

## Why a federation?

Suffolk GP Federation is a not-for-profit Federation of 40 independent GP practices covering 360,000 patients.

The RCGP vision, on which Suffolk GP Federation is based, sees Federations as a way of GP practices working together to deliver services. Many years ago, local practices formed the Out of Hours Coop to deliver one particular service. Practices had found they were no longer able to provide care at nights and weekends in the traditional way, and got together to do so. Most clinicians agree the clinical care offered was far superior to anything the private sector have been able to deliver since then, and the same potential exists with the Federation.

In the new NHS world, many commissioners across the country are introducing new pathways for conditions which are close to primary care. Where these pathways are too complex for individual practices alone to manage, Federations offer an alternative to corporations and Foundation Hospital Trusts moving in.

In East Anglia, CCGs are contracting with local groups of practices working together to deliver services such as skin lesion removal, phlebotomy, referral management, dementia services and community based diabetes care. Federations offer a way of keeping clinical activity within primary care

## Update on services

### Formation of a locum chambers

Locum chambers are independent self-funding professional groups of GPs working as a 'virtual practice'. The Federation is organising a meeting of salaried GPs and locums who are interested in finding out about chambers. The meeting will be led Richard Feldhouse who is the CEO of the National Association of Sessional GPs and a Director of Pallant Medical Chambers.

The meeting is 7pm on 2 October. If you would like to attend please email [admin@suffolkfed.org.uk](mailto:admin@suffolkfed.org.uk).

### Group buying of medical defence cover

36 practices have submitted details of their medical defence cover totaling £1m of cost. We have asked MPS, MDU and MDDUS to quote for this and expect savings of 15-20%.

### Federation HR support

With practices likely to make redundancies in the future, HR support, beyond ACAS, will be important. PMs have

negotiated an offer with AP Partnership to provide all aspects of HR support for £20 per employee per annum. Details will go directly to your PM.

### Group buying of flu

Ipswich practices have an established buying group for flu and we will be opening this to all member practices later this year. This will enable us to obtain an even more competitive price.

## Clinical services update

### Ultrasound

- CIA practices are now using the service which covers all of East Suffolk and parts of Waveney and South Norfolk.
- Where sonographers recommend follow-up pelvic ultrasounds we are now booking these automatically and there is no need to re-refer.

## Developing the Federation

### Our current priorities are:

- Generate revenue to allow us to breakeven. We have recently been awarded a small contract to manage a project for the CCG and consulting work to advise Southend CCG on forming a federation for their practices. We are in the process of bidding to manage the community diabetes service in North East Essex.
- Raising our profile—we met the Head of Primary Care in NHS England to explain the federation model. We have also been asked to speak at the RCGP Conference.
- Sharing our overheads over a wider population. Therefore we have been speaking to practices in West Suffolk about potentially joining, along with others in South Norfolk and Waveney.

## New member of staff

Sam Clarke is the Fed's new administrator—[admin@suffolkfed.org.uk](mailto:admin@suffolkfed.org.uk).

## Any ideas?

All of our ideas come from members so if you have any thoughts please email [tim.reed@suffolkfed.org.uk](mailto:tim.reed@suffolkfed.org.uk)

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