

Medical Director's Notes

Access has been the topic of many conversations this month following the publication of the Recovery Plan by NHSE. There does appear to be some recognition and attention to the pressure we are all facing in the tone of the document. I was a pleasure to see Stowhealth and Neil Macey featured in the document and high-level conversations.



We know that innovative ideas have been developed in all surgeries over many years to address the changing pressures in the health and care landscape and our populations needs. I remain committed to primary care solutions at scale - working with our member practices and GP leaders to achieve realistic and deliverable changes. There are some interesting ideas we are working on locally in the digital and automation fields and the interface between primary and secondary care. Other ideas trialled elsewhere can be found here www.aomrc.org.uk/reports-guidance/general-practice-and-secondary-care-working-better-together/attachment/gpsc_working_better_together_0323/

Working with colleagues in North East Essex

Since the NHS was reorganised last year, Suffolk and North East Essex are part of the same health and social care system. North East Essex has a similar organisation to the Fed called GP Primary Choice (GPPC).



We are working closely with GPPC and there is much we are learning from them. The coastal area around Clacton has very high levels of deprivation – greater than Ipswich. This area was also one of the first places to experience a crisis in general practice. Most of the issues that arose here have started to appear in Suffolk.

The Fed works closely with the practices and GPPC through the North East Essex Diabetes Service. This is a great example of how general practice can facilitate some of the best outcomes in the England despite having some of the highest deprivation.

Fed involvement in primary mental health

The Fed has been working since 2018 on a wide-ranging project to improve mental health and wellbeing services in Suffolk. We have now decided to end our involvement with the core project. Going forward, Christopher Browning will represent general practice at the Community Mental Health Board and NSFT will work directly with CDs on the ARRS element. David Pannell/ Christopher Browning are involved with a review of Talking Therapies (new name for Wellbeing). The LMC retains a consultative role.

Future of spirometry service

Funding is due to end in August and the ICB has still not decided whether it will continue. Obviously, we are chasing as the team has scarce skills we want to retain. In the meantime, we have purchased a FeNO machine and the team have looked at how they could incorporate testing into the protocol.

Freeing-up space used by Lloyd George notes

The Fed has tested a service using Unity in Haverhill which involves physically moving the notes to a Fed IG secure warehouse. Our team scan any notes that are requested and start the process of scanning the rest – which will take a long time. For Unity this freed-up a large room which has been a small contribution to their space issue. We have secured additional warehouse space and have applied for accreditation and then plan to offer the service to members at cost in the next few months.

Bladder & Bowel service

We have changed supplier for some continence products and are systematically reviewing all patients. Care homes are complete with no major issues. We are now working through domiciliary patients and have noted an increase in complaints. Often these are not related to continence products but wider support.

The Student Pharmacist Summer Placement in General Practice Programme

The SNEE Training Hub are delivering a programme which gives student pharmacists the opportunity to partake in a paid six-week placement in General Practice. This offers a taster of the foundation year pharmacy training (5th year).

The Training Hub are currently going through a shortlisting process and will be placing students with practices who have signed up to the scheme. To reduce the workload for member practices, the Fed will be the 'host employer' and be responsible for the HR checks and paying the students. If you can host a student please email lucy.beer@snee.nhs.uk.

Podiatry

The team are making rapid progress addressing issues:

- **Podiatry direct referral for x-ray and other imaging** - Currently if this is needed a request goes back to GPs for referral. The team are working with radiology at both hospitals so they can direct refer which will hopefully start in the late autumn.
- **Antibiotic prescribing** - Again historically GPs were asked to do this. We now have PGDs in place so podiatrists can prescribe for patients with diabetes (roughly 40%). We are putting in place PGDs for Flucloxacillin and Clarithromycin, for non-diabetic patients. The main issue is the speed of the PGD process which is outside our control.
- **Patient direct referral** - we have had web based self-referral for some time but not via phone. This will start in the autumn using the same system AHP use. Once it is ready, we will do an awareness raising campaign including cards care navigators can give to patients, Facebook etc.

Digital & automation

- **SystmOne auto-filing of results** - this facility has now been added. More work is needed to draft clinical protocols tailored to local reference ranges. We believe it would be sensible to undertake this once rather than all practices doing the work individually.
- **New patient registration** - We plan to test at Framfield, Stowhealth and Unity then set-up workshops for PMs to show how it works (aiming to fully automate 80% of new registrations). The software will integrate with the NHS App.
- **Automating additional processes** - we plan to use a supplier called Jiff Jaff. Consensus is to start with the filing of negative screening results (cervical, retinopathy and breast).
- **General practice digital strategy** - John Lynch, our Suffolk & North East Essex Primary Care Digital lead, has drafted a concise plan. Please email david.pannell@suffolkfed.org.uk for a copy.
- The **General Practice Digital & Automation Group** meets first Thursday of each month and is open to anyone with an interest. Contact David Pannell

GP Support Hub (info@thegphub.org)

- Pensions Event - Wednesday 7 June 7pm - 9pm at Holiday Inn, Copdock. Speakers from Medical & Financial and Larking-Gowen. Book via: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/pensions-event-tickets-588050072597>
- Red Whale GP Update Courses - 20 May and 18 November: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/pensions-event-tickets-588050072597>
- BringBaby event 21st June 10.00 - 13.00 with a Child Safeguarding update, abnormal bloods and keeping up to date when out of practice. [Suffolk GP BringBaby webinar 21st June 2023 Tickets, Wed 21 Jun 2023 at 10:00 | Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/pensions-event-tickets-588050072597)
- Litigation training in bitesize form - six one hour sessions: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/delivered-by-gp-support-hub-47226869053>