



NICS Newsletter - January 2020

Dear All

The start of a new year is always an odd mixture of reflection on what has happened and projecting towards what is happening and what might happen. NICS has come a long way in the last 18 months since we started the improved access clinics in August 2018. We are now delivering GP appointments, minor wound clinics, smear clinics and phlebotomy from six hubs across NWS. We have first contact physios working from 15 practices, and LIVI are delivering about 500 digital GP appointments a week to our patients. We have met every one of our performance targets, including patient feedback which is consistently high with 94% of patients rating us good or excellent. Over the last year we delivered over 50,000 appointments to patients in NWS.

Having got the services up and running we have worked hard at making sure that the services are of high quality. Dr Nicki Mantel-Cooper has been appointed as Medical Director and together with Claire Laing (Head of Quality Assurance for NICS) they have audited at least 20 consultations of a significant number of the clinicians working for NICS and followed up on any that have shown to have any learning needs. They also follow up on any complaints or significant events, in the spirit of continual improvement. We have been notified by CQC that we will be inspected in February. I believe that the hard work put into the service delivery, the emphasis on quality and improvement, and the collaboration that we have with all the practices in NWS (particularly those that host Improved Access Clinics) will be evident during the inspection.

This year we will be expanding what NICS does by partnering with ASPH to deliver the services at the Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC) at St Peter's Hospital. We are working closely with ASPH to deliver a primary care lead model, but with an emphasis on how this fits into the model of care of NWS. The UTC needs to be an extension of our local primary care, but also to enable patients to have a more seamless journey into and out of secondary care. As a start to help with this flow, an admissions referral form has been developed for all GPs to use when sending a patient urgently to St Peter's. This is to allow the patient you have seen to be sent where you deem appropriate without needing re-assessing by a GP in the UTC or being seen in A&E when they should be in the surgical or medical assessment areas. This letter will be sent through to practices to put into their EMIS documents. More about this will come out in locality meetings and I would appreciate it if it can be used by everyone sending a patient in. We have added a list of all contact numbers for all the specialties to make it easier to contact the relevant clinician in the hospital.

We have been using Locums Nest as our technological platform for offering out and filling our Improved Access clinics for nearly two years now. We will be using Locums Nest to do the same for the UTC. Please let all your GPs know about this and if anyone is interested in doing UTC shifts to either sign up on Locums Nest or contact either George Roe (george.roe@nhs.net) or myself. We have also bought a block contract with Locums Nest for all practices in NWS so all practices can use this for free for one year. It is a very easy



app to use and makes filling the session and invoicing for it much easier than lots of emails. Please give it a go and see if it makes your PM's life a bit easier!

The other area that NICS is working on is the development of a home visiting service for NWS. Following on from the pilot that we ran last year, we are in discussions with CSH and SECAMB to work through how this can transition from a pilot to a fully integrated service. It is envisioned that ultimately, we will be able to have the PCN paramedics working closely with the frailty hubs, and rapid nursing, therapy and care services to provide a home visiting service to better meet the needs of the most vulnerable people in our area.

Underlying all of what NICS does is three principles. We want to support all practices in NWS, helping to make general practice more sustainable. We work towards delivering great care for our patients. We try to work in innovative ways, trying new things and always welcome new ideas, and new partners in our work.

I'd like to thank everyone for your continuing support and wish everyone a Happy New Year.

Caroline and the team at NICS

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