

Chief Executive's Office

Outline Brief on the new GP Health Centre

This paper outlines a summary of the proposed primary care procurement of West Kent PCT (WKPCT) as part of the national Equitable Access to Primary Medical Care Services programme.

We propose to develop a 3 GP health centre which will be open from 08.00 to 20.00, seven days a week. It will provide a range of services that will be similar to most GP surgeries for patients who register with the practice, and it will also offer a range of walk-in services for non-registered patients.

The PCT has not yet determined the specific site but we propose to locate the new centre in the north of West Kent where it will serve new residents moving into the Kent Thameside development and the Dartford area.

This location has been decided on by the Evaluation Group overseeing the procurement, after taking into account the PCT's public health needs assessment which clearly identifies this area of population growth as the part of West Kent most in need of the services that the new health centre will provide.

Members of the Evaluation Group have discussed this with the Local Medical Committee and local GPs in Dartford, Gravesham & Swanley who are supportive of the location and objectives of the new health centre.

The Evaluation Group includes representatives from the Local Medical Committee, local GPs, local borough councils, social services, and the Health Network, West Kent PCT's panel of members of the public who are helping the PCT to improve and develop services. It will be involved throughout the procurement process, and will carry out the evaluation of the final bids, making a recommendation to the PCT's Board.

This new health centre will not replace any of the existing GP practices and we do not anticipate any adverse impact on existing GP services. We have received expressions of interest from a number of local practices interested in providing this new facility. Some groups of local GPs have teamed up with private sector developers to bid jointly, which means there is not always a clear distinction between public and private sector bids.

Additional funding for this project has been included in the PCT annual allocation, as it has for all PCTs, as this is a national initiative. At this stage it is not possible to determine whether this will cover the whole cost, but as the population increases, the PCT budget will be increased, over time, to cover the costs of the new residents.

The objectives of the new health centre are to increase the capacity of primary care facilities, increase the choice for patients and encourage innovation in service provision. This initiative is also an important stage in the way that WKPCT will reduce health inequalities and put much greater emphasis on health promotion.

The Public Health Strategy Priorities for WKPCT are to:

- Reduce inequalities
- Improve mental health and well being of children
- Reduce teenage pregnancies and improve sexual health of young people
- Improve lifestyles of the adult population
- Increase the number of older people supported to live at home and in the community
- Reduce drug and alcohol misuse.

It is possible that the new health centre will be located at a site in the Thames Gateway development area, near Ebbsfleet, that has been designated for a health facility. A final decision on the site for the health centre will only be made when we have been out to tender and agreed a preferred partner for this development.

WKPCT has produced a Project Specifications summary that will be developed in discussion with potential bidders, the local population and other interested bodies as the procurement process progresses. WKPCT sees this specification as a minimum standard and is keen to discuss innovation, in terms of service delivery and scope of services.

The procurement process has been developed by the Department of Health to ensure that there is a level playing field.

As well as involving a range of key stakeholders in the development of the project, the PCT has specified that public representation is part of the criteria that will be used in evaluating and scoring the bids.

This is not a national requirement but reflects the importance placed on patient experience and involvement by West Kent PCT.

Bidders will have to demonstrate how they intend to engage patients and develop their plans in liaison with patient representatives. As a minimum, the PCT has specified:

- the establishment of a patient group within the first year of the contract and regular meetings thereafter
 - the production of relevant patient information which includes but is not limited to a leaflet written within the first six months of the contract and which will be regularly updated, at least annually.
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