



Section A: **Member Practices' Introduction**

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A total of 49 GP practices across the Dudley borough came together on April 1, 2013, to create NHS Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group (Dudley CCG).

In our first year as members of our CCG we have made some major improvements in patient care. It is exciting that we, as GPs, now feel we can shape how decisions are made in Dudley borough.

It hasn't all been easy and working with partners across health, social care and the voluntary sectors has been a steep learning curve. However, our first year has undoubtedly been marked by significant achievements for the benefit of our patients, of which we are all proud.

During the 12 months since becoming a statutory body, our members and our CCG Governing Body have encouraged each of us, along with our partners, to start 'Thinking Differently'. Together we believe we have made a positive impact on the health priorities of our local community and have laid the foundations for significant progress.

We try to gather opinions from our member practices in many ways: via locality meetings, membership events and an anonymous questionnaire. We know from their feedback that member practices are pleased to have made these steps forward:

Cardiology services across Dudley are being restructured, improved and simplified. A key driver to success has been the improved clinical dialogue between our GPs and consultant cardiologists. We have worked together to create a seamless, fit-for-purpose service for patients, designed to provide a quicker service with excellent outcomes. It is a model of collaboration which is likely to be extended to other services in future.

Urgent Care provision in Dudley is key to good healthcare for our patients, and also allows us to improve waiting times in A&E. Following a thorough public consultation process, we gained approval to change Urgent Care provision in Dudley. Work to model the new service, in continued consultation with members and the public, is on course for the contract to be awarded by the end of 2014. We know that for the vast majority of patients their chosen first port of call for medical help is their GP, so alongside the

Urgent Care developments is the vital work to improve access to primary care.

Improving access to GP services is vital. Although NHS England manages the budget for GP services, we have worked closely with their local area team and, in consultation with patients (including our expanding network of Patient Participation Groups (PPGs)), have implemented a range of measures to improve patients' experiences of, and access to, primary care. More flexible appointments; better telephone systems; and online booking for appointments and repeat prescriptions are just some of our innovations.

Improved information technology. During 2013/14 our membership unanimously supported moving all GP practices to a single IT system for patients' clinical records. This is, as far as we know, unique for a health economy nationally, and is due to be completed by early summer 2014. Introduction of the same system in the new Urgent Care Centre will also be a huge benefit for patient safety and quality of care at all times.

Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) Scheme. Our Chief Accountable Officer, Paul Maubach, negotiated on behalf of all GPs in Dudley a suspension of this scheme, which freed up the time we needed to move quickly to the new systems. This is a mark of the confidence that NHS England has in NHS Dudley CCG.

Achieving financial balance, against a very difficult background of increasing demand, an ageing population and greater healthcare expectations.

Supporting practices to improve systems and processes to impact positively on patient care and closer ways of working.

Establishing new pathways to manage certain conditions such as stroke and diabetes to higher standards, closer to patients' homes in the community.

Improving dementia services in partnership with Dudley Council. In early 2014 NHS England visited to discuss the ground-breaking work taking place in Dudley to improve the dementia pathway and care integration across the borough.



“...our first year has undoubtedly been marked by significant growth and achievements. //”

The service was highly commended in the 2013 NHS Challenge Prize for Dementia

Since our CCG has taken over from the PCT, the level of cooperation between GPs and all clinicians, including secondary care, has improved. There is now more focus on clinical outcomes. We are developing our clinical leaders to ensure better working and understanding between GPs and non-clinical managers. We are also working hard to involve our wider community in many of the difficult issues facing the local health economy.

Our CCG is a transparent and accountable organisation. Our locality and borough wide members' meetings are helping our GP colleagues become more engaged as we build trust and as the benefits of being part of a genuinely clinically-led organisation become clearer.

However, we have all experienced the frustration of being told that we are in charge only to find that because of national policy or guidelines we don't have complete freedom to run services in the way we think would be best.

We also feel that there is still much work to do in making sure that members from every practice, no matter how big or small, are given - and take - the opportunity to play an active part in our CCG.

One of our ambitions is that Dudley becomes a destination of choice for aspiring Primary Care Clinicians at a time when GP recruitment poses a national challenge.

We can see the size of the challenge to come. We believe that in Dudley at least we have the clinical leadership to deliver the best possible improvements in services for our patients, and ensure vibrant high quality primary care.

Dr David Hegarty, Dr Jas Rathore and Dr Steve Mann, on behalf of the members of NHS Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group.



Dr David Hegarty



Dr Jas Rathore



Dr Steve Mann

Looking Ahead

To help us evaluate our successes and highlight areas where we need to improve as a membership organisation, we regularly ask members to share their views in a variety of formats, particularly via locality meetings, members' events and a monthly interactive bulletin.

As a result of their feedback, the next year will see further progress. Key areas for improvement, as recommended by the membership, include:

- Continuing to make innovation funds available to our member practices through their localities, a move which resulted this year in practices working together on integrated working to improve the quality of primary and community care
- Localities to work together to consider the idea of Federation working as a model to support smaller practices and further improve access to primary care
- Additional training and development opportunities for GPs in management and commissioning
- Review of engagement techniques and methods to ensure all GPs and practice staff are well informed and have the opportunity to play their part in CCG activity and decision making
- Develop the role of PPGs further to formally link up with Locality and Borough working models, ensuring the patient voice is heard at every level
- Improve customer service on elective pathways of care
- Invest in the CCG's integration model as a means of shifting the emphasis from hospital-based care to primary and community care which supports public health and wellbeing

The views of members, as expressed in an end of year evaluation questionnaire, are contained in a feedback report in the Important Information Supplement, Section I.

