

# YOUR HEALTH SERVICES NEED YOU!

## SOUTH ISLINGTON PRACTICE BASED COMMISSIONING NEWSLETTER

*Reviewing services for patients by patients*



The Practice Based Commissioning Patient Group met in September. Leaflets were sent to all Practices to invite patients to join the discussion group. The aim of the group is to look at services provided to all residents living in South Islington and who are registered at the following Practices:

*Clerkenwell Medical Practice, Mitchison Road Surgery, The Family Practice, River Place Health Centre, City Road Medical Centre, Roman Way Medical Centre, The Amwell Practice, Islington Central Medical Centre, Bingfield Primary Care Centre, Elizabeth Avenue Group Practice, St Peter's Street Medical Practice, Pine Street Medical Practice, Killick Street Health Centre, Prebend Street Surgery, Ritchie Street Group Practice.*

The group will be looking at services which are provided after they have seen a GP. For example we may look at whether going to the hospital for diabetic checks is better in terms of convenience and cost than being seen by your GP. It is not reviewing current services offered by individual Practices, but the stage after being seen at your surgery. However, you are able to compare and review what services are offered at different GP surgeries throughout Islington by using the NHS Choices website. We hope to feedback to you from these meetings through newsletters like this. They will also include comments from patients on the

group, such as those within this copy.

## **WHAT IS PRACTICE BASED COMMISSIONING (PBC)?**

Practice based commissioning is about involving GP practices in buying in services which are local and in convenient settings for patients.

GPs are given resources to become involved in these decisions because they are best placed to understand the needs of their patients.

Commissioning a service and following it through until the service is set up involves the following processes:

- ◆ Assess patient needs
- ◆ Determine priorities
- ◆ Design a service based on need
- ◆ Support patient choice
- ◆ Seek patient and public views

GP's are given a budget to buy services for their patients and if they make any savings on this they can use the money saved for new services for patients.

Through Practice Based Commissioning in Islington, a Community Dermatology Service was set up in 2007, a Community Ear, Nose and Throat Service was set up in 2009 and a Community Diabetes service set up in 2008. A lot of work has also taken place so that more services are provided by your GP Practice rather than at the hospital.

## WHAT PATIENTS SAY

**Jain:** I am a patient at Islington Central Medical Centre and was invited by my GP to attend the first meeting of the group in September.

The group was made up of patients from the various practices that form the South Islington patch, the Practice Managers and Dr Peter Baines who gave us an overview of what Practice Based Commissioning (PBC) is about.

PBC was a new concept for the patient participants and not easy to get your head around, but the presentation did give us an overview of what it's about and the importance of involving patients in deciding which health services should be prioritised at a local level. What PBC aims to do is provide the most appropriate services for the local community such as self referral by patients to physiotherapy so that they do not need to book an appointment with their GP. The group will look at service pathways that patients take and see how they can be improved for patients in terms of being seen quickly and efficiently but also cost effectively.

What surprised me was how different each practice is in its approach and that with only 2 or 3 patients from each practice it will be hard to make a meaningful contribution unless more patients become involved. That's why we

went on to talk about the need for a regular newsletter to tell people what is going on and to seek their views.

I do hope that you'll find this newsletter interesting and it will encourage you to get involved, or at least, share your thoughts on the changes you feel may help patients with your Practice Manager.

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**Daphne:** I attended the South Islington Practice-Based Commissioning (PBC) meeting in Goswell Road on 16<sup>th</sup> September. I am a member of the Elizabeth Avenue Practice Patient's Group.

The opening was very welcoming and the Practice Managers encouraged us to speak up and give ideas, suggestions & general feedback.

A presentation that had a frightening array of terms to describe the commissioning process, as well as a jolly metaphor involving lavatory paper was used to explain how PBC works. The GP did his best, but because of the different ways our respective practices operate it soon became clear it will be difficult to make valid choices that will work for everyone.

Some felt that the meeting was to make sure we suggest things that coincide with the desires of the Practice, others to show our awareness of the complexity of

funding services within PCTs. Lots of questions, not so many answers, as yet!

All the Patient participants are volunteers and we struggled to grasp what PBC is about. The frustration in the room was real and with over 20 people in the room, it meant not everyone felt comfortable speaking out. Rose, a pensioner, was undaunted and voiced her concern at having a 13 week wait for the result of a test.

Suggestions included circulating handouts and an agenda before the meeting and educating patients to use Camidoc rather than go to the hospital's A&E dept which places a huge drain on scarce resources.

Participants were asked to use their own experience of the NHS to inform the more altruistic aim of deciding what's best for everyone in their GP Practice. It's a steep learning curve not just for the Patient's but also the practitioners. The meeting produced lively discussion and everyone seemed stimulated by engaging with this process.

I walked home with Rose after the meeting and despite her own problems she was full of enthusiasm for what we'd talked about and how she could really contribute her wealth of experience. Hopefully other patient's will want to come along and make their voice heard too.

## NEXT MEETING

Our next meeting will be held on **16<sup>th</sup> November** between 2-4pm at NHS Islington, Goswell Road. Patients are invited to sign in at reception, a member of staff will show you to the meeting room. Refreshments will be provided.

The agenda is:

- ◆ Group discussion on terms of reference and ground rules for the group
- ◆ Discussion on extended hours in GP surgeries
- ◆ Looking at freed up resources and how they can and have been used within South Islington
- ◆ Reviewing communication by CAMIDOC (out of hours service provider) to patients on the services that they provide.

The following meeting in February 2010 will be an evening meeting.

Please let **Tom Phillips** - [pbc.admin@islington.nhs.uk](mailto:pbc.admin@islington.nhs.uk) / **020 7527 1162** - know if you would like to attend the next meeting.

## FEEDBACK

Please contact Tom Phillips if you have any comments or suggestions you would like to make regarding the services you have experienced that you feel could be improved within South Islington. You can also let Tom know if you would be interested in joining the group and / or receiving email updates.