



Fens, Hartfields and Wynyard Road Public Consultation

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the types of NHS contracts and what are their differences?

There are three different types of GP contract. These are:

- General Medical Services (GMS) contracts
- Personal Medical Services (PMS) contracts
- Alternative Provider Medical Services (APMS) contracts

The General Medical Services (GMS) contract is the contract for GP practices to deliver services to local communities.

The **GMS** contract was introduced in 2003 and covers three main areas:

- Covering the costs of running a general practice, including some essential GP services
- The quality and outcomes framework (QOF) – covering the two areas of clinical and public health. Practices can choose to provide these services.
- Enhanced services (ES) – covering additional services that practices can choose to provide. ES can be commissioned nationally or locally to meet the populations healthcare needs.

The Personal Medical Services (PMS) contract is a locally agreed contract.

The **PMS** contract offers:

- Local flexibility compared to the nationally negotiated General Medical Services (GMS) contracts
Variation in the range of services which may be provided by the practice, the financial arrangements for those services and the provider structure (who can hold a contract).

The Alternative Provider Medical Services (APMS) contract enables Commissioners to commission or provide primary medical services within their area to the extent that they consider it necessary to meet all reasonable requirements.

APMS contracts:

- Are provided under Directions of the Secretary of State for Health and provide the opportunity for locally negotiated contracts
- Allow commissions to contract with non-NHS bodies, such as voluntary or commercial sector providers, (or with GMS/PMS practices) to supply enhanced and additional primary medical services
- Commissioners can enter into APMS contracts with any individual or organisation to meet local needs, as long as core NHS values are fully protected and secured.

Fens, Hartfields and Wynyard Road medical practices currently have APMS contracts.

Why do we need a new contract for these three practices?

The current contracts come to an end on 31 March 2017. These have already been extended, so we are unable to extend them again.

We have to secure a provider in order to ensure GP services continue for patients.

How will the new contract be awarded?

The contract will be awarded depending on the provider's ability to show how they will manage the contract (from a clinical and service point of view), their staffing plans along with other criteria to judge their capacity, capability and technical abilities.

Why is the CCG conducting a public consultation in relation to the future of the three practices?

The CCG has worked with NHS England to ensure that the quality of GP services at the three practices has remained the same by extending provider contracts on a short-term basis. However, to continue doing this is not possible in terms of continuity of care and financial sustainability.

This is also not supported under the legal terms of NHS GP contracts outlined in the national policy: 'Managing the end of time-limited contracts for primary medical services.'

As this will result in a change to the way the current services are provided, the CCG is consulting the public to give people the opportunity to have their say before it makes a decision.

Have patients had the opportunity to inform the options being consulted on by the CCG?

Yes. In 2014 a survey was sent to all patients, asking them about their experience of using their GP practice and what was important to them about accessing services.

In June 2016, the CCG undertook a further programme of engagement with patients at the three practices to understand their needs and what is important to patients about the way services may be delivered in the future.

2,596 people responded. This represents almost 40% of the patients registered with the three practices.

Will the service I receive remain the same?

There will be no changes to the service that patients receive during the consultation period. Once the consultation has ended, the CCG will consider all the feedback and use this to inform its decision-making.

The way services are currently provided may change once a decision has been made. Patients will be kept informed of the feedback from the consultation, the decision made by the CCG about the future provision of services and the next stages after the consultation period has ended.

What is the patient profile for each practice?

There are currently over 7,000 patients supported by all three practices.

Statistics from 2015 are available which include age range and other demographics.

These are available on the CCG website at:

<http://www.hartlepoolandstocktonccg.nhs.uk/news/projects/fens-hartfields-wynyard-road-project-say/>.

Printed copies can be provided on request. Copies are also provided on the tables at consultation events to inform discussion.

How did the CCG reach the decision to consult on these three options?

