

## Workforce initiatives

Last year the Fed started various initiatives to attract and retain our workforce:

- The Work in Suffolk section of our website ([www.suffolkfed.org.uk](http://www.suffolkfed.org.uk)) is starting to generate enquiries from GPs (3 so far) interested in finding out more about our County. It now includes a video highlighting the attractions of the County, a brochure with career development opportunities and an interactive map with vacancies. When contacted we offer support, such as introductions to practices and even the offer of an accompanied weekend tour, for a GP and their family.
- We have 8 newly qualified GPs on our Fellowship Programme. All Fellows are attending our bespoke Leading the Way development programme and some spend a day per week in a hospital speciality (including this year gynae, occupational health, dermatology and orthopaedics) or on CCG project. Fellows are funded for a Masters and each has a GP mentor who are providing their time for free. One Fellow is exploring spending time working in New Zealand before returning to Suffolk.

Our Fellowship Programme has been much more successful than other schemes in the East of England. Last year we advertised rather late but this year we will be presenting to VTS students and publicising the scheme much earlier, with the expectation that we can attract more participants. The scheme is being led by John Cannon who is available if you need further information.

- 14 more experienced GPs have started our Advanced Leaders programme this month. Speakers include Dr Martin McShane (National Clinical Lead for LTCs) on 'understanding the NHS system', a visit to the innovative Bromley-by-Bow Healthy Living Centre in London and a two day simulation exercise.
- 12 PMs are on our PM Development Programme.
- Health Education East of England have supported the formation of a Community Education Provider Network (CEPN) across Suffolk which is designed to improve the management or training and development in primary care. As you will be aware the hospitals' scale means they currently get the bulk of resources and so dictate how nurse, HCAs and Physician Associate training works. The key to

making this primary care friendly, for example training nurses who can work immediately in practices, is for primary care to work at scale thus replicating how the hospitals operate. We hope the CEPN can facilitate this

- We hope to continue all of the initiatives next year and will be approaching the two CCGs to equally share the costs with the Fed.

## Strategic options for Suffolk primary care

In late January, 22 practices attended a meeting which explored super-partnerships in more detail. The session discussed key questions such as clinical models, ownership, property, decision making, managing day to day issues and what should be decided locally and what centrally?

Sarah Elms from BDO (financial advisers) presented anonymous analysis of the attendees accounts. Ross Clarke from Hempsons (legal advisers) ran through the legal processes and models of how it could work. If you would like notes from the meeting and the two presentations please email David Pannell.

Following the meeting your Board will undertake the following:

- Organise additional meetings which will run explore the various options for primary care (wait and see, merger, create a network, salaried model and super-partnership). Confirmed dates are:
  - East - 17 February 5.30pm to 6.30pm - Trinity Park - post the CCG educational meeting.
  - Forest Heath - Wednesday 24 February - 7 to 8.30pm - Orchard House.
  - Haverhill & Sudbury - Monday 7 March - 12.30

We will arrange further sessions in the West.

- Prepare a firm proposal setting out the principles of a Suffolk super-partnership and how it would work (a 'strawman'), to facilitate discussion within partnerships
- Support members to understand the opportunities likely to emerge from the 2017 voluntary contract, once the details are clearer. The rumours suggest this may be attractively funded but require lists of over 30,000 patients, 7 day working and involve a time limited contract.

## GP+ update

- Bury is now working well. Last week there were 82 appointments (45% of capacity) with referrals from 9 practices, 4 diverts from A&E (who are really pleased about the service), 3 from the ambulance service and 12 from 111. Progress has actually been faster than when the East started.
- The system for EMIS practices to book appointments electronically should be up and running in the middle of this month.
- Ipswich GP+ saw 1,153 patients in January of whom 53% were booked by practices, 11% A&E, 3% Ambulance and 31% 111. 28 practices used the service.
- We are now in discussions with NHSE and the CCGs about what happens from April.

## Walton Surgery

Walton is a 4,251 patient PMS practice in Felixstowe. The surrounding area's population will be growing as a result of various building projects. The single principal, Billy McKee, is coming towards retirement and is developing a succession plan. He will be advertising for succession partners in the BMJ and LMC Newsletter (likely to be two to cover CQC and the building lease).

Our soundings to date suggest there may not be local interest from members in taking on the practice. If this were the case we think it likely NHSE may either tender it, potentially attracting a private provider, or offer it to the community services provider (which is run by the two Suffolk hospitals). In North Essex and Waveney/Great Yarmouth the community services providers run a portfolio of practices.

The Fed Board has discussed the situation and agreed that strategically it is not in the interests of member practices to risk either a private provider or the hospitals having a toe-hold in primary care. If either managed Walton it would set a precedent and they would likely be asked to manage other practices as a group. This could, by default, take us towards a hospital driven health system.

Our plan is to ask member practices if they want to take on the Walton contract as this is the optimal solution. If there is a risk of the contract being handed back, the Federation would explore working with Billy to take on the contract.

## West Suffolk leg ulcers

We have heard back from WSH which is responsible for

community services. They are asking practices for details of their activity and will then propose how they will deliver the service, which may be as now.

## East Suffolk ultrasound

The time from referral to the report being back with practices is less than five working days for Riverside, Norwich Road, Framfield House, Wickham Market, Stowhealth, Bildeston, Hadleigh, Needham market, Eye and Felixstowe. Aldeburgh is slightly longer. We have spare capacity so please consider using the service if you do not already.

## West Suffolk Community Pain Service

This is a non-medicalised service offering patients, with persistent pain, the opportunity to learn skills, become self-empowered and confidently self-manage their pain. All patients with persistent pain, that has been fully investigated, are suitable with initial assessment being within 12 days. All patients receive a biopsychosocial assessment and support with individual and workshop based sessions. These take place in Bury, Newmarket and Haverhill. The team comprises specialist nurses, physiotherapists, a psychologist and a medical consultant.

The service is now fully established, working well and receiving positive feedback from patients and members. If you would like further info or a visit to explain the service in more detail please contact Gill the Nurse Consultant and Service Manager.

## Members agreement

The new Articles of Association have now been approved. Some members have not yet signed the Members' Agreement and this is required by each practice wanting to be part of it.

## Board elections

The adoption of the Members' Agreement means a third of GP and PM directors will resign each year and fresh elections held. This will commence next year.

## Receiving this newsletter

If you are not receiving this directly please email [Melissa.tooke@suffolkfed.org.uk](mailto:Melissa.tooke@suffolkfed.org.uk).

Paul Driscoll  
Chair