



County Durham and Darlington

Integrated Business Board
Tuesday 26 January 2010
Item No: IBB/10/15

NHS COUNTY DURHAM AND DARLINGTON INTEGRATED BUSINESS BOARD

Proposal to Permanently Close Branch Surgery at Arthur Street

1. Introduction - Background and context

This paper is to advise the board to give consideration to the formal closure of Arthur Street surgery in Ushaw Moor. Arthur Street surgery is a branch surgery of Brandon Lane surgery, Dr Khan is the GP who delivers services from this site. In October 2007 there was a flood at the surgery which caused damage to an extensive amount of the ground floor requiring the branch surgery to be closed. The Arthur Street surgery's opening times, prior to the closure, were 2 hours a day Monday to Friday providing a total service provision of 10 hours per week. The premises have remained closed and Dr Khan has submitted a formal application requesting closure of the Arthur Street premises to be formerly closed.

2. Implications and risks

Consultations undertaken by Dr Khan with his patients, the public and stakeholders has clearly demonstrated that the temporary closure of the Arthur Street premises, has proved to have had little or no impact upon the patients that had previously attended the branch surgery. It has also demonstrated the benefit of being able to consolidate the services onto one site resulting in improved access both for the Brandon Lane patients as well as the Arthur Street patients. The practice has also addressed transport issues by making patient services more accessible to patients travelling from Arthur Street by aligning surgery times to fit in with bus times for patients travelling to Brandon Lane.

Following a report submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Appendix 1) a letter has been received from the OSC (Appendix 2) which has endorsed Dr Khan's request to close the branch site having been satisfied that consultation has been undertaken. In addition, the potential financial savings that could be made by approving the application to close the premises would be £9764.38 per annum. This is made up of the reimbursement the practice receives for rent and rates for the premises.

Document management				
Version	Date	Summary	Owner's Name	Approved
1.0	9/11/09	Proof read by Debra Hartley	David Britton	
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3.0	26/01/10	Presented to Integrated Business Board	Amanda Hume	

3. Recommendations

The board is requested to:-

- note the content of the paper,
- approve the application from Dr Khan to close the branch surgery at Arthur Street in Ushaw Moor with immediate effect.

4. Author and sponsor director

Author: David Britton
Title: Primary and Community Care Development Manager

Director: Amanda Hume
Title : Director of Performance and Contract Management
Date: January 2010

Purpose of paper	Information sharing <input type="checkbox"/> Development/discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Decision/action <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
How does the paper support / have implications for:	
NHS County Durham's 4 Strategic Aims	Ensuring services are safe by being provided from premises fit for purpose.
Our Vision Our Future workstreams	Ensuring that support is given to GP service provider to deliver improved service and better access for their patients
World class commissioning competencies	WCC COMPETENCY 2 Working collaboratively with community partners-Overview and Scrutiny Committee WCC COMPETENCY 3 Meaningful engagement with the public and patients to shape services and make commissioning decisions that reflect the needs, priorities and aspirations of the local population,
Standards for better health	Meets Core Standards within C20, C21 and D12
Use of resources	Making financial savings by closure of premises not fit for purpose. Annual saving of £9764.38
Targets and Vital signs	
NHS Constitution	Meets the requirement to ensure that services are provided in a clean and safe environment that is fit for purpose.
Darzi Principles	Improves access to GP services
Impact on / Involvement of partners	Ensuring that they were consulted and involved in the decision
Equality & Diversity	
Other policies / Issues	

Proposed permanent closure to Arthur Street Premises Ushaw Moor

Background and context

Arthur Street is a branch surgery of Brandon Lane surgery and Dr Khan is the GP who delivers services from this site. In October 2007 there was a flood at the branch surgery which caused extensive damage to a large area of the ground floor, requiring the branch surgery to be closed on temporary basis whilst an insurance claim was being pursued.

Due to an error by the insurance company the work was delayed for a number of months and as the premises were considered to be no longer fit for purpose it remained closed. The practice decided to formally apply to close the branch surgery permanently. During the initial months of the closure it became apparent that patients were happy to travel to the main site at Brandon Lane (as the majority had done so prior to the closure) as the patients could access the full range of service the practice provides. Following a fire assessment and health and safety inspections, which include a Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) assessment, it was established that a considerable amount of remedial work would be required to make the premises at Arthur Street fit for purpose.

The temporary arrangements that were put in place for patients living in the Ushaw Moor area aimed to minimise the disruption and be responsive to the patients needs. The consultation by the practice with their patients confirmed that the patients residing in Ushaw Moor have been very happy accessing services at the main site (Brandon Lane). This in turn has enabled the practice to extend access to their services from the main site as they are not stretching the resources across two sites.

The Arthur Street surgery opening times, prior to the temporary closure, were 2 hours a day Monday to Friday.

Since Arthur Street temporarily closed only five patients removed themselves from the practice list. Many of the patients living in the Ushaw Moor locality already travelled to the Brandon Lane surgery as they have a greater choice of appointment times and can access the other services that they offer such as minor surgery, aromatherapy, counselling and sexual health screening if required.

Actions taken by practice to address the closure

In order to address the closure the practice extended clinic times at Brandon Lane to enable availability of additional appointments for those patients who would normally attend Arthur Street.

The practice gave significant consideration to transport arrangements for patients living in Ushaw Moor that included additional pre-bookable appointments at times in the morning with surgeries starting earlier in the afternoon on two days on the week linked into the bus service. In addition the Deerness transport service also operates in the area which provides additional transport options for patients. The expansion of the telephone consultation service has also ensured that residents at Ushaw Moor can access a GP when they choose to.

