

Health Scrutiny Committee - 20 July 2016

Hopton and Stanton Surgeries

On behalf of NHS England and West Suffolk CCG

1.0 Purpose

To update the Committee members on GP services provided by Hopton and Stanton Surgeries

2.0 Key points

- The landlord of the Hopton Surgery gave the practice notice that they must leave by January 2017. Because of staffing and infection control concerns, the practice indicated they would have to move the GP room to the Stanton site in December 2015.
- The same number of GP appointments are currently offered to people who are registered to use the Hopton Surgery and Stanton Surgery as before December 2015.
- The practice has made efforts to meaningfully engage with the local population. Planning work on the local developments have included practice engagement as well as for the local population, notably on June 2015. More work has been carried out to engage transparently with the local population, with the help of Healthwatch Suffolk.
- NHS England has supported the practice for its development plans.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 The Hopton (Avicenna, High Street, Hopton) and Stanton GP practice (10 The Chase, Stanton) is currently operated from two villages located about four miles apart from each other in west Suffolk to the north of Bury St Edmunds.
- 3.2 The Hopton site was set up by the father of the now retired senior partner, and is attached to his private house. Hopton Surgery consisted of a GP consulting room, a treatment room, a dispensary and a reception area shared with Hopton Dental Surgery. GP surgeries were offered every morning, as well as Monday and Friday afternoons. Patients often would travel freely between the surgeries, depending on which GP they wished to see.
- 3.3 Since 2012 a housing developer and the Hopton parish council has been looking into re-providing the GP surgery. Please see link to Draft Development Brief - http://www.hoptonsouth.co.uk/draft_development_brief.html. At the same time, planning has been underway to expand the accommodation at Stanton site, as there are three significant housing developments in the catchment area. Stanton has 110 homes being built, Barningham 25 homes and Hopton 36 homes. The first two of these are almost completed, and population growth purely as a consequence of these developments is anticipated to be around 400 patients. This equates to list size growth of 9%. Further houses are planned at Ixworth which is part of the practice's boundary. The practice is one of a handful of surgeries in West Suffolk offering registration to patients that reside outside the designated boundary. As a result, it has patients registered as far away as Eye, Thetford, Stowmarket and Bury St Edmunds.

- 3.4 A senior GP retired in August 2015. As the owners of the property wanted to expand the dental area, the practice worked with the owners to try to recreate the GP room elsewhere in that property. However in the end, the issues around adequate space for staff and infection control were too great to overcome. By late November the practice informed the owners they could not use the kitchen/ corridor and the practice would vacate the GP room by the 12 December, as requested.
- 3.5 The practice wrote to more than 500 patients in Hopton and to broader stakeholders to explain it had the use of a treatment room only, and that a nurse-led service only would continue at Hopton. This means that patients travel to Stanton to see a GP and to obtain their medicines from the practice dispensary; and visit nurses and phlebotomists at the Hopton practice. There are four part-time GPs, as well as two nurses and one phlebotomist. The practice has the West Suffolk Hospital outreach phlebotomist also attend once per week and has now successfully recruited a third part time practice nurse.
- 3.6 Up until February 2016, the practice were still exploring potential options for the Hopton site, with community leaders, and requested funding from NHS England (NHSE) through a project initiation document. The NHSE and CCG Primary Care and Estates Strategies set out that: the use of premises should be maximised; value for money is ensured; priority is to be given for plans to support seven day working; and mergers or co-location of primary care services are encouraged. The practice was informed that, as it was not proposing to increase the opening hours at a new Hopton surgery, it was unlikely to secure funding for the project. The GPs, who are independent businesspeople, decided then that they could not afford to pay for the proposal for Hopton as they would be unable to open for more hours.

4.0 Current situation

4.1 Commissioners

NHSE is ultimately responsible for commissioning primary medical services. Most related decisions will be made jointly by NHSE and West Suffolk CCG via the CCG's joint commissioning committee. The Hopton and Stanton GP Practice is contracted by NHS England to provide General Medical Services and pharmaceutical services. This is unchanged.

NHSE and the CCG continue to work with and support the practice to help them plan and support both a) the continuation of as many services at Hopton as possible and until they leave in January 2017 and b) to explore the development opportunities at Stanton.

4.2 Practice services

The practice still offers the same total of 347 GP appointments now per week as it did prior December 2015. Prior to December 2015, 7% of booked appointments at Hopton were missed and 3% of bookable appointments were not booked. After December 2015, the do not attend (DNA) rate has fallen to 2% but the uptake of appointments at Hopton has rendered 21% of appointments at Hopton were not used. (Comparison weeks have been chosen six months apart: w/c 7/12/15 and 6/6/16). GP extended hours appointments that used to be provided at Hopton are now at Stanton.

