

# General Practice Access Plan

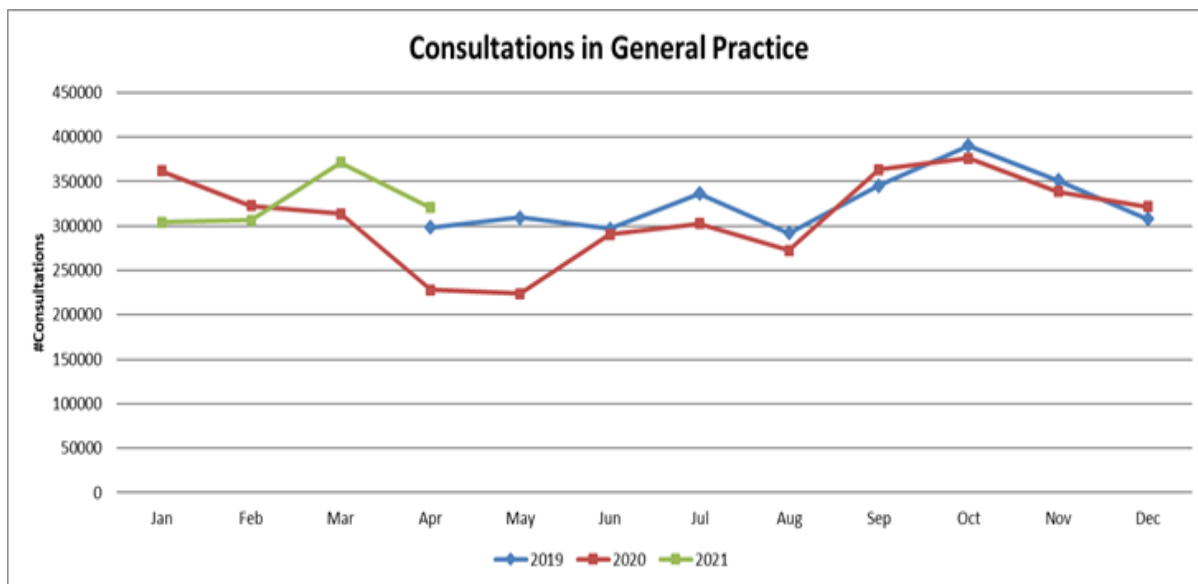
## Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent

4<sup>th</sup> June 2020

# Context



- All GP practices offer appointments during their core opening times of 8.00 am to 6.30 pm Monday to Friday. Other extended hours and out of hours services are offered outside these times.
- Since the COVID pandemic in March 2020, GP practices have remained open and delivering appointments in a different way operating a total triage model of remote consultations alongside face to face following triage and where clinically appropriate. This model was in line with the NHS England Standard Operating Procedure and was to ensure that patients were still receiving safe access to general practice whilst protecting staff and the public in terms of the risk of infection.
- Consultations during this time has been variable and currently in comparison to the same time last year and the previous year before that, consultation rates are higher as at April 2021.



	Consultations				
Month	2019	2020	2021	2019 to 2020 Variance	2019 to 2021 Variance
Apr	298,125	227,930	320,673	-24%	8%

- 8% year on year growth in SSOT
- 22,000 additional appointments in April 21
- 2 additional surgeries per week per practice

# Key drivers



- Pent up demand
- Patients are used to same day emergency appointments during lockdown and are not prepared to wait for a few days for an appointment
- Social distancing in the waiting room and PPE donning and doffing have reduced capacity
- 111/DNS handover problems in the afternoon when all capacity used
- Due to the backlogs, patients think going to A&E will promote them up the list for investigations such as bloods and x-ray, even surgery
- Variability among practices, particularly in deprived and diverse communities
- Lack of communication around the role of other health professionals as people tend to want to see the GP
- Longer waits on the phone due to the large volume of vaccine queries
- Duplication from total triage

# Activities/actions put in place during the pandemic to support general practice access



- Quality quarterly dashboard reviews continued to examine data and soft intelligence and hold targeted conversations with practices where access is a potential issue
- Supported practices to move to a total triage model and providing IT equipment and advice/guidance for remote working solutions
- Continue to deliver extended access (at least 30 appointments per 1000 registered patients) and extended hours as part of the PCN DES (PCN delivery of 30 appointments per 1000 registered patients) some of which has been utilised to support the delivery of COVID vaccinations
- Ensuring all practices and PCNs have robust business continuity and resilience plans to support accessibility in the event of outbreak management
- System wide People Hub (workforce bank) set up to support practices if they require additional staff due to shielding or self-isolation
- GP appointment dashboard developed to support system intelligence on activity levels during the pandemic.

# Examples of new workforce roles in PCNs and practices

225 WTE additional roles since ARRS introduced in July 2019



Social prescribing link workers

- Grow capacity
- Supports current workforce shortages
- Supports PCN specification delivery



First contact physiotherapists



Clinical Pharmacists



Mental Health Practitioners



# Key actions already in place to support general practice access



- Weekly access summit meeting in place – Primary Care, communications, clinical leads
- Communications for general practice access project group in place to drive key operational actions
- Communications and access working group with general practice and patient representatives
- Communications general practice action plan developed
- Key documents from NHSE shared with practices including General practice COVID SOP, access letter, toolkits, other guidance
- Short term solution regarding phone line capacity via MS Teams offered out
- Close review of consultation dashboard data

# Detailed action plan for general practice access



Action Area No.	Action Area
1	Communications
2	Access Improvement Programme (Time for care)
3	Record keeping
4	Digital solutions
5	Quality, variation and resilience
6	Training and development
7	Workload initiatives

# Action area 1 - communications

Action	Target date	Responsible	Notes
General practice access communications plan in place	May 2021	Communications Team	Plan in place – see details below
Communications general practice access project group in place	January 2021	Primary Care/Communications/Clinical Representation	Complete – project group in place
Communications general practice access working group in place with general practice and patient representatives to develop and deliver key actions	March 2021	Primary Care/Communications/Clinical	Complete – Working group in place
Online survey to gather information from general practice staff (receptionists) on perceived challenges and barriers for patients	July 2021	Primary Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practice representatives on the working group are using the survey and will feedback themes and trends for informing training and development</li> </ul>
Patient information and education campaign: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share help us to help you campaign</li> <li>Share NHSE access toolkit</li> <li>Develop local messages to raise awareness of extended workforce</li> <li>Develop local messages about alternatives to general practice</li> <li>Develop social media support including a masterclass on communicating with patients via these channels</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Communications/Primary Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NHSE campaigns and toolkits circulated and promoted</li> <li>Local messages being worked on with a steer from the working group</li> </ul>
Review existing feedback from