

## **Digital Solutions in City and Hackney Primary Care – December 2018**

As described in the paper submitted by Dr Mark Ricketts and Richard Bull, City and Hackney GP Confederation has been commissioned by the CCG to explore a range of tools which might support practices to manage patient need more efficiently by using online/digital/phone systems. At present we are exploring with practices the following areas:

### **1 Online Consultation Platforms**

#### **1.1 eConsult Online Consultation Platform**

eConsult is a web based patient triage platform, developed by the Hurley Group of doctors. Hackney has one practice run by this organisation – Allerton Road surgery. eConsult provides for a consistent online offering for practice websites (via GP Web Solutions), which allows them to retain their existing practice website address. Alternatively a practice can create a link to eConsult from their existing practice website. Patients use eConsult to ask for advice about their condition online.

1.1.1 A new, one year contract (1st August 2018 to 31st July 2019) has recently been signed for 13 practices, ten of which are renewals and three of which are new adopters of the platform.

- Cedar Practice
- Dalston\*
- Elsdale Street
- Gadhvi\*
- Latimer Health Centre
- Queensbridge Group Practice
- Richmond Practice
- Shoreditch Park Surgery\*
- Somerford
- Sorsby Practice
- Spring Hill Practice
- Statham Grove Practice
- The Heron Practice
- The Hoxton Practice

\*new practices added

1.1.2 Practices have mixed views about whether this actually helps them or patients. Some practices really rate this platform, others say that it is “clunky” and requires patients to input a lot of information about their need and so there is a high rate of patients abandoning the eConsult process. However, we are discovering that, like most things, the practice has to really own the concept and support it and patients in order to get the most out of it.

1.1.3 We aim to work with practices to drive up the use of eConsult. A meeting is booked with the account manager in January to plan a relaunch of the platform and to discuss increasing the quality of management data.

## 1.2 askmyGP

askmyGP is an online access and GP digital triage system created by a GP called Dr Harry Longman. askmyGP assesses patients when they initially contact their practice to make a GP appointment. The online algorithm is then read by the GP who can process the patient onto the appropriate health professional within the practice, such as a practice nurse or pharmacist, if not relevant for the GP. The GP will respond to the patient by phone or email (depending upon the patient's submitted preference) and, depending upon the presentation, can offer a consultation by telephone, video or face to face.

1.2.1 The following five practices in City and Hackney have signed up to the initial Pathfinder programme which helps practices to understand and reflect upon their demand, capacity, service and efficiency through the GP Navigator suite.

- i. Spring Hill Practice
- ii. Nightingale Practice
- iii. Barton House Group Practice
- iv. De Beauvoir Surgery
- v. The Lawson Practice

Once completed, practices can then decide whether or not they wish to proceed and embark upon the Transform programme which provides access to the askmyGP online consultation platform. Thus far, only one practice has completed the Pathfinder programme. This is a fairly new initiative in Hackney so we will watch with interest.

## 2 **Patient Partner**

Patient Partner is software that integrates with a practice's existing telephone system and the EMIS appointment system, to enable patients to book, cancel or check an existing appointment via the telephone, 24/7, without speaking to the reception staff.

2.1 The following five GP practices in City and Hackney are currently offering Patient Partner:

- i. Cranwich Road Surgery
- ii. Hoxton Surgery
- iii. Lawson Practice
- iv. Lower Clapton Health Centre
- v. Stamford Hill

The following eleven practices have placed an order for it to be installed:

- i. Beechwood Medical Centre
- ii. Clapton Surgery
- iii. De Beauvoir Surgery
- iv. Elm Practice
- v. Gadhvi Practice
- vi. Nightingale Practice
- vii. Rosewood Practice
- viii. Sorsby Health Centre

- ix. Spring Hill Medical Centre
- x. Well Street Surgery
- xi. Wick Health Centre

The following seven practices have been visited by the supplier and provided quotes:

- i. Abney House Medical Centre
- ii. Allerton Road Surgery
- iii. Cedar Practice
- iv. Dalston Practice
- v. Elsdale Street Surgery
- vi. Heron Practice
- vii. Southgate Rd MC & Whiston Rd Surgery

A further ten practices have arranged demo visits with the supplier:

- i. Barretts Grove Surgery
- ii. Greenhouse Health Centre
- iii. Healy Medical Centre
- iv. Lea Surgery
- v. Neaman Practice
- vi. Riverside Practice
- vii. Shoreditch Park Surgery
- viii. Somerford Grove Health Centre
- ix. Statham Grove Surgery
- x. Trowbridge Practice

Practices which have taken on Patient Partner are very keen on it – it helps patients who do not wish to access the practice via a computer/website/online route and is very easy to use.

