

Medical Director's Notes

I am pleased GP Fed will be delivering the ADHD prescribing and monitoring element of the NSFT (Suffolk adults and children) and EPUT (North-East Essex adults) shared care agreement from 1 April. The service covers patients from those practices that decide not to continue with the work which will no longer be remunerated.



The Fed service excludes two groups of ADHD patients:

- Right to Choose – the Suffolk LMC's advice is these should be repatriated by practices to the relevant Right to Choose provider.
- Private patients

The Fed will be undertaking monitoring checks and prescribing for the NSFT & EPUT patients. We are recruiting NMP mental health clinical practitioners and prescribing clerks. Our team will have weekly interface meetings with NSFT/ EPUT consultants. Prescribing will be via SystemOne so practices will have full visibility.

We are aware there is much confusion re ADHD. A briefing note will be going to practices in March and a communications programme for patients will occur at the same time. This is being developed with Essex and Suffolk LMCs.

I am proud of how quickly the Fed team have mobilised to deliver this complex service.

Formation of the GP Executive in Suffolk and North-east Essex

The influence of general practice has been declining for over a decade. To start addressing this locally, Suffolk & Essex LMCs, Suffolk GP Federation and GP Primary Choice in North-east Essex came together to form the GP Collaborative.

The role of the Collab is to take a view on strategic decisions or policy which affect general practice and raise our profile. LMCs retain their statutory role representing general practice. An example is coordinating our response to ESNEFT's introduction of its new EPIC electronic patient record.

In 2024 the Collab commissioned a report examining general practice's influence. As a result, the Collab decided to form an executive team from amongst its representatives. Crucially the GP Executive will have the time needed to focus on:

1. General practice 'speaking as one'
2. Deepening relationships with senior leaders in our health and social care system
3. Proactively shaping/developing plans - rather than just responding to others. This is particularly relevant to Future Shift, the NHS current buzz words.

The Collaborative held competency interviews for the Executive roles and have appointed:

- GP – Dr Freda Bhatti
- GP – Dr Peter Smye
- Manager – David Pannell
- Deputy Manager – Aimee Longfoot

GPs will undertake one day per week for the GP Exec and managers two days. We are also exploring appointing a non-GP clinician.

The Exec will commence in March and is funded by a combination of secondments from host organisations and the ICB.

EPIC sub-group

ESNEFT is implementing a new electronic patient record system, EPIC, from October. It will start in the two hospitals, including pathology and then roll-out to community services, Urgent Treatment Centres etc. Pathology is the first demonstration of the issues this will raise for general practice.

The EPIC sub-group brings together those in general practice impacted by EPIC. Chaired by John Lynch it includes Essex and Suffolk LMCs and our two local federations.

New chair and Fed Board elections

Simon Rudland is stepping down as Fed Chair in the Spring and the Board has elected Nick Rayner as his replacement. Nick is a partner at Oakfield in Newmarket and Executive Chair at Suffolk Primary Care Partnership.



The Fed's Members' Agreement sets-out our democratic accountability with elections for non-executive directors. The Agreement is no longer fit for purpose e.g. the groups of practices comprising an election constituency no longer exist. Also, the Fed is now large and complex so it takes several years for non-executives to understand the organisation and therefore discharge their legal responsibilities.

Your Fed Board discussed a range of options and decided to postpone elections to see how the GP Collab evolves. We will review how the Fed Board is selected in 9 months and bring proposals to member practices.

Lung Cancer Screening

This national programme invites those current or ex-smokers, aged 55 – 74, to attend the lung health check. The phone appointment calculates risk using the Prostate Lung Colorectal and Ovarian prediction model and the Liverpool Lung Project (LLP). Around 50% are referred for a CT scan. The Fed is delivering screening in Suffolk.

The main impact on practices will be incidental findings from the CT (especially coronary artery calcification). We have agreed with Suffolk LMC that these patients will be given an NHS Health Check.

Bidding for ME CFS & Long Covid service

The Fed is bidding for this service and is eager to talk with anyone who has an interest in how this should run. We are also interested in identifying local GPs either working in a similar service or interested in doing so. Email david.pannell@suffolkfed.org.uk.

GP Digital & Automation Group

- **Warning re use of AI scribes e.g. Heidi** – our Data Protection Officer, Emma Cooper from Kafico - a national expert, has now met with the Information Commissioners Office regarding AI scribes. The ICO is not currently supportive of their use and has formed an internal group to produce guidance especially on informed consent. Therefore, our DPO cannot sign-off and allow their use until this happens (hopefully within 8 weeks). This includes local pilots or testing in individual practices.
- **All-day face to face GP Digital & Automation workshop** – the 2025 event will be held on 13 May at the Holiday Inn at Copdock. Agenda will include training sessions on AI scribes, presentations from interesting providers and a chance to discuss all things digital with colleagues. To attend email evans.scott@suffolkfed.org.uk

News in brief

- **Any changes to your senior partner?** – if your senior partner has changed or is about to change can you email lucy.hart5@nhs.net? The Fed is owned by our practices with the shares being held in trust by senior partners. NHSE checks our register each year so we need to update with those who have retired or moved on.
- **Ipswich Urgent Treatment Centre** – the Fed no longer provides this service. Our team did a brilliant job setting it up and professionally handing it over to ESNEFT. A number of colleagues transferred to the hospital and we wish them the best.