

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Paper Closure of Kenton Medical Centre – Update

1. Background

- 1.1. Drs PK Das and B Das of Kenton Medical Centre gave notice to NHS North West London (NWL) on 1 March 2012 that they intended to retire from general practice on 30 June 2012. The doctors hold a Personal Medical Service (PMS) contract with NHS Brent, and own the current premises. They confirmed that the premises will not be available for use as a GP practice once they retire.
- 1.2. As Drs P Das and B Das are the only contractors the PMS contract terminates upon their retirement and therefore a decision must be taken on how patients will access primary medical services in the future. The practice list size at the time of the termination notice was 2500.
- 1.3. In light of the contract termination, NHS NWL had to determine how to proceed and identified two options.
 - 1.3.1. Option One - enables patients to choose to register with a GP from an existing list of established practices in the area. There are five general practices within one mile and 4 slightly further away who are all accepting new registrations. Most of these practices hold contacts with NHS Harrow but this is not a barrier to patients living in Brent wanting to register.
 - 1.3.2. Option Two - involves inviting applications from providers to take up a contract to provide primary medical services for the former patients of the surgery. There is a formal procurement process that should be followed in such cases that ensures the process of selecting a provider is fair and transparent. This procurement would be a competitive tendering exercise.
- 1.4. A four week engagement process was undertaken to inform patients and stakeholders of the proposed option and to ask for feedback on what information would be of use to patients in choosing a practice to register with. Six responses were received during the engagement period, these were as follows;
 - 1.4.1. Two responses from patients were received asking for advice about how to register with another GP practice
 - 1.4.2. One response from a patient asking for more information about the nearby practices e.g. premises access and waiting times.
 - 1.4.3. One patient asked if patients could be automatically transferred to a GP practice of choice, instead of having to re-register
 - 1.4.4. A GP in a Brent practice, not included in the list of nearest practices, stating that they had capacity to register additional patients
 - 1.4.5. Barry Gardiner, Member of Parliament for Brent North, requesting

further clarification on the notice period for the practice closure.

1.5. In light of the responses during the engagement period and after reviewing both of the options in detail it was recommended to the NHS NWL Board that patients should be asked, and supported where needed by the practice and local PALs team, to register with an alternative practice in the local area, as described in option one above. The reasons for this are as follows:

- Existing GP practices in the surrounding area have capacity to register additional patients
- The list of 2500 is well below the local average practice list size and, with list inflation in Brent at around 24%; the actual list size is likely to be somewhat lower. This suggests that this is not a viable list to put out to procurement or attract sufficient interest from the market.
- It presents more individual choice for patients when choosing where they would like to be registered in future.
- As the practice premises will no longer be available for use, the availability and affordability of suitable new premises in the local area may be challenging for new providers.
- The length of time to procure a new practice and premises would be between 9 – 12 months.

Update:

1.6. Following the Board decision patients were written to informing them of the decision and sent details of other practices in the area, with their opening times, services offered and patient satisfaction survey results.

1.7. Local social services, community services and Hospital and Mental Health Trusts have been written to inform them that the practice will be closing and to ask them to support any patients on their caseloads who may require additional help in registering.

1.8. As of 27 June 2012, 980 out of the original 2500 patients have not yet registered with another GP. These patients will be written to again to encourage them to register with another GP practice.

1.9. There are three patients, who the practice had identified as vulnerable, who had not yet re-registered with an alternative practice. The Patient Advice and Liaison Team is in contact with those patients directly to ensure they are re-registered quickly.