

## What is a Primary Care Network or PCN?

- ◆ A **Primary Care Network**, otherwise known as a **PCN**, is a group of practices who are working together to care for populations of 30,000 - 50,000
- ◆ The new GP contract of April 2019 asked practices to develop networks with neighbouring practices in their area
- ◆ The PCNs are intended to help practices to offer better access for patients, deal with the demands on the NHS in a more resilient way, share a workforce to deliver care and look after our registered population's health in a new proactive way
- ◆ YHP has effectively been working as a PCN for several years. The government now think this way of organising general practice is the best way to protect and improve general practice. The new contract has offered us the chance to bring the new practices in Great Bridge and Lyndon into our network. PCNs will be the only route for new funding into general practice over the next five years so it is vital we seize this opportunity.
- ◆ YHP was already working with the local hospital trust - SWBT - to help manage the new practice sites which are both in West Bromwich. Lyndon Health Centre and Great Bridge Health Centre are a single practice working on two sites. As they are both near to Carters Green Medical Centre it makes sense to include them in our PCN and soon the new site for Carters Green Medical Centre at Sandwell Hospital will also house Lyndon Health Centre

## What will this mean for me, for my practice and for our patients?

- ◆ The PCN contract asks networks to deliver certain services together for their patients.
- ◆ We have started with extended hours which are provided from north and south 'hubs' seven days per week. This means that our patients do not have far to travel to get an appointment in the evening or at weekends. The north hub is in West Bromwich and south hub in either Rowley Regis or Tividale depending on the weekday.
- ◆ We will soon be expanding the YHP home visiting team to provide services for patients in areas served by these hubs meaning our home visiting team will not have to travel such long distances from their base in Rowley Village to visit patients in West Bromwich.
- ◆ The expanded home visiting team will include a new PCN pharmacist who will work with the team to improve our prescribing to, and care of, people with long-term conditions who are housebound or live in care homes.
- ◆ A social prescribing link worker will soon join our team. Many of our patients face challenges which we as a health care team cannot improve, for example poverty, poor housing, loneliness and isolation, barriers to physical activity and unemployment. Without addressing these challenges they will never be well. Social prescribing link workers can help individuals to improve their wellbeing by exploring their needs and helping them achieve their own goals to improve their situation. Please can you welcome them as part of our team when they start in the next few months.
- ◆ Over the next few years we will receive more funding to bring new physiotherapists, physician associates and paramedics to work in our network as well as extra pharmacists and social prescribing link workers.
- ◆ The investment the government has made in PCNs is a clear sign that general practice cannot continue to operate in the traditional way and gives an opportunity to completely redesign the way we provide care to our patients who come from one of the most deprived areas in the country and deserve the very best service we can offer.

## How can I get involved with this?

- ◆ PCNs will be expected to work with other providers - hospitals, mental health teams, voluntary organisations and the local council - to transform the way we care for our population. This will only succeed if our patients and each of our colleagues have a chance to help to shape new ways of working.
- ◆ We will be create opportunities to get involved over the next few months as well as keeping you informed about what is going on.



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