

Coventry Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board 5

15 February 2023

Overview of GP Primary Care services in Coventry

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To provide an update of the monitoring, restoration and support plans for GP Primary Care services in Coventry.

2. Information/Background

- 2.1 Following the impact of Covid-19 on GP Primary Care services in line with the National Guidance, efforts have continued to ensure that; the delivery of the vaccination programme maintained its' momentum and, that the full offer of GP Primary Care services was stepped up to respond to patient need.
- 2.2 The Covid Pandemic resulted in significant, necessary changes to how Primary Care was delivered in Coventry as it did across the wider ICB locality. As a result of these changes, we have continued to develop systems to provide access to GP services to the population of Coventry (and Warwickshire) in a variety of ways including face to face, telephone and video consultations delivering the national expectation to meet the demand for GP Primary Care services.
- 2.3 The additional impact of further Covid-19 waves on the ability to step services back up to pre-pandemic levels and to increase capacity during the Winter period has resulted in a number of specific actions being taken by the ICB to support GP Primary Care to provide care to patients. However, the significant efforts made by GP practices in stepping up capacity to meet demand for appointments and to restore services previously paused in line with the National Guidance at the height of Covid, in conjunction with these actions have resulted in an increase in appointment delivery of 20.4% since December 2019 (pre-Covid baseline).

3 Key areas of Activity:

Restoring and supporting access to GP Services

- 3.1 Restoration of services delivered in GP primary care has continued, including specific efforts to address the backlog of childhood immunisations and cervical screening, Long Term Conditions monitoring and medication reviews, all of which were impacted by Covid-19. All GP Practices within Coventry continue to provide face to face appointments as well as remote triage and video consultations appropriate to the clinical needs of their registered patients. The ICB has implemented a range of projects which have and continue to support service provision and service development.
- 3.2 Key enabling workstreams include the focus work on developing our Primary Care Estates Strategy to develop opportunities within existing and scope the potential requirements for additional fit for purpose premises from which to deliver patient services and support the infrastructure required to support this.
- 3.3 Further work building on the rapid roll out of GP IT systems to support the virtual / remote opportunities to provide services to patients has continued and includes the move to upgrade existing software, IT equipment and also telephone systems in practices which improve the overall experience of patients.
- 3.4 In order to provide sufficient capacity and appropriate services, all practices within the ICB are being supported in relation to their workforce, recruitment and retention. Support is provided through the Coventry and Warwickshire Training Hub with a wide range of opportunities to provide education, training and development and, in collaboration with the local Federation, support recruitment of staff as part of the Additional Reimbursable Roles.

4 Access

- 4.1 Appointment levels across the City and across the ICB footprint have fully recovered and are exceeding levels seen in 2019-20.
- 4.2 Of the appointments delivered, latest data shows a continued increase with 76% of patients being seen face to face by GP either the same day as booking, or the following day. Telephone appointments are slightly higher at 77.9% on the same day. This is an increase on the position reported in July 2021 with 63% being achieved at that time. Coventry total GP face to face appointments are currently shown to be at 56.5%, this also supports the move towards more telephone / remote consultations based on clinical need and patient presentation. The number of non-GP face to face appointments delivered has risen by 32% in the same period (December 2019-December 2022).
- 4.3 A total of 164,086 appointments were delivered in December 2022 compared to December 2019, an increase of over 20%. This equates to 8,204 appointments being delivered each working day of December in 2022. When we consider the total population of Coventry of



442,000, the appointments offered during December as shown demonstrate that 37% of the total population of Coventry could have had an appointment with an appropriate clinician.

- 4.4 In order to further support access to GP Practice services, the ICB has commissioned additional capacity to expand the current provision of Enhanced Access hours. These Enhanced Access clinics provide additional appointment availability Monday to Friday 6.30pm-8.30pm and Saturday 9.00am-5.00pm at a number of locations across the City. A further increase to support throughout the winter period (12th December 2022 – 31st March 2023) has been commissioned with an additional 2,000 appointments being delivered across Coventry and Warwickshire in the first 2 weeks leading up to Christmas holiday period alone with a DNA (Did Not Attend) rate of less than 4%.
- 4.5 As part of the ongoing programme of work to support practices to increase access, the delivery of services under the PCN DES (Primary Care Network Directed Enhanced Service) has supported patient care by the wider pool of General Practice professionals appropriate to their clinical need. This has resulted in patients being able to access services from professionals including but not limited to Clinical Pharmacists, Physicians Associates, Physiotherapists and the expanded ARRS (Additional Reimbursable Roles) workforce.
- 4.6 All practices are open across Coventry and are accepting registrations for new patients and continue to review their offer to patients. We continue to monitor the access levels and issues raised regarding access to appointments.
- 4.7 We also continue to work closely with our local Primary Care Federations to provide appropriate services for patients with respiratory illness. The Respiratory at Home service has been further enhanced throughout the Winter period to provide increased capacity to support patients to remain in their own home wherever possible and safe to do so.
- 4.8 In addition to these specific clinics, the ICB has also commissioned capacity to support practices experiencing periods of reduced staffing through the Surge Service. This enables practices to be supported to meet patient need at short notice and mitigates against sickness such as Covid-19, influenza and other unplanned absence.
- 4.9 In response to the Strep A national position, the ICB has commissioned services specifically to provide a dedicated service throughout the Winter period (until 31st March 2023) to ensure swift access to Paediatric Hubs which serve patients 0-16 years of age with a suspected infection. These operate Monday-Friday and patients are referred into these clinics by their registered practice in line with approved clinical assessment criteria. Appointments are offered at a number of locations across the ICB footprint with services for Coventry being delivered at key, accessible locations within the City.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 The Board are asked to NOTE the content of the report.