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Our Ref: AL/DS
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Mahroof Hussain
Scutiny and Civil Services Manager
Derby City Council
The Council House
Corporation Street
Derby DE1 2FS

Dear Mahroof

Thank you for your letter dated 1 April 2015, regarding access to GP services and the work of the CCG. Please accept my apologies for what appears to be a slow reply, but there has been some confusion about whether your letter was received within the CCG prior to it being re-sent following your recent meeting with CCG colleagues.

We have taken the four recommendations made by the Adults and Pubic Health Board following the presentation we provided with NHS England in March and outlined the action the CCG is taking or will be taking against each.

Routinely collect data on the appointment bookings for all practices as part of the performance management process.
General practice has to be accessible, (and believed to be accessible) to the population it serves in order to be effective. It is one of the most challenging pressures for many, if not all, practices and one of the most important things to patients. We have clinically led annual practice visits with each practice and will ensure that discussion about access and appointment booking systems is included in the visits in 2015/16. For these visits we do refer to a 'dashboard' of data drawn from national and local sources and this includes the scores on the national patient survey questions about ability to get through on the phone, ease of making an appointment and patient experience. Across the CCG our overall scores on these indicators are above the England average but there is a range across our practices and we will focus on those with the lowest patient rating. It is equally important that practices with appointment systems rated as good maintain that performance. Our review of quality in practices also includes information about complaints and we are also reviewing how we can triangulate other sources of information to create a clear picture of patient experience in our practices.

Identify surgeries with best practice in appointment bookings and disseminate this amongst all GP practices across the city.
One of the opportunities of the CCG as an organisation is the ability to share challenges and solutions across practices through our locality groupings and practice manager forums where representatives from practices meet together monthly. We will ensure that access to practices and booking processes are discussed within these groups; we will be able to identify best practice from the national survey and local experience.

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Routinely monitor customer complaints for all surgeries as part of their performance management responsibility.
The CCG has implemented a quality service specification with all practices which, amongst other things, requires reporting of numbers of complaints and a demonstration of evidence of learning from complaints and also incidents. This is in addition to national returns which are now also required. As noted above, we are also reviewing other sources of intelligence about patient experience to ensure we can spot themes across all service providers where patients could be receiving an improved service.

Enable GP surgeries to work together and sharing premises where appropriate to provide comprehensive access to GP services.
The CCG supports practices to meet with neighbouring practices to consider the opportunities to work more closely together to ensure more resilient services. Nationally there is an infrastructure fund to provide resources for premises development and we are encouraging practices to consider their needs and prepare bids against this fund.

We continue to look to ways in which we can support practices to improve their performance and to learn from those who are performing well. The CCG is in the process of developing its plan to help practices meet the challenges faced by rising demand and workforce constraints in line with our new delegated responsibilities for commissioning primary care services and will be discussing this with our practices in the coming months.

Yours sincerely

Andy Layzell
Chief Officer

cc Jonathan Rycroft,Head of Primary Care Commissioning, NHS England
Councillor Paul Pegg, Chair Adults & Public Health Board
Councillor Jangir Khan