

Report to Shropshire Health Scrutiny Committee

September 2017

Claypit Street Medical Practice APMS contract (Whitchurch)

Background and Introduction

- 1 In 2016, there were 3 GP Practices in Whitchurch with a total population of around 13,500 patients. In 2016, one of these Practices known as Richmond House gave notice on their GMS contract and the CCG undertook a procurement exercise to secure provision of a new GP practice in Whitchurch.
- 2 The CCG, with the support from NHS England went to the market between June and August 2016 to identify potential new providers. A limited response from potential providers was forthcoming and a decision was made to award a temporary contract whilst a more permanent solution was found.
- 3 The CCG awarded the temporary Alternative Provider Medical Services (APMS) Contract to Shropshire Doctors Co-operative Ltd (Shropdoc) to commence 1st November 2016. The contract was to deliver GP services to a population of around 3,300 patients and the Practice was named "Claypit Street Medical Practice". The contract had an end date of 31st March 2018. The commitment from the CCG was to secure permanent GP services across Whitchurch to commence at the end of the contract term.
- 4 On 3rd July 2017, Shropdoc wrote to the CCG advising that they had found it impossible to recruit to full time positions and were becoming reliant on GP locums which they felt was not a sustainable position. Being unable to consistently provide GP cover was not a comfortable or safe position to be in, so the Shropdoc Board reluctantly decided to hand back the contract to the CCG so that another solution can be provided. Shropdoc initially requested that the contract be novated to a new provider with effect from 1st September 2017.
- 5 In August 2017, the CCG Primary Care Commissioning Committee (PCCC) was asked to agree to the early termination of the Claypit Street Medical Practice Contract with Shropdoc and to novate the contract to an alternative provider for the remainder of its term.
- 6 This paper is to inform Health Scrutiny of the current position and provide an opportunity for discussion.

Summary of Options

- 7 The CCG considered 4 options.

- Option 1 – To refuse to accept the early contract end and work with Shropdoc to provide continued services until the end of March 2018. Shropdoc had identified that securing workforce is the reason for the early termination of the contract. If workforce cannot be secured, services cannot be maintained and therefore there could be a risk to patient care if the CCG did not accept the early end to the contract.
- Option 2 - To agree to Shropdoc's request and find a new interim provider to manage the contract until the end of March 2018. Bringing a new provider into Whitchurch for a short period of time is not considered to be a viable proposition. A new provider would need to employ staff on a very short-term basis and at short notice. The CCG considered if bringing in a new provider at this stage in the contract would provide the best outcomes for patients and were also concerned that a new provider may not be secured within the timescale requested.
- Option 3 – To agree to Shropdoc's request and "disperse" the registered patient list to other nearby practices. This option was considered by the CCG when Richmond House relinquished their contract and at that time, the other 2 practices in Whitchurch did not feel able to accept the patients without having a longer-term plan agreed. They felt that it would destabilise their own practices and reduce the quality of care they could provide. The existing premises at other local practices are also limited.
- Option 4 – To agree to Shropdoc's request and ask a single existing practice to accept a novation of the existing contract until 31st March 2018. The long-term plan for Whitchurch is to secure one premises in which to deliver Primary Care Services and discussions have been ongoing for some time. Both the remaining practices in Whitchurch see this as the long-term goal.

Primary Care Commissioning Committee Decision

- 8 Prior to the PCCC meeting in August, the CCG discussed the above options with Shropdoc, Bridgewater Medical Practice and Dodington Surgery (the other 2 practices in Whitchurch) and subject to agreeing terms and conditions, Bridgewater Medical Practice agreed to accept the novation of the Claypit Street Medical Practice Contract until the end of March 2018. However Bridgewater is not able to take on the contract until 1st November 2017. The novation of the contract was therefore agreed as the best way forward for the patients at Claypit Street Medical Practice. This was confirmed at the PCCC meeting in August.
- 9 PCCC also agreed that they would actively develop a long-term plan for future service provision for the registered patients and to ensure communication with practices. To date communication has been via the public PCCC papers, press releases and discussions at the Whitchurch patient group.

10 PCCC requested monthly reporting to continue until the novation is completed and long term provision is secured. Discussions continue with both Bridgewater Family Medical Practice and Dodington Surgery in Whitchurch.