

Overview and Scrutiny

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29/11/07

Dear Tracey,

Haringey Primary Care Strategy – Developing World Class Primary Care

I am writing to you in response to your consultation on the Haringey Primary Care Strategy in order to inform you of the conclusions and recommendations that have been reached by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Given the significance of the proposed changes, they were considered to represent a substantial variation or development to local services. Under statutory regulations, this required that the Committee assess whether the TPCT had properly consulted the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, conducted appropriate consultation and public involvement and presented proposals that were in the interests of local health services. A small panel of Members was appointed by the Committee to undertake this detailed work and report back on its findings.

To help its deliberations, the Panel that was set up received evidence from a very wide range of sources including Haringey Local Medical Committee, Haringey TPCT Patient & Public Involvement Forum, community groups and, of course, officers from the TPCT. Panel Members also attended public consultation events held throughout the Borough and visited other Primary Care Trusts to view facilities similar to those proposed within the Primary Care Strategy. From this evidence, the Panel formed the following conclusions:

- They were satisfied that the TPCT had consulted appropriately with Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Given the range and number of public events held, they were also of the view that the TCPT had provided sufficient opportunities for the public to engage with and participate in the strategy consultation process. The Panel were of the view, however, that the consultation did not provide sufficient detail to allow the public, or indeed the Panel itself, to fully appraise the proposals or assess the likely impact of the planned changes contained within the Primary Care Strategy.
- They concluded that the TPCT had presented convincing evidence of the need to improve and modernise primary care services in Haringey. In

particular, they demonstrated the need to update the model of care through which services are currently provided. In its assessment of the proposed super health centres, the Panel agreed that they potentially offer a number of significant benefits to Haringey residents, such as extended primary care services, improved access to secondary care and new opportunities for health and social care services to work more collaboratively together. However, the Panel had a number of key reservations about the implementation of this model as it currently stands:

1. It was noted that the current distribution of primary care services within the Borough is effectively unplanned. As the strategy contains no details as to how the nature, level and location of primary care services will be directed across the borough, the possibility exists that those areas which are poorly served by primary care services and experience significant health inequalities may continue to be so. The Panel were therefore of the opinion that the TPCT should adopt a planned approach to the future structure and location of primary care services so that general practices are located where the need is greatest and in a manner that addresses health inequalities. Any incentives or encouragement that may be offered to GP practices to relocate to super health centres should therefore be applied selectively so that services are distributed according to these principles.
2. Further information is required on the proposed locations of super health centres and how these 'hubs' will operate and interact with remaining general practice 'spokes'. In addition, more detail needs to be provided on the anticipated number of GP practices that will be within the super health centres, as well as those remaining outside. Without this information, the Panel indicated that it is difficult to assess the full implications of the strategy and therefore provide a meaningful and constructive response.
3. The Panel established from its visits to health centres in other London boroughs that having multiple GP practices in one building does not necessarily lead to either greater collaborative working or longer opening hours for patients. This will be a challenge for the TPCT to address due to the semi independent nature of GPs and further work will have to be undertaken to ensure that it becomes a reality.
4. The Panel had reservations about the financial framework to support the development of the Primary Care Strategy. Whilst it was clear that resources would be released through the centralisation of GPs in super health centres and through commissioning of secondary services through primary care, realistically these would only yield additional revenue in the medium to long term. Given the scale of the proposed developments, the Panel were sceptical that the level of new investment (£3.7 million) would be sufficient for delivering fully on the strategy. The Panel considered that a more detailed financial plan would be needed to be developed to fully appraise its viability.

5. There is a need for there to be a clear monitoring and audit process to make sure that the planned outcomes are achieved, with full community involvement.

Despite these reservations, the Panel indicated their full support for the need to develop and improve primary care services in Haringey, particularly in the need to shape and deliver services to areas of greatest need. However, the Panel could not conclude at this stage that the principles and objectives of the Primary Care Strategy would be fulfilled and delivered through the plans or documentation currently submitted. Until the additional information referred to was received, the Panel were not able to conclude that the proposals were in the interests of local health services.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee has fully endorsed the findings of the Panel. It requests that the TPCT respond to the issues highlighted above and that Overview and Scrutiny Committee are kept informed of future developments with the Primary Care Strategy.

Yours sincerely



Gideon Bull

Chair – Overview and Scrutiny Committee