

NHS England Board meeting

Paper Title: Publication of the Delivery Plan for Recovering Access to Primary Care

Agenda item: 5 (Public session)

Report by: Amanda Doyle, National Director Primary Care and Community Services

Paper type: For discussion

Organisation Objective:

NHS Mandate from Government	<input type="checkbox"/>	Statutory item	<input type="checkbox"/>
NHS Long Term Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Governance	<input type="checkbox"/>
NHS People Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Executive summary:

Summary of the Delivery Plan for Recovering Access to Primary Care and our approach to implementation and delivery, following publication of the plan on 9 May 2023.

Action required:

The Board is asked to note the information provided in this paper.

Summary

1. In the Autumn Statement the government committed the NHS to publish a delivery plan for recovering access to primary care. [Delivery plan for recovering access to primary care](#) sets out a series of commitments to tackle the 8am rush and make it quicker and easier for patients to get the help they need from primary care. The plan was developed and informed with expertise and insight from a wide range of professional and patient stakeholders as well as front line clinicians.
2. The plan builds on changes made in the 23/24 GP contract and sets out how the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and NHS England (NHSE) will:

Empower patients by rolling out tools they can use to manage their own health, and invest up to £645 million over two years to expand services offered by community pharmacy.

1. Enable patients in over 90% of practices to see their records and practice messages, book appointments and order repeat prescriptions using the NHS App by March 2024.
2. Ensure integrated care boards (ICBs) expand self-referral pathways by September 2023, as set out in the [2023/24 Operational Planning Guidance](#).

3. Expand pharmacy oral contraception (OC) and blood pressure (BP) services this year, to increase access and convenience for millions of patients, subject to consultation.
4. Launch Pharmacy First so that by end of 2023 community pharmacies can supply prescription-only medicines for seven common conditions. This, together with OC and BP expansion, could save 10 million appointments in general practice a year once scaled, subject to consultation.

Implement ‘Modern General Practice Access’ so patients know on the day how their request will be handled, based on clinical need and continuing to respect their preference for a call, face-to-face appointment, or online message. We are re-targeting £240 million – for a practice still on analogue phones this could mean ~£60,000 of support over 2 years.

5. Support all practices on analogue lines to move to digital telephony, including call back functionality, if they sign up by July 2023.
6. Provide all practices with the digital tools and care navigation training for Modern General Practice Access and fund transition cover for those that commit to adopt this approach before March 2025.
7. Deliver training and transformation support to all practices from May 2023 through a new National General Practice Improvement Programme.

Build capacity so practices can offer more appointments from more staff than ever before.

8. Make available an extra £385 million in 2023/24 to employ 26,000 more direct patient care staff and deliver 50 million more appointments by March 2024 (compared to 2019).
9. Further expand GP specialty training – and make it easier for newly trained GPs who require a visa to remain in England.
10. Encourage experienced GPs to stay in practice through the pension reforms announced in the Budget and create simpler routes back to practice for the recently retired.
11. Change local authority planning guidance this year to raise the priority of primary care facilities when considering how funds from new housing developments are allocated.

Cut bureaucracy to give practice teams more time to focus on their patients’ clinical needs.

12. Reduce time spent liaising with hospitals – by requiring ICBs to report progress on improving the interface with primary care, especially the four areas we highlight from the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges report, in a public board update this autumn.
13. Reduce requests to GPs to verify medical evidence, including by increasing self-certification, by continuing to advance the Bureaucracy Busting Concordat.
14. Streamline the Investment and Impact Fund (IIF) from 36 to five indicators – retarget £246 million – and protect 25% of Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) clinical indicators.

Implementation and delivery

3. NHSE will now prioritise implementation, working closely with, and supporting Integrated Care Boards to deliver. Dr Amanda Doyle, National Director for Primary Care and Community Services, is the Senior Responsible Officer for delivery, and will work closely with regional and ICB colleagues as well as supporting communication to the profession for the general practice elements of implementation. The pharmacy elements of the plan are subject to consultation with PSNC.
4. Further information will shortly be communicated to ICBs and primary care teams to ensure clarity on the next steps and the actions required locally to access the significant support that has been made available. This will be communicated through guidance and a series of webinars in the coming months.