

## Medical Director's notes

I hope you were all able to take some time off over the summer and at least partly refresh for what looks like the toughest winter I can remember. We are all facing high demand and expectations, increased complexity and the never-ending external pressure in our day-to-day work. A hostile media is not helping. Your Fed will try to support you as much as we can. We will keep our clinical services responsive to the needs of patients and our members including timely referrals. We don't always achieve this in all our services but are working on it.

Please remain well, seek help if you need it and look after each other.

Ruth Bushaway

## Fed Board news

Tom Curtis, a GP in the Fed's practice Unity Healthcare in Haverhill, has left to join a tech company.

Tom was central to turning the practice around and provided valuable input on the Board.

We wish him all the best.



Dr Tom Curtis

## Getting East ultrasound back on track

We are sorry but our waiting times have jumped, with routine waits at 71 days v a target of 42 (urgents 16 days v a target of 14). A combination of factors has caused this including our focus on vaccination, an accumulation of well deserved staff leave, machine problems and an appointment less each day for cleaning/donning. The team have stepped up brilliantly to put on extra clinics and plan to clear the backlog soon after New Year.

## Consider self-referral to podiatry

The service has cleared its backlog and wait times are 3-4 weeks. The team have a programme to address its ageing workforce and clinically prioritise medium and high risk feet, particularly diabetic. Two apprentices have been recruited and the team are working on a Peripheral Arterial Disease pathway. Suffolk has a self-referral option which is a national first UK. Please feel free to use it as it saves practice appointments. We will be dropping in self-referral cards to your reception which work the same way as AHP physio. There are really good materials to help low risk patients to self-manage.

## Mental health improvement programme

The Fed is supporting the rollout of the new community mental health programme which includes PCN mental health practitioners within general practice. The approach has been piloted in Haverhill where practices feel more supported and NSFT referrals have grown less than the rest of Suffolk. More than half of the 30 new PCN mental health practitioners have been recruited and are starting the orientation process. In the spring IDTs will become Locality Recovery Teams with much more integration with practices.

## News in brief

- Fed now CQC rated Good – the inspection started in 2020 just before lock-down but has now finished with a good outcome.
- Gender pay gap – our median pay gap dropped significantly and we are making progress. Five of our eight strong Executive team are women.
- North East Essex Diabetes - The Fed set-up and manages an innovative diabetes service for the CCG. Outcomes are the best in England and NHS England recently concluded they are the area with outcomes that are the least impacted from Covid.
- LARC Service – we are running a Public Health funded service to reduce the Covid waiting lists. Your practice manager will know how to refer.

### Cervical screening update

The Fed is working with local community groups to increase the uptake of cervical smears. Patients with traditionally low uptake include those with a learning disability, who have suffered abuse in the past, younger women and some faith groups. Hopefully you will come across the team when you are out and about.

Health educators Helen Ellerby and Holly Horsman recently popped up at a local event.



### GP Support Hub

Jina and Tracey can answer questions and queries via [info@gphub.org](mailto:info@gphub.org) or 01473 350 820. Priorities are currently:

- Supporting GPs interested in becoming locums or coming close to retirement and exploring their options.
- Launch of central calendar of events including Basic Life Support, doctors' bag equipment calibration and relevant meetings. Access via [this link](#)
- First5 groups (east and west) – these have recently had great speaker events and also informally share support and experiences via WhatsApp. If you want to join please email the Hub.
- We are supporting local six formers interested in a career in medicine.



**Our Out of Hours operations team have been particularly busy over the last few months.**

## Working in GP+, Out of Hours and ED Streaming

We are pleased that these remain local services, clinically led and owned and generally staffed by local clinicians and integrated with daytime general practice. Like daytime general practice they are busy but continue to offer a supportive working environment. It has been a couple of years since we featured these services so thought it worth highlighting how they operate.

	Out of Hours	GP+	ED Streaming
Common features across all three services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ SystemOne (incl training for the out of hours module)</li> <li>▪ Excellent local IT support</li> <li>▪ Indemnity cover via CNSGP – you are automatically covered</li> <li>▪ Comprehensive induction</li> <li>▪ 15 minute appts, scheduled breaks and monitoring if running late</li> </ul>		
Locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Riverside Ipswich</li> <li>▪ Bury</li> <li>▪ Sudbury</li> <li>▪ Mildenhall</li> <li>▪ Saxmundham</li> <li>▪ Haverhill</li> <li>▪ Stowmarket &amp; Eye</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Riverside Ipswich</li> <li>▪ Bury</li> <li>▪ Sudbury</li> <li>▪ Mildenhall</li> <li>▪ Felixstowe</li> <li>▪ Haverhill</li> <li>▪ Newmarket</li> <li>▪ Wickham Market</li> <li>▪ Stowmarket</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ipswich Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital</li> </ul>
Types of patient	Generally one problem. Slightly higher acuity than daytime GP	Similar to daytime GP	Generally one problem. Slightly higher acuity than daytime GP
Referrals and diagnostics	Generally patients go to their practice for diagnostics or referrals unless urgent	Episodes of care completed e.g. referrals made or diagnostics ordered	Episodes of care completed e.g. referrals made or diagnostics ordered
Hours of operation	Monday to Friday 6.30pm to 8am  Weekends and Bank Holidays 24 hours	Monday to Friday 6:30pm – 9pm  Weekends and Bank Holidays  Ipswich & Bury 9am – 9pm  Other sites Saturdays 9am - 1pm	Monday to Friday 11am – 9pm (subject to change from November)  Bank Holidays and weekends 9am-9pm

We have not reviewed our pay rates for several years. We have increased these to GP £85 per hour, NP £40.38, Prescribing Nurse £31, non-prescribing nurse £27.09, LARC HCA £13.50 and GP+ admin £12. Over-night shifts are paid more. We have a long list of different roles and if yours is not on here please contact us. If you would like to know more, book a shadow or induction please contact HR ([hr@suffolkfed.org.uk](mailto:hr@suffolkfed.org.uk)).

### Changes to how GP+ works

After feedback from our clinicians, GP+ will return to mirroring daytime general practice i.e. patients booked in for a phone/video consult and a face to face if required. Could reception teams make this clear to patients and also only book them into a site where they can travel to.