

5 December 2018 - Partnership Position Statement

Whyburn Medical Practice hand back the Personal Medical Services Contract to NHS England

Background

Partners at Whyburn Medical Practice (WMP) in Hucknall, Nottingham, a large well-established GP Practice with in the region of 12,000 patients, have made the decision to hand back their Personal Medical Services (PMS) Contract to NHS England.

WMP has been operating and providing high quality patient care since 1 April 2009 following the merger of two smaller practices (Byron Medical Practice and Portland Medical Practice) who prior to this had provided GP services in the local area for many years.

Today, as in the past, WMP is regarded as a high performing GP Training Practice supporting the training of many GP registrars, Foundation Doctors and Medical students. The practice was rated as 'good' in its most recent CQC inspection in 2016.

What decision has been made?

The GP Partners at WMP have decided to hand back their Personal Medical Services (PMS) Contract back to NHS England (NHSE) and bring their Partnership to an end.

When will the PMS Contract be handed back?

On Friday 30 November 2018, the GP Partners at WMP served notice to hand back their PMS Contract. The six-month notice period required means that the PMS Contract currently held will come to an end on 31 May 2019.

Why has this decision been made?

For several years, WMP has been subject to a large increase in the service charge relating to the NHS Property Services owned building that it resides in, leading to a dispute. These highly inflated charges and other business issues have resulted in the business becoming financially unviable.

Sadly, because of this, a new GP Partner recently resigned during their mutual assessment period and a GP trainee, who had hoped to join the practice as a Partner on completion of their training, understandably decided to take up a position elsewhere.

Given the wider national issue of difficulties in GP recruitment, coupled with the fact that WMP faces a further two GP Partners retiring in the near future, the situation was felt to be untenable. In essence, the grave concerns regarding the financial unsustainability of WMP, have made an already difficult recruitment situation, impossible and this has resulted in an inability to move forward or plan for the future.

The GP Partners at WMP have tried tirelessly to find a solution to these problems, exploring all avenues, but without success. It is, therefore, with huge amount of sadness that they feel unable to continue to provide a safe, high quality service to their patients. This regrettably has left them with no other option than to hand back their PMS Contract.

What will happen to the registered patients?

During the six-month notice period leading up to the contract being handed back, the GP Partners are committed to working closely with Nottingham North and East CCG and NHS England to find the best possible outcome for the registered patients.

The CCG is keen to find a suitable solution for local patients to ensure the continuation of primary care services at the practice. It is currently working with colleagues at NHS England and WMP to examine the options for the provision of primary care services when this contract expires on 31 May 2019.

What will happen to the staff?

Employment law states that the staff at the practice will be TUPED over to a new contract holder, if commissioned by the CCG. The GP Partners are committed to working closely with the local CCG to find the best possible outcome for all staff at WMP.

What happens next to patients?

At this point, patients do not need to do anything as the service will continue as normal. The CCG will write to patients if they need to take any action. The CCG and WMP will continue to keep patients update through their respective websites.

The CCG is committed to ensuring that patients continue to receive high quality primary care services after 31 May 2019. The process is to explore local solutions that ensure GP services will continue at the practice. This may include looking at procuring a new provider for the practice. Patient feedback and comments will be important in determining the best outcome for the practice and its patients.

Dr James Hopkinson, Clinical Lead, Nottingham North and East CCG says:

“We’re saddened that Whyburn Medical Practice has made the difficult decision to hand back their contract. We recognise that the partners have been facing a number of challenges and trying for some time to recruit additional GPs and other clinicians. We’ve been working closely with them to help address the issues and while we are very disappointed that they have arrived at this decision, we appreciate it is one that will not have been taken lightly.”

“We understand that this will be unsettling news for patients. We’d like to reassure patients that it is our priority to ensure that they continue to receive high quality, safe patient care.

“Over the next six months, we will be working closely with our colleagues at NHS England to find the right long-term solution for the patients currently registered with Whyburn Medical Practice and ensure that any changes take place with minimal disruption.”

If patients have any concerns they can contact the CCG’s Patient Experience Team on:

0115 883 9570 or email: ncccg.patientexperience@nhs.net

You can see the full CCG statement here – www.nottinghamnortheastccg.nhs.uk/nhs/whyburn

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