

Externalisation of three GP Practices

Panel Recommendation

Background

Three GP Practices across Brent, The GP Unit at Wembley Centre for Health & Care, The Burnley Practice at Willesden Centre for Health & Care and Sudbury Primary Care Centre are currently delivered by Brent Community Services.

Brent Community Services served notice to NHS Brent and as such NHS Brent, after a deliberative process agreed that the practices should be put to a competitive tender to source an alternative provider. As the tender was in the 5 week advertisement process, the PCT received a letter from the Sudbury Primary Care Centre, on the 20th of November 2009, declaring that they wished to submit a Right to Request Expression of Interest. The PCT acknowledged this request and acted accordingly by stalling the tender process and alerting the other two practices to this request so that they could also submit and Expression of Interest if they wished too.

Process to date

Over the course of the next 3 months the PCT took the following actions:

1. Sought legal advice to pause the tender process with minimal risk
2. Sought advice from the SHA, the Department of Health Social Enterprise Unit and the Social Enterprise Investment fund to clarify the process and the PCT's recommended actions.
3. Held a meeting with all three practices to discuss this information above and answer any other questions.
4. Amended the Expression of Interest Template to personalise it to Brent and request slightly more robust information.
5. Wrote to all practices on the 22/12/2009 to disseminate the information formally.
6. In the letter above the PCT formally requested one submission from the combined GP Practices, as this would support the PCT's strategic vision.
7. Organised and hosted an informative afternoon session for the practice staff on the 21st of January with representatives from the following:
 - Department of Health Social Enterprise Unit
 - Social Enterprise Investment Fund
 - Leader of existing Social Enterprise (outside of Brent)
 - SHA
 - PCT senior commissioners
8. Wrote to all practices on the 29th of January 2010 with a formal update and answer to queries from this session and other ad-hoc questions.
9. Extended the date for the submission of the Expression on Interest (detailed in the letter issued on the 29th of January)
10. Added guidance notes into the amended Expression of Interest template to assist the practices in completion of the template – issued with letter on the 29th of January.
11. Funded a session with an external and independent facilitator (PCT not present), held on the 25th of February, to support practices in developing a

working relationship – as this was a PCT request. Locum costs for staff covering the Burnley practice also funded.

12. Following feedback from the practices, the PCT agreed to support applications from individual practices, if working relationships could not be developed.
13. Supported the practices on a query by query basis throughout this time.

Evaluations

On the 26th of March, the PCT received two Right to Request Expression of Interest documents. A joint application from the Wembley and Sudbury practices and a single application from the Burnley Practice which incorporated the homeless service they currently deliver.

The PCT Evaluation Panel met on the 29th of March to evaluate both the Expression of Interest's. The Panel consisted of:

- Mark Easton – Chief Executive and Chair of Panel
- Jo Ohlson – Director of Primary and Community Commissioning
- Dr Peter Savege – PCT Medical Director
- Chandresh Somani – Non – Executive Director
- Jenny Greenshields – Deputy Director of Finance
- Sarah Curtis – Observer (non voting)

The panel agreed the following:

- Each question in the expression of interest template was worth equal weight.
- Each Expression of Interest was scored independently of one another.
- The evaluation criteria for question.
- Each question was scored out of 5 (1-5) with 5 being the highest score.
- The final section was pass/ fail
- Each score must be supported by every member of the panel.
- The total number of marks available was 40, with the declaration questions being a pass/fail.
- 60% of the total marks available was a suitable pass mark to approve the Expressions of Interest to the next stage.

The response to each question was discussed against the scoring criteria and a score awarded. The total scores were then tallied and the results are shown below.

- **Total points available = 40 = 100%**
- **Minimum pass mark = 24 = 60%**
- **Wembley and Sudbury Practice Score = 24 = 60%**
- **Burnley Practice Score = 12 = 30%**

The panel also agreed the following key points of feedback on each Expression of Interest.

Wembley and Sudbury Practice:

1. Benefits of the Social Enterprise model were clear in the proposal.
2. The PCT wishes to see the two practices merge onto the Sudbury site.
3. The governance arrangements were unclear but seemed excessive and potentially costly.
4. The aims and objectives section was very robust and in-line with the PCT Strategic direction.
5. Stakeholder engagement section was lacking evidence. A much greater and wider range of stakeholders should be consulted in development of the Integrated Business Plan (IBP) and this should include PBC.
6. The bottom up costs are unrealistic and the PCT expects significant savings to be demonstrated in the IBP.
7. The risk management section was very well structured and covered all major areas.

Burnley Practice:

1. The Expression of interest contained insufficient detail and clearly lacked preparation.
2. The implications of forming a Social Enterprise were not carefully or clearly considered.
3. The stakeholder engagement section was very strong and well prepared.
4. There was little assurance throughout the Expression of Interest that an effective team building relationship was in place, or in development.
5. The costs section lacked detail of the cost of delivering the service.
6. Governance arrangements were not clear, and the relationship between the Burnley Practice and Harness Care Co-operative was not clearly demonstrated.

Recommendations:

1. **The Wembley and Sudbury Practices gain PCT approval to prepare and develop their Social Enterprise proposals into a full Integrated Business Plan. We would expect the business plan to set out plans to merge the practice on the Sudbury site, and demonstrate better value for money than in the expression of interest. The process and timeline for this development will be agreed through a minuted meeting between the practice and a senior PCT commissioner and will require Chief Executive approval.**
2. **The Burnley Practice does not gain PCT approval and an options appraisal for the future of the practice and the homeless service will be presented to EMT in April.**
3. **The Tender process in its current form is cancelled – as this is currently for all three practices.**