

# Demand on primary care and community services

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All parts of the health and care system in Harrow have been responding to the level 4 NHS emergency status as a result of the Omicron variant. The system has had to respond to increased demand for urgent care services, the need to support effective discharge from hospital, COVID outbreaks in bedded units and offices as well as much higher than normal staff sickness levels.

Business continuity plans were in place across all organisations in advance of moving into this current level 4 status.

Specifically for Primary Care, 7 December, NHS England and NHS Improvement wrote to all GP Practices regarding temporary changes to the GP contract to support the vaccination programme and defined two key priorities:

- Delivering the accelerated vaccination programme until 31st December 2021
- Ensuring that we act to reduce the risk of admission to hospital with general practice looking to maximise on day care and essential proactive care.

# Primary Care Priority Areas (1/2)

## Key requirements for General Practice:

- **Infection Protection and Control** - review adherence to procedures to ensure you keep yourselves and your teams safe whilst maintaining an open front door;
- **Covid-19 positive patients** - identify High risk patients who may benefit from increased monitoring (remote monitoring) or who may be appropriate for the newer community treatment options including nMABS (neutralising monoclonal antibodies) or could be part of the PANORAMIC study;
- **Covid-19 vaccination programme** – ensure immunosuppressed patients requiring 3rd or 4th doses are supported as well as maximising booking of booster jabs. Ensure all staff are trained to deliver the Covid-19 vaccine and work with your PCNs to ensure you are supporting the accelerated ask;
- **Flu jabs** - ensure these are provided to as many as possible in the target groups;
- **Medication** - consider providing patients with 2 month's medication if they are stable to reduce General Practice workload during December to February;

# Primary Care Priority Areas (2/2)

- **Vulnerable patients** – support for particularly vulnerable people including providing crisis numbers and crisis plans for those with severe mental illness and continuing health checks for patients with a learning disability. Also ensuring support for care homes and their residents throughout the winter period.
- **Review of patients who are at risk of admission** - targeted review of patients - for example, those at risk of respiratory exacerbations including asthma reviews for those not in control and rescue packs for those with COPD, and diabetic patients at risk of admission this winter.
- **Capacity** - make best use of the whole systems resources to free up capacity within NW London (i.e. when appropriate refer patients to the Rapid Response team who have 2-hour response time and in some instances is faster than calling out the London Ambulance Service).
- **Delivery of practice and primary care winter plans** including supporting 111 - absorb as much on the day demand as possible to support 111. This includes a requirement to participate in the GP Worklist approach/Please also ensure that staff are up to date with the latest urgent care pathways.

# Harrow Primary Care Response

- It is a daily challenge balancing our resources between the urgent needs of our patients, the management of long term conditions, and the vital task of vaccination and public health this winter
- Despite the challenges, primary care remains open and is continuing to serve the needs of the population. We have been ensuring that patients are able to contact primary care through telephone, online or by walking in to GP surgeries. Face to face consultations have continued throughout this period.
- In response to accelerating the vaccination programme we have had to pause some routine work for example routine health checks , whilst we focus on urgent/ emergency care and expanding the vaccination programme
- As the level of COVID plateau in London, we are planning to move towards recovery in the next few weeks. Our focus across the system would be to bring back to 2019 achievement against targets

# Community based services

Our community based services have also been balancing the system asks of supporting booster vaccinations, managing urgent care, facility hospital discharge and managing core services with high staff sickness levels.

CNWL mental health and children's services are operating as normal, although with significant pressures.

CLCH adult community services have enacted their Business Continuity Plan, the impact on services on which is shown on the subsequent slide. This is under regular review and CLCH is likely to move quickly to service restoration so long as the Trust and wider health and care system is coping. It is noted in particular that workforce sickness is showing some sign of improvement in the last week, and the Outer North West London division is now operating at the 6% mark, with 2% being COVID related.

# Impact on adult community health services (at 13<sup>th</sup> January 2022)

Adult's Services	Status	Adult's Services	Status
Diabetes clinics and DESMOND education	●	Respiratory	●
District Nursing	●	Cardiology	●
Falls	●	Podiatry	●
Therapy	●	Tissue Viability	●
Speech and Language Therapy	●	Dietetics and Nutrition	●
Epilepsy	●	Palliative Care	●
Multiple sclerosis	●	Care Home Team	●
Rapid Response	●	Immunisation Team	●