On 26 July 2016, the Primary Care Committee agreed on the three options to take forward for consultation. This was decided by scoring against criteria such as:

- Availability of suitable premises
- Affordability to CCG
- Affordability to providers
- Supportive of CCG strategy
- Increased system sustainability
- Public engagement activity

Wynyard Road is included in every option – does that mean that the CCG has already made a decision?

No. Wynyard Road is included in each option as it scored highly against the scenario appraisal criteria (see the question above). However, no decision will be made until after the consultation has finished. Feedback from the consultation will inform the decision-making process undertaken by the CCG.

Who sits on the Primary Care Committee and what is their role in this consultation?

Representatives of the CCG, Local Authority, Health and Wellbeing Board and Healthwatch Hartlepool sit on the Primary Care Committee.

Their role was to decide which options would be most appropriate to take forward for formal consultation with the public.

Why did the CCG not take the option forward for ‘one provider three sites?’

It was concluded that the option of having 3 sites operating under one provider would:

- Not be affordable from a provider’s perspective (this was informed by the CCG’s past experience of procurement with providers, in particular the previous exercise in trying to find a long-term contract for Hartfields)
- Not support the CCG’s strategy regarding general practice (there would be a significantly higher risk of disrupting continuity of contracts and therefore potentially disrupting quality of care to patients at the three practices)
- Add to wider issues that are already known regarding GP recruitment and retention to the local area, potentially leading to understaffing.

I don't have transport, what happens if I have to move to a new surgery and it is not on a public transport route from where I live?

As part of the consultation we are asking for patient's comments and concerns regarding any transport issues. The CCG will take transport into account when making its decision of the future provision of services.

Can the current practices expand?

The CCG has considered the size of the premises and whether they could expand to see a larger number of patients:

- The Fens Medical Practice is not able to expand on the existing site
- Hartfields is not able to expand on the existing site
- Wynyard Road is able to expand its service on the existing site, but has poor parking availability and there is limited public transport in the area.

What do you mean by 'one provider?'

GP provider organisations are private businesses that are commissioned by the CCG to deliver GP services. They operate from the specification and duration of the contract assigned by the CCG.

The options being consulted on would result in one provider delivering services from one or two sites, depending on the decision made by the CCG after the consultation has ended.

Why are we not doing something completely different and designing a different model?

The CCG needs to comply with national NHS policy which sets out stipulations for procurement and contracts.

Should the consultation not focus on the number of GPs at these practices rather than the capacity of the buildings?

We can't just focus on the number of GPs. We need to think about the whole primary health care team which includes professionals like practice nurses and pharmacists.

The national requirement is that everyone should have access to a 'primary care service' rather than focusing on GPs alone, to ensure that patients are given effective care and appropriate to their needs.

Has there been an equality impact assessment on how any changes will affect patients?

Yes. An equality impact assessment has been conducted. This will be refreshed as the consultation progresses. Targeted engagement is also being conducted with groups of people defined as having 'protected characteristics' by the Equality Act 2010.

The equality impact assessment can be found by visiting the consultation webpage on the CCG's website at:

<http://www.hartlepoolandstocktonccg.nhs.uk/news/projects/fens-hartfields-wynyard-road-project-say/>

Printed copies are available on request.

Can patients move to other practices outside of the Fens, Hartfields and Wynyard Road areas if they want to do so after any changes are made to the existing service provision?

Yes. You are free to move to a different practice at any time.

What is the Better Health Programme?

The Better Health programme is looking at how the NHS in Darlington, Durham and Tees can improve outcomes and experience for patients when they need care, especially in an emergency. The programme covers both hospital and community based services.

The programme is being led by around 100 senior clinicians, including hospital Consultants, GPs and senior nurses. Other key partners, including those working in social care services are also involved in the programme.

More information can be found on the NHS Better Health Programme website at:

<https://nhsbetterhealth.org.uk/>. Printed information is available on request.

If you require further information, or printed copies of any of the documents mentioned above, please contact the communications and engagement team on 0191 374 2795.