### **3 Patient First**

Patient First is an access/appointments system developed by one of our own C&H practices – by Richmond Road Medical Centre, winner of Practice of the Year in 2017 and GP of the Year (Highly Commended) in 2018 for Dr Gopal Mehta. It combines the use of digital initiatives, reception navigation and collaborative triaging and is the particular expertise of Dr Mehta.

#### **3.1 Online Access**

Through the use of patient online services, the model enables patients to arrange telephone appointments with a GP or member of the administrative team 24 hours in advance without having to call the surgery. On the day the telephone appointment has been booked, the patient receives a call-back within 15 minutes of their chosen time slot from the healthcare professional with whom they have pre-booked (GP/Pharmacist/Admin etc.) who will discuss the patient's health concern and manage their needs accordingly (i.e. offer face to face appointment/complete referral/order investigation etc.). If patients aren't able to access online services they can call the main surgery telephone number at 8am and ask to make a telephone appointment with the GP; who will then call the patient back within a 3 hour window.

### 3.2 Reception Navigation

Administrative teams are trained to screen all calls that have been booked online, ensure they have been booked for the appropriate healthcare professional, and re-navigate them if required. Administrative Teams are also trained to navigate the patients who call in to the surgery to ensure they are directed to the most appropriate healthcare professional/member of staff for their needs. As part of navigation, PatientFirst also incorporates non-clinical members of the team in delivery of QOF/long-term conditions outcomes (i.e. booking in the relevant health reviews if required) to ensure this process becomes a core element of initial navigation and every patient contact counts.

### 3.3 One Team

A large element of teaching and training during implementation of PatientFirst is focused on working with practices to create 'one team' – a team that work together and deliver together.

### 3.4 The following five practices in City and Hackney are now using Patient First:

- i. Barton House Health Centre
- ii. Lawson Practice
- iii. Lower Clapton Health Centre
- iv. Richmond Road Medical Centre
- v. Springhill Practice

Three practices are in the process of implementing it:

- I. Healy
- II. Stamford Hill Group Practice
- III. Queensbridge

A further seven have expressed an interest in it:

- i. Athena Medical Centre
- ii. Beechwood Medical Centre
- iii. Hoxton Surgery
- iv. Neaman Practice
- v. Nightingale Practice
- vi. Well Street Surgery

## 4 **EMIS Online Triage**

The GP Confederation have arranged for the provider to do a presentation and demonstration of EMIS Online Triage to a small group, in January 2019. This platform has reportedly improved significantly and therefore could be provide a third option for practices to choose from, in terms of online consultation platforms.

## 5 **City and Hackney Health App/Director of Services**

This piece of work began under the banner of "demand management" and was initially funded by the CCG, but this has now grown and is a central plan of our whole-system work around Neighbourhoods. Essentially, we aspire across the health, social care, voluntary etc system to have a single live Directory of Services and supporting app so that residents, patients and professionals all know what is available and where. This is at the very early

stages of development but might be something that Councillors would like to learn more about.

**6 Evaluation**

We now need to develop a model of evaluation of all of these initiatives. We are talking to the Clinical Effectiveness Group (part of the Department of Primary Care at Queen Mary) to see if they feel they can work with us on evaluation.

**5. Conclusion**

This short paper seeks to give an overview of what we are doing around Digital services in primary care at the moment. We would love to do more!

**Laura Sharpe, Chief Executive Officer, City and Hackney GP Confederation**  
**Peter Sheils, Programme Manager, City and Hackney GP Confederation**