

Improving Healthcare in Eden

~~:: Locality Briefing ::~~ ~~~ Issue 1 – May 2008 ::~~

Cumbria PCT's Eden Locality Team is leading the implementation of 'Closer to Home' in the Eden district. 'Closer to Home' is a new way of delivering the best possible treatment and support as close as possible to people's own homes. When people do need specialist care, hospitals would offer faster access to first-class services. We can only do this by making changes to the way care is delivered both in hospital and in the community and by making sure that these improvements make the best of our staff, equipment and money.

This briefing is based on the business of the April Practice Based Commissioning (PBC) meeting and developments since. It's worth noting that in Eden, we're trying to make changes gradually so we can be sure new ways of working are effective before moving on. By piloting small changes step-by-step, we hope to make the transition smooth, so you will see gradual improvement, rather than sudden leaps.

Key People

- Dr Helen Jervis Eden Locality GP Lead
- Dr Cameron Munro Eden Locality Deputy GP Lead
- Dr Angus Ross Eden Locality Unscheduled Care Lead
- Dr Venetia Young Eden Locality Mental Health GP Lead
- Judi Edgerton Eden Locality Mental Health GP Lead
- Dr Ian Pritchard Eden Locality Community Hospital Lead
- Dr Clare Brock Eden Locality Community Service Lead
- Dr Sarah Mills Eden Locality Diabetes Lead
- Justine Anderson Eden Locality Commissioning Manager

Practice Based Commissioning

The current way of commissioning – where Lead GPs representing all the GP Practices in Eden make decisions about services together – is working very well. It's rare for any of the Practices not to be represented at a meeting, and agreement can usually be reached on important topics. The last PBC meeting reviewed the current arrangements and agreed to continue them.

Early Support Stroke Discharge Team

Between May 2007 and March 2008 there has been a pilot scheme to improve the care stroke patients receive in Eden, with the aim of getting them home, safely and more quickly. Studies have shown that this way of working increases the speed of a patient's recovery, and how much improvement they can achieve. In Eden, patients achieved 90% of their 'Therapy Goals', increased their confidence and have progressed further with the therapy and support offered by the team. On top of this, average stays in hospital were reduced from 41 days 17.2. Although the pilot ended in March '08, we have approved another £25,000 to keep the project going until it can be expanded, and move into the new Health and Social Care Teams coming out of 'Closer to Home' (see below).

Primary Care Assessment Service

A Primary Care Assessment Service, or PCAS, is a way of assessing and treating minor injuries for people who might otherwise end up waiting in an Accident and Emergency department. Eden is going to get its own PCAS, 24/7, based in Penrith Community Hospital. Penrith already has a minor injury clinic, and an out of hours service, so the focus of this project is currently on

expanding these to include more potentially serious complaints and more advanced assessment and treatment. The next steps will involve Dr Angus Ross working closely with the minor injury staff to set up robust, safe protocols for patient care in the new areas of clinical work that previously had to be admitted to Carlisle.

Electronic Patient Records

We are looking at ways of using patient records more effectively to improve communication, prevent duplication of effort and improve patients' experience, especially when needing care from, for example, GPs, community hospital and social services. We need to be careful to be sure that there are no concerns about confidentiality, and are going to look very closely at the proposed system to make sure it will work for us in Eden.

Public Engagement

Anna Scamans, Public Engagement Lead, has joined the Eden Locality Team, to support us with helping local people get more involved. Anna is working on a Public Engagement Action Plan to highlight areas we need to work on. This Briefing is part of the process, and we are planning another Eden Locality Stakeholder Group meeting in July. If you'd like to be involved, please contact Anna Scamans (contact details at the end of this Briefing).

Community Cardio-respiratory Clinic

This Clinic will help people suffering from breathlessness to get a rapid assessment of their condition in Penrith Community Hospital, instead of having to travel to an Acute Hospital. Their GP will refer them to the Clinic and they will be seen within two weeks. This project is in its early stages, and the next step is for a GP specialist to work with cardiology experts to improve his/her skills. We will also be adapting premises and training specialist community nurses.

Integrated Health and Social Care Teams

There are two elements to this project:

Health and Social Care Services will bring health care and social services together so that all contact with patients is integrated and people can live as independently as possible. The rapid-response teams will be multi-skilled and work across both Health and Social Care so that treatment and support won't have to stop when responsibility for a patient moves to another organisation. The teams will work from Alston and Penrith.

Step Up/Step Down Community Beds will focus on bringing people safely back from the Acute Hospitals quicker, and preventing them having to go to Acute Hospital unnecessarily. The current bed numbers at community hospitals in Eden will remain until there is enough information resulting from the changes we are making to help us understand how many beds we will need for future use. We are enhancing current services with:-

- Designated beds for orthopaedic and stroke patients,
- Step Down care to help people return from acute hospital to a local setting,
- Step Up care to provide stabilisation and treatment so people don't have to be admitted to acute hospitals.

The development of the Teams is in the early stages, and we are focussing on working to increase patients' access to rehabilitation and therapy, making sure current services run smoothly, increasing medical presence on the wards, and increasing access to home care.

We hope you've found this Briefing useful. If you have a query, or a suggestion of how we can improve the Briefing, please contact Anna Scamans on 07785 518 520 or anna.scamans@cumbriapct.nhs.uk. Thank you from the Eden Locality Team.