

ABM University Health Board	
Date of Meeting: 25th January 2018 Name of Meeting: Health Board Meeting Agenda item:4i.	
Subject	Future Provision of General Medical Services
Prepared by	Hilary Dover, Director Primary and Community Services
Approved by	Chris White, Chief Operating Officer
Presented by	Chris White, Chief Operating Officer

1.0 Situation

To request the ABMU Health Board to note and approve the recommendation of a contract variation to facilitate a practice merger with effect from January 2018 between Clydach Primary Care Centre and Sway Road Surgery.

The Standing Orders set out the requirement for the authorisation of goods and services including capital and service level agreements for non NHS bodies. As GP Surgeries fall into this category and the value of the contract is above the delegated limit of the Chief Executive, Board level approval is required. The total value of the contract variation is £1.2m.

The Primary Care Team have been working to support the merger of the Clydach Primary Care Centre and Sway Road Surgery. A project group with membership from the Health Board, NWIS, NHS Shared Services Partnership and both practices has been established. On 13th December 2017, the Primary and Community Service Management Board noted the results of the practice engagement exercise and approved the recommendation of a contract variation to facilitate a practice merger with effect from January 2018.

2.0 Background

In common with other parts of the UK / Wales sustainability issues are being experienced in general medical practices within ABMU Health Board. Welsh Government have produced the GP Sustainability Assessment Framework 2017/18 which has been completed by all GP practices in ABMU Health Board. The Sustainability Framework has been used to RAG (red, amber, green) score all practices and in total there are 5 'red' practices and eleven 'amber' within ABMU HB. (this is made up of 8 amber practices in Swansea, 5 red / 2 amber in NPT and 1 amber in Bridgend). The sustainability framework scoring was however mainly completed in June 2017 and the situation has evolved since then. Across ABMU Health Board, 13 practices have made formal sustainability applications for support covering a population of 84,096.

The Health Board has been keen to take a pro-active approach to mitigate against sustainability issues, which has included the establishment of the practice support

team (PST) consisting of Clinical Director, salaried GPs, Advanced Nurse Practitioner and Service Improvement Manager who provide diagnostic and service transformation support to practices. The PST works closely with the Primary Care team, Medicines Management, Finance and Workforce colleagues to support practices. To date the PST have worked with 18 practices. Additionally the development of a discretionary merger framework and Health Board providing financial and project support to facilitate practice mergers or potential merger discussions is now in place and has been found to be beneficial.

There are acute sustainability issues in Sway Road Surgery, originally a 4 partner practice which, due to recruitment and retention problems, has been down to 1 GP since May 2017. Clinical cover has been supplemented by regular locum sessions, and the employment of additional allied professionals such as a Nurse Practitioner, Pharmacist and Paramedic. The list currently stands at 7548 patients. The practice offers a range of enhanced services. The ongoing situation of a single GP holding the contract is not sustainable. The practice currently the highest scoring practice in the Swansea area on the sustainability framework.

The Clydach Primary Care Centre has 6 GP partners and 1 Salaried GP and patient list currently stands at 10780. The practice also employs a Minor Illness Nurse, Pharmacist and Physiotherapist, and offers a range of enhanced services.

Both practices have overlapping geographical areas within the Cwmtawe Cluster Network and importantly share the same values. Telephone triage is being operated at both practices and Clydach Primary Care Centre is an approved training practice for GP Registrars, with 3 GP Trainees in placement at this time.

A formal sustainability application was submitted to the Access and Sustainability Panel in February 2017 by Sway Road Surgery, subsequent applications were submitted in August and September 2017. The Access and Sustainability Panel were informed that Sway Road Surgery and Clydach Primary Care Centre were in practice merger discussions. Since then both practices submitted their intention to merge to the Health Board, who agreed a one off financial support up to a maximum of £25,000 via the ABMU Health Board Merger Framework.

3.0 Assessment

A clinical model has been developed to support the merger of the two practices, which outlines the following:

The location of the practices will remain unchanged, Sway Road will act as a branch surgery and all patients will be transferred (unless patient choice to move to an alternative practice) to the new **Cwmtawe Medical Group**, using the W98022 code. Additionally there will be no proposed changes to the inner and outer practice boundary areas.

The new practice will have 18,328 Patients. There will be 7 GPs, 3 Salaried GPs (vacancy exists for a 4th Salaried GP) and there will be no change in number of practice staff. The practice training status will continue to offer primary care training to the Vocational Training Scheme GP's / Foundation Scheme GPs / medical

students. Research opportunities will increase to incorporate patients of the former Sway Road site.

