

Dear Colleague

Re: Help us build a better NHS in south west London

We are distributing the attached Issues Paper across south west London, to draw attention to the challenges faced by the local NHS and ask local people to help us develop the solutions.

The Issues Paper is published not just by local CCGs, but by the whole of the local NHS, including all our local provider Trusts.

We know that many of the points raised will not be new to everyone – indeed, we have been discussing these issues with local people for several years.

So what is different now?

- The most significant change is that the national NHS Five Year Forward View sets out new ways of delivering healthcare. It advocates changing the way in which services are delivered and funded, so that more care can be delivered in the community, by GPs, nurses, pharmacists, midwives, therapists and other health professionals. New ways of organising services around the patient are suggested, making the long term NHS goal of most care being delivered in community settings far more attainable. This dovetails perfectly with what we would like to achieve in south west London.
- The case for change is much the same as that outlined in the past but the problems it causes are getting worse. The challenges of rising demand, an ageing population and more people needing care have not gone away. Nor has the large variation in the quality of care, depending on where and when you access services. We know we need to change the way we deliver services to give local people the care they need.
- The financial case for change is also broadly the same – without changing how the money is spent, in five years' time we will not have enough money to pay even for the services we deliver today. Of course, as time has gone on without any significant changes being made, the financial difficulties have got worse. This is not

simply a question of funding – the NHS has had an above inflation increase in money for the last five years, but costs are rising much more quickly. It is also a question of how and where we spend the money.

- The NHS workforce challenge is also well known: we do not have enough GPs, district nurses, community nurses, midwives or specialist children's doctors; there are not enough senior doctors in south west London to make sure we meet the London Quality Standards in all our hospitals.
- The NHS Five Year Forward View means that the way in which patients use the NHS is likely to change. Many more services and clinicians will operate outside hospital, in the community and in a different way. GP practices are set to work more closely together and services previously provided only by hospitals could move into the community. Hospitals and GP networks will be expected to offer services over 7 days a week. Nurses and pharmacists are also playing a much bigger role in delivering care to patients and keeping people healthy.
- New roles such as care navigators and case managers are being developed to help people with physical and mental health problems to stay healthy and avoid a crisis, helping patients to get the right service at the right time to avoid an unnecessary hospital admission. New ways of working can now cut across old NHS and social care boundaries to avoid duplication and fragmentation of care.

What does this mean for patients?

- If we do nothing then within five years patients in South West London will no longer have the services we currently provide. Patients will be left with sub-optimal care as we will not be able to meet the required quality and safety standards. We think that patients deserve better, with access to safe, high quality and sustainable services for years to come.
- We expect big changes in the way patients receive the care they need. We want to see a greater emphasis on helping people to stay well and helping those with long term conditions to manage their own health, understand their conditions better and access

support when they need it. This would mean much more joined up working between the different parts of the NHS (GPs, hospitals, primary care teams, community services, mental health services, the London Ambulance Service), the social care services run by local councils (and by Your Healthcare in Kingston), and services run by the voluntary sector.

- We want future services to be built around the needs of our population, rather than the needs of different public bodies.
- Patients and carers would get better services. They would also need to take more responsibility for their own health where possible, ensuring that they use health services wisely and appropriately. We have strong communities and networks to draw on; we want everyone to play a part in delivering a better, sustainable health service.
- All our services will need to change. We expect all of our hospitals to be there for when people need specialist care. It is possible that different hospitals may do different things in future, rather than trying to do everything everywhere. But we will not make major changes to any hospital without first putting an alternative in place – and consulting the public on the options. At present, we are still discussing with local hospitals what part each of them will play.
- We recognise that ideas for change can be unsettling as well as exciting. While clinicians may be excited about the potential for changing the way things work for the better, we also know that many people find change difficult and will want reassurance that what we are proposing will make things better and that they will not lose out.

That is why we are publishing the Issues Paper: we want to put our cards on the table and let you know our current thinking. Most doctors and nurses, as well as managers, agree that we cannot go on as we are. We want our patients and local people to be part of our decision-making process and part of building a better local NHS.

What is this Issues Paper for?

- We want local people and stakeholders to get involved in the discussion about the future of the NHS. There is a broad consensus within the local NHS that things need to change – and we know that we cannot go on as we are. But we want to have an open and honest dialogue with you about what the changes might look like, how we can build on what works now and what ideas or concerns you have.
- There are two versions of the Issues Paper – the full version and the shorter summary. We recommend that you read both and let us have your views. This is not a public consultation - there are currently no plans to make the kind of major changes that require public consultation. If we do develop such proposals, we would certainly consult on them. But whether or not a consultation is eventually needed, we want to start a new conversation now, because things have changed. We know we can work with you to deliver better health services in south west London.

How can you get involved?

We are encouraging both individuals and organisations to get involved in the discussion and respond to the Issues paper.

- Use the contact details in our Issues Paper to respond to the questions raised in the Issues Paper on our website.
- If you hold meetings, invite us along to discuss these issues in person.
- If you have staff or networks, send them our Issues Paper and encourage them to respond.
- If you have a website or social media account, draw attention the debate.
- If you want to find out more, visit our website at www.swlccgs.nhs.uk

We hope that this is the beginning of a new NHS in south west London – one that has the input, support and confidence of local people.

Yours sincerely,

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