

Medical Director's Notes

At long last David, the exec and I have managed to spend some time looking forward rather than only responding to the pandemic. These are unsettling times for general practice with 'noises' coming from NHS England and the press restarting its pre-Christmas attacks on our profession. *I know practices are also starting to think about the longer term and I am pleased the Fed is now in a position to offer some specific help. We want to form a Practice Support unit in Suffolk which is intended to work with member practices on longer term development of general practice. What it does precisely is up to members and we will be speaking to you about this over the next few months.*

I would like to draw your attention to the Board elections we will be holding. If you are a GP looking for a new challenge this might suit you. Being a non-executive director is interesting and challenging but with extensive support from our experienced management team. If you are not sure what it entails please feel free to give me a ring.

Ruth Bushaway – Fed Medical Director



Do you have an interest in cardiology?

The Fed and Ipswich Hospital have jointly offered an innovative community cardiology service since 2010. We are now recruiting additional GP Clinical Assistants to work as part of the team. Each community clinic has a consultant and two GP Clinical Assistants. They run at least two times a month on Thursday and Friday afternoons at either Woodbridge or Riverside in Ipswich. The service deals with a wide range of cardiology referrals including rhythm disturbances, resistant hypertension, non-urgent chest pain and valve disease. They are made using the pre-referral guidance and referral form.

The GP Clinical Assistant consults with a patient and then can discuss any cases they want or need to with the consultant. Brief clinical notes are made on paper and a clinic letter or 'notification' dictated and typed into a hospital system called Evolve. The Clinical Assistant uses Evolve to edit and verify the letter, which is then sent to the GP practice electronically.

Every quarter we have a paid team governance meeting. We discuss how clinics are going, data, any significant events, discuss clinical cases and have a talk by a consultant.

Our expectations include undertaking individual learning with mentoring provided by Paul Venables the lead consultant. We also ask Clinical Assistants to respond promptly to the rota request which is three months in advance. Also you would need to keep mandatory training up to date. The remuneration per session is £300 paid via the Fed's payroll.

If you have any questions please feel free to email me on stephen.ball6@nhs.net.

Steve Ball – Clinical Lead

Ipswich ED Streaming and the new Urgent Treatment Centre

The Fed's ED Streaming service has moved into much nicer refurbished rooms XXX. We now have two clinicians working together and they also take it in turns to provide advice to ambulance crews calling from the community. The vast majority of these are resolved without conveying patients to hospital.

In eighteen months ED Streaming will become an Urgent Treatment Centre. This will be a primary care led walk-in facility co-located with ED. It will have a general practice ethos and culture, for instance using SystmOne. It will be open 24/7 and integrated with Out of Hours.



Mental health update

For the last three and a half years, the Fed has been helping to develop a new approach for mental health in Suffolk. This has been the most challenging project we have ever been involved with. Members are well aware of the historic and current issues with services. On top of this, the pandemic shifted the priorities of NHS England and has placed severe pressure on NSFT.

2021/2 has been the first year of implementing the new approach – a programme which is due to last several years. The Fed has been helping NSFT, for example introducing PCN mental health practitioners in to primary care. Whilst this has been interrupted by Omnicom we have decided, with system partners, that this is now a good time for the Fed to end its implementation support role. We will continue to support NSFT where we can.

Practice Support/Development Unit

The Fed is now in a stable financial position and is exploring creating a Practice Support/Development Unit. This would have a dedicated recurrent budget and management team with the capability to work-up and implement initiatives relevant to large numbers of member practices. What these involve will be up to members.

We will be commencing a discussion with members which will help us prepare a business plan. The questions are:

1. Should we work-up the concept of a Practices Support Unit in more detail?
2. What would your practice/PCN like the Unit to prioritise?
3. How should practices/PCNs be represented?

Are you interested in becoming a Fed non-executive director?

We will be holding elections to replace two GP directors who left the Board during the pandemic. The vacancies are for a GP from the West and Ipswich. To be eligible you need to be a Suffolk doctor (salaried, sessional or partner) and working in either the West or an Ipswich practice or area.

The Fed is a clinically led, not for profit community interest company, owned by Suffolk practices, with a turnover of £24m and employing around 550. The Board is supported by an excellent senior management team.

Directors commit approximately half a day per month which consists of a Teams meeting and ad hoc emails. Remuneration is £3,672 per annum paid via the payroll. Induction, training and support is provided.

For further information or an informal conversation, please either contact Ruth Bushaway (ruth.bushaway@suffolkfed.org.uk).