Both sites will continue to use the Telephone First Model based on prudent healthcare principles and the opening hours for the new Cwmtawe Medical Group will remain unchanged and will operate Monday to Friday 8.00 to 18.30. The merging of the clinical systems will take place early April 2018.

The new Cwmtawe Medical Group will offer the same wide range of Enhanced Services, as patients currently received across both sites, as both list of enhanced services are the same. All work associated with the Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) will be unaffected and will continue. They will also provide the new INR DES on behalf of two other practices within the network.

A comprehensive patient information/engagement plan was submitted to the Community Health Council (CHC) for consideration and advice. The CHC felt that a four-week information/engagement period would be both proportionate and sufficient. The following plan was agreed:-

- A letter to every household advising of the proposed changes and how they could provide comments
- Included with the letter was a list of Frequently Asked Questions
- A four week information/engagement period where patients were asked to complete feedback forms.
- Two drop in sessions (held on 8th November and 29th November) for patients to ask the GP's directly any questions they may have.
- An email address to allow patients to make comment electronically.

The engagement period ended 30th November 2017, 188 (1% patients) responses were received and the results reviewed and accepted by the Primary Care and Community Services Management Board on 13th December 2017 (see Appendix 1).

As noted in Appendix 1, the main area where patients expressed dissatisfaction was the prospect of travelling to the linked neighbouring practice to receive treatment from a member of the primary care team. Both Clydach Primary Care and Sway Road believe patients have misinterpreted the question. The following response has been received from Dr Iestyn Davies, *"Patients will not be expected to travel to the neighbouring practice routinely. This option may be offered to patients if it means seeing a medical professional in a timely manner. However this will not be forced upon patients and the next available appointment will be given at their desired location."*

4.0 Recommendations

The Board is asked to note and approve the recommendation of a contract variation between Clydach Primary Care Centre and Sway Road Surgery.

To approve the practice merger of the Cwmtawe Medical Group with effect from January 2018; for the main surgery at Clydach Primary Care Centre and a branch at

Sway Road Surgery. Providing improved sustainability for both practices and their respective practice populations.

Following approval the ABMU Health Board Chief Executive Officer is asked to sign the GMS Contract Variation.

Patient Questionnaire Results

- 1. I am generally satisfied/unsure/ dissatisfied about the proposed merger of the two surgeries**
Of the 188, 122 (65%) responded that they were satisfied, 47 (25%) were unsure and 16 (8%) dissatisfied (3 didn't answer)
- 2. I am generally satisfied/unsure/ dissatisfied about the prospect of travelling to the linked neighboring practice to receive treatment from a member of the primary care team.**
Of the 188, 68 (36%) responded that they were satisfied, 32 (17%) were unsure and 88 (47%) dissatisfied.
- 3. I understand the challenges facing the modern NHS and the need to introduce working with allied professionals I am satisfied/unsure/ dissatisfied about the possibility of greater choice and flexibility.**
Of the 188, 128 (68%) responded that they were satisfied, 42 (26%) were unsure and 13 (7%) dissatisfied (5 didn't answer).
- 4. I understand that new services may be introduced as part of the merger exercise for example the ability to order on line repeat prescriptions; I am satisfied/unsure/ dissatisfied about the prospect of using this service.**
Of the 188, 122 (65%) responded that they were satisfied, 29 (15%) were unsure and 33 (18%) dissatisfied (4 didn't answer)
- 5. I understand that there is the possibility of receiving a text message to remind me of certain services on offer, for example a flu vaccination, I am generally satisfied/unsure/ dissatisfied about this.**
Of the 188, 127 (68%) responded that they were satisfied, 25 (13%) were unsure and 29 (15%) dissatisfied (7 didn't answer)

Additional Comments

Only a few patients made additional comments which are summarised below:-

- Concerns around bus transport, cost and connections to Clydach, non-drivers and elderly patients
- No to text messaging as no access to mobile phone, potential to use email as well as texting
- No to online prescription ordering as no access to computer
- Why merge with Clydach, why not have one or all practices come under one in Morriston. Could 2 struggling practices mean only 1 large struggling practice?
- Access to lady doctors will be good, is the decision to merge based on financial grounds or patient satisfaction?
- Will the flexibility lead to extended hours opening sometime in the future?

A specific email address was set up for patients to communicate any concerns, **no** emails were received to the email account.