Patients living in Ushaw Moor and surrounding areas can order repeat prescriptions over the telephone or via the practices internet services. As part of the consultation process Dr. Khan approached other GP practices in Ushaw Moor and Bearpark area and received assurances from them that if patients chose to they could register with them. The impact for the local pharmacy has also been reviewed and patients have continued to access these services.

A review of the registered list for practice has identified that 213 patients, residing in Ushaw Moor have chosen to remain registered at the Brandon Lane Surgery.

Current Situation

- The surgery has been closed since October 2007 due to flood damage.
- Since closing 5 patients normally attending Arthur Street have left the practice and their reasons are unknown.
- There are another 5 patients who remain registered with the practice who would normally attend the branch surgery who have not been seen since the temporary closure.
- 60 patients who normally attend the branch surgery have utilised the 106 appointments now being made available at the main site at Brandon Lane.
- Of the 60 patients that were seen at the branch surgery within 12 months prior to the temporary closure, 50 of these patients have since been seen by a doctor at least once at the main site.

Patient and Public Consultation

On the 30 November 2008 Dr Khan and his practice manager attended an OSC meeting where Dr Khan gave a presentation explaining why the practice is applying to close the branch surgery permanently. In relation to information received on the proposal, the members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee said they would wish to see evidence of robust involvement that meets the requirements of Section 242 of the NHS Act 2006. The practice has since undertaken those consultations:

First Consultation

On the 4 February 2009 Dr Khan hosted a consultation meeting at the practice, having advertised this event with notices placed in local shops and at W Smith chemists in Ushaw Moor.

There was representation from three patients at this event along with Dr Khan and the practice manager. The consultation paper to date was discussed in detail. The patient representation sought confirmation that patients could change practice if they chose to do so.

The transport problems were discussed and it was felt that the practice had taken into consideration transport issues by adjusting clinic times and advertising the Deerness transport service as appropriate. It was acknowledged that transport was an issue within the area but that patients had continued to travel to the Brandon Lane site since the branch surgery closed.

Those in attendance also acknowledged the rationale to consolidate services at the main site and agreed that the branch surgery was not cost effective to run. The consultation lasted about 20 minutes as the group raised no objections to the practice applying to the PCT to permanently close the branch surgery at Ushaw Moor and were happy with the consultation that had taken place.

Second Consultation

Councillors were invited to a second consultation meeting on 19 May 2009. Parish councillors were also identified and invited to attend. Posters advertising the event were placed in Ushaw Moor cricket club, W Smith Chemists, Deerness sports centre, Co-op Brandon, St Josephs Church, St Johns, Meadowfield sports centre, the surgery and corner shop. Invites were also given to primary care trust commissioners, Jeremy Brock Health and Scrutiny Liaison manager and Verna Fee, Head of Patient Carer and Public Engagement.

Councillor Phillip Stoddart and Councillor John Turnbull attended this consultation and met with Dr Khan, Dr Oliver and the practice manager. Dr Khan provided the background as to how the branch surgery came into being. Capacity issues were discussed and Dr Khan confirmed that the other surgery in Ushaw Moor had been consulted and they did have the capacity to take any patients wanting to move. Dr Oliver confirmed that the practice boundaries were not changing and therefore any patients wanting to register at Brandon Lane surgery in future could do so.

Councillor Stoddard and Councillor Turnbull stated that they had no objections to the practice applying to permanently close the branch surgery and that they had received no objections from patients and local residents.

All parties noted that despite the proactive advertising of the consultation events that there had been a lack of attendance by the community that the practice serves. There were no further questions or issues raised at this event.

Other considerations

Other stakeholders including GP practice and pharmacists, were consulted the results of which gave no objection to the practice applying to close the branch surgery. The PCT also consulted with RSVP North East to look at the potential of extending the service to include Ushaw Moor and Brandon Lane.

Conclusion

The consultations have demonstrated that the temporary closure of the branch surgery at Arthur Street, due to the flood damage, has proved to have little or no impact upon the local community and minimal effect upon patients that had previously attended the branch surgery.

It has also been demonstrated that the benefit of being able to consolidate the services onto one site has improved access and service provision for all patients registered with the practice.

The practice has also addressed transport issues by making patient services much more accessible to patients travelling from Arthur Street by aligning surgery times to fit in with bus times for patients travelling to Brandon Lane.

Recommendation

The board is requested to approve the application from Dr Khan to close the branch surgery at Arthur Street in Ushaw Moor with immediate effect.

Appendix 2

Contact: Jeremy Brock
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Your ref:
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8 October, 2009

Dear Mr Britton

Re: Practice request to close branch surgery: Arthur Street Branch Surgery, Ushaw Moor

I am writing in response to your letter of 23 September 2009 in respect of the above request. I have considered the information you have provided to us and note that this was initially discussed with the committee in January when it requested further consultation with patients and the public.

We are satisfied that sufficient consultation has now taken place and that steps have been taken to address issues arising during the consultation.

In taking forward formal closure of the surgery we would emphasise the importance of promoting the availability of the Deerness transport service to patients who will now need to travel further as a result.

We would also wish to request that in cases where proposals of this nature are proceeding this committee is notified at the earliest opportunity. In particular the committee will be interested in the extent of engagement and consultation with service users and how the outcomes of the consultation are to be addressed.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Chaplow".

CLlr Jean Chaplow,
Vice Chair, Adults Well Being and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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