The practice has successfully recruited more nurses and is back to the complement of nursing provision, after two nurses left in November 2015 and January 2016

respectively. These two new nurses are on a training programme to provide them with primary care-based clinical skills. From March 2016, there have been additional ad hoc Saturday GP morning clinics to help with demand following bank holidays and known busy periods. This is above the core hour services normally provided historically and is a new commitment that the practice has pledged.

The Hopton surgery continues to offer practice nurse, healthcare assistant & phlebotomy appointments, excluding child vaccinations.

In mitigation for the move of GP services to Stanton, the practice asked for patient and community feedback and it was ascertained that there were three areas where patients and the public needed to be supported: parking; dispensing services; and transport between the two sites (which are four miles apart).

Parking at Stanton

There was some hearsay but no direct complaint to the practice, that this would be an issue. Parking has been monitored and there are no severe impacts on the provision at the surgery site. Staff are now parking on site and patients are asked to point out where they have problems.

Dispensing services

The practice still offers a telephone repeat prescription service as well as online request and prescription side-slip. The practice is working with Botesdale GP surgery to set up a collection and delivery service for medicines so that patients do not have to travel to Stanton to collect these in person. The practice have anticipated that an hour delivery slot twice weekly to their patients' homes will be required plus an additional hour nominated for the van to be at a central location (i.e. village hall car park) for collection purposes. Both surgeries are formulating their expected needs/frequency/logistics so that formal agreement between the two surgeries can make this service a reality as quickly as possible.

Transport

Two avenues have been explored. A community transport service is advertised broadly within the practice, for the community to make use of. The community transport team have circulated posters to village notice boards that are accessible. The practice advertises the service in its waiting room and on its website too. The practice has also requested assistance from the Hopton Parish Council to disseminate the posters further afield. There is another service set up with volunteers from the Hopton High Street Chapel. So as not to overload the volunteer group, GPs were given permission by the provider to identify patients who will most benefit and share the contact details with patient permission. To date, there have not been any patients that have presented at the surgery with a GP that they thought would benefit from having the details of this service. The practice has not seen any evidence that the community bus has been used, although it is awaiting final confirmation from the service that this is the case.

5.0 Future development

Services will continue to be offered at Stanton and monitoring of the mitigating actions will continue. There will be a requirement for at least another room to take on nurses and phlebotomists; and the practice are pursuing additional interim clinical space at the Stanton Health Centre opposite.

NHS England has agreed to fund the costs of an options appraisal / feasibility study (from national Primary Care Infrastructure Funds) to support the practice in developing a scheme to increase capacity in Stanton. This work will be completed by 30 June 2016. (The options appraisal will note the four significant housing developments in the practice's immediate catchment area: Stanton, Ixworth, Barningham and Hopton (as detailed in St. Edmundsbury Borough Council's rural vision). Once the practice has received the options appraisal to help the GPs formulate its plans, it will broaden discussions. West Suffolk CCG has identified a Project Manager to undertake this work on behalf of the practice.

NHS England will continue to work with the CCG and the practice to progress plans over the coming months.

The practice is consulting with all neighbouring practices; and patients will still have the same choice of GP practices with which to register.

6.0 Engagement and communications

6.1 Healthwatch Suffolk is providing advice and support to the GP practice to help develop their Patient Participation Group (PPG) from a virtual group which communicates electronically into one that meets face-to-face. Progress is underway to gain further interest and support to develop this additional feature of the PPG. With the help of Healthwatch Suffolk and current members of the PPG, engagement sessions have been set up in the waiting rooms of both locations to allow patients the opportunity to discuss issues with an impartial third party. Healthwatch Suffolk has carried out two lots of engagement – one at each site – to understand the impact of the changes.

6.2 In the table below is a set of engagement and communications the practice has been involved in and, in most cases, has led:

Month/Year	Action
January 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved and expanded its stakeholder list Called a face to face meeting of its Patient and Participation Group (which is usually virtual) Website update
April 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting called by Cllr Joanna Spicer in Barningham Attended by senior partners Attended by CCG
June 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning meeting (Hopton South) http://www.hoptonsouth.co.uk/draft_development_brief.html

EVIDENCE SET 2

October 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NHS England declined the initial project initiation document
November 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Private landlord made business decision• Partners made decision to quit the premises, based on staffing and infection control concerns
December 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sent briefing to stakeholders including PPG• Wrote to 520 patients in Hopton• Posters in surgery• Sent press release
January 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updated communications to stakeholders• Updated Project Initiation Document (PID) sent in
April 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community leaders briefing following PID response• Press release on doctors decision• Stakeholder communications updating on three main topics raised as concerns a) Community travel arrangements between sites b) deliveries of prescription drugs c) and parking
June 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Healthwatch visits to both sites to ask patients for feedback• Updated stakeholder communications and issued to public

Prepared by

Lois Wreathall, Head of Primary Care for West Suffolk CCG

Rob Freeman, Practice Manager Hopton and Stanton surgeries

Stuart Quinton, NHS England

