

Medical Director's Notes

I have been reflecting on where the Fed is now, where we have come from and reviewing our priorities, strategy and objectives with our team and our Board.

The Fed is several things; a provider of services with a proven track record of being able to innovate and deliver solutions quickly and sustainably; a partner in the wider health and social care system.

But we are also a membership organisation. This is a constant and key core value in our decisions. To be honest, sometimes the needs and pressures of delivering services pushes this out of focus and your feedback when we make mistakes is helpful and needed.

We have moved as have you, to a PCN focused space and this has been often in a reactive rather than planned way. We need to get back to directly supporting practices and PCNs to find solutions at scale for the multitude of challenges the new landscape is bringing you.

We are reviewing key PCN and practice-facing parts of the Fed such as GP+, Spirometry and the GP Support Hub. We will also broaden our direct support to practices/PCNs addressing your needs including automation, HR, training and others. At scale but with you, our member practices. If you have any ideas please do not hesitate to send them to me.



Automation

Robotic Process Automation uses a keyboard and mouse to train software to follow a pre-defined decision tree. It is not AI and can only follow the process. Automation is widely used outside the health sector and increasingly by our local hospitals. General practice is some years behind.

Following a notice in the Fed newsletter, an 'Automation' meeting is now being held on 1st Thursday of each month, for interested GPs/managers. At the inaugural meeting we discussed the processes we might focus on:

- Those involving GPs would save most e.g. path result filing but are complex, expensive to deliver and higher clinical risk. However, we do need to be thinking about this type of process longer term.
- There was general agreement best to start with new patient registration as it should be relatively straightforward to standardise the form and process.

We are planning a project for registration and will keep members updated. Please feel free to join the monthly meeting by emailing david.pannell@suffolkfed.org.uk.

GP+ news

- The service now offers only face to face appointments.
- We want to increase practice nurse appointment utilisation. One issue is practices need to prescribe dressings before the appointment as GP+ cannot hold stock. To get around this barrier, practices can undertake the initial wound check and then prescribe subsequent dressings which are used in GP+. This allows practices to reduce stock of expensive dressings and ensures the patient attends GP+ with the correct dressing. GP+ double appointments can be booked for more complex wound care.

Fed Urgent Care clinical meetings

These are for clinicians working in Out of Hours, GP+ and ED Streaming. The recent meeting included a review of interesting recent cases and a discussion on the Mental Health Act and capacity.



Chloe Hutchinson Associate Clinical Lead in Urgent Care leading discussion at the event

GP Support Hub (info@thegphub.org)

- Pensions Event on Wednesday 7 June 7pm Holiday Inn, Copdock. Speakers from Medical & Financial and Larking-Gowen. Book via www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/pensions-event-tickets-588050072597
- Red Whale GP Update Course will run on Saturday 20 May and Saturday 18 November.
- Support Hub will be attending the Medical Applicants event on Saturday 13 May at the University of Suffolk for the Next Generation Project. If you have children aged 17-18 or family interested in medicine then email ambassadors@caredevelopmenteast.co.uk
- We will be holding a Litigation Training event hosted by Kennedys Law and a further Phoenix GP Course later in the year for mid-career GPs. Please contact us if you are interested.
- One day Essential Dermatology – Saturday 27 May - course for all primary care clinicians – covering skin fundamentals, infection, urticaria, eczema, acne perioral dermatitis and rosacea, taking good photos, psoriasis and lesions. Book via <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/essential-dermatology-series-1-tickets-566468361117>

News in brief

- **Ring Pessary fitting/refitting training** – Our Cervical Screening team have been awarded two-year funding. If your practice would like training please email lucy.ainsley@nhs.net.
- **Cervical screening** - Funding for our innovative Very Important Invitation service has been extended for twelve months.
- **Intermediate Cardiology Service** – this east Suffolk service now runs on SystmOne.
- **Apologies to our Physician Associate colleagues** - who we temporarily blocked from referring to the Fed's ultrasound service. We inadvertently copied a decision at ESNEFT but this has now been reversed.
- **Podiatry workforce** – this is one of the most challenging issues nationally and locally, with a very aging workforce and little training. The nearest schools to Suffolk are at Northampton or London. To address this, the Suffolk Podiatry team have an apprenticeship programme and our first two are nearly at the end of their second year with a further person about to join.
- **Fed accounts for 2021/22** - Our revenue decreased slightly to £24.1m (2020/21 - £25m) largely because we did far fewer Covid vaccinations. Our surplus rose to £1.1m (£693k) which is what you would typically expect for an organisation of our size. During the year we made a substantial investment in our IT network. Overall we are in good financial health.