| | | | <p>The PCT will ensure that the find-a-dentist service has information about which dental practices are wheelchair-accessible, and how people can be referred to the community dental service.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 7 That the Mobile Dental Unit visits schools and local community events to make this service more visible and target residents from a young age.</p> | <p>The mobile dental unit currently visits local community events, e.g. LAP area events, whenever possible and this service is popular. The schedule of locations and times for the mobiles across Tower Hamlets will be publicised.</p> <p>The Mobile Unit will be visiting the Primary schools within the pilot mentioned as part of recommendation 4.</p> | <p>Sajid Shah, Dental Development Manager , TH PCT</p> <p>Sajid Shah, Dental Development Manager , TH PCT</p> | <p>The mobile dental unit was used to support the public consultation event for the new dental practice in Bow.</p> |
| | <p>A report on activities and locations where the Mobile Units have operated will be made available to the Health Scrutiny Panel.</p> | | |

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| <p>Recommendation 8 That the PCT reports to the Health Scrutiny Panel on how good practice and performance from around the country - particularly areas that face similar issues as the borough - informed the development of the Oral Health Strategy.</p> | <p>The PCT will provide a report to the Health Scrutiny Panel on the evidence base that was used to inform the development of the Oral Health Strategy.</p> | <p>Desmond Wright, Consultant in Dental Public Health , TH PCT</p> | <p>A report was provided in the February 2008 update for the Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>The PCT Oral Health Strategy was informed by the national strategy “Choosing Better Oral Health”. The Department has also recently produced and evidence based oral health toolkit which has been sent to all dental practices.</p> <p>The PCT is using evidence from a new and innovative model of dental practice in Oldham and Salford to inform the model of service for the new dental practice being established in Bow.</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 9 That Tower Hamlets PCT develops a major publicity campaign that explains the role of GPs, Dentists and other primary care professionals and also increases</p> | <p>The PCT supports the need for an information campaign explaining the role of different professionals and how to access different types of health services. The PCT Communication Lead will work with colleagues in the Local Authority, voluntary sector and Primary Care, to identify the most appropriate ways of publicising this information, through developing a health information communication strategy and campaign programme.</p> | <p>Jeremy Gardner Associate Director Head of Communications and Community Involvement & Sajid Shah, Dental Development Manager , TH PCT Sajid Shah, Dental Development</p> | <p>The PCT launched an information campaign – “Easier, Quicker and Better Care in Tower Hamlets”, explaining how to access care in General Practice.</p> <p>Leaflets and posters have been distributed to all GP surgeries, dentists, community pharmacists and optometrists for display; and also to public libraries and East End Life. The find-a-doctor helpline was established in</p> |

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| <p>awareness of the availability of additional primary care services including Pharmacy First and the Walk-In Centres. The PCT should work closely with the Council and voluntary sector in undertaking this campaign. The Working Group suggests that East End Life is used to publicise information about how to join a GP and Dental Practice and also the rota for the Mobile Dental Unit. The Mobile Dental Unit rota should also be provided to all GPs, Dental Practices, and community organisations</p> | <p>The PCT will ensure that the Dental Mobile rota is more widely available – through pharmacies, dental practices, health centres, GP surgeries, local community organisations, councillors and the local media.</p> | <p>Manager , TH PCT</p> | <p>June 2008.</p> <p>In relation to dental services, the following actions have been taken by the PCT:</p> <p>Ensured that details on dental services are fully up to date and available on the NHS Choices website.</p> <p>Commissioned the new find-a-dentist service from LBTH which started in June 2008.</p> <p>A public consultation exercise was conducted during May to June to canvas views on the setting up of a new dental practice in Bow. This included a short questionnaire for residents in Laps 5 and 6 posted in East End Life, discussion at LAP meetings, a Saturday morning information event in Roman Road market, and a facilitated focus group.</p> <p>The PCT is planning a marketing and information campaign on dental services to be launched in the autumn</p> <p>The rota for the mobile dental unit is sent to East End Life and also displayed in local GP surgeries, community pharmacists and community centres.</p> |

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| working in the field of health as well as local Councillors. | | | The PCT Oral Health Promotion Team has a regular presence at community events and they also took out a one-page advertisement in East End Life in July 2008. |
| Recommendation 10 That the PCT works closely with 'LINKs' and the Health Scrutiny Panel to monitor primary care services including asking LINKs Members to make service visits to GPs and Dental Practices. | The PCT welcomes the opportunity to work closely with LINKs and the Health Scrutiny Panel in monitoring primary care services and is happy to coordinate visits to General Practice and Dental Surgeries. PCT Primary Care Services will be guided by the PCT Lead for Patient and Public Involvement, regarding the most appropriate way of working with LINKs. | Abbas Mirza Associate Director, TH PCT | The PCT welcomes the opportunity to work closely with LINKs and the Health Scrutiny Panel in monitoring primary care services and is happy to coordinate visits to General Practice and Dental Surgeries. We are aware that the LINKs is just being established and have highlighted the need for closer working with nominated public representatives in relation to dental services. |
| Recommendation 11 That the PCT works closely with the Council and voluntary sector to improve patient education. In | The PCT will proactively work with Health Guides and Health Trainers so that they have the information that they need to signpost residents to appropriate services and provide appropriate health information to patients. The PCT will coordinate patient education schemes aimed at maximising the ability of patients to | Abbas Mirza Associate Director, TH PCT | The PCT has maintained its commitment to the Health Trainers and Expert Patients programmes. |

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| particular using Health Trainers to link up residents with local community organisations, PCT and the Council. | <p>manage their health conditions, e.g. through the Expert Patient Programme.</p> <p>The coordinated publicity and information campaign outlined in recommendation 9 will be central to this programme.</p> <p>A progress report will be made available by end March 2008, although this is a long term commitment for the PCT.</p> | <p>Abbas Mirza Associate Director, TH PCT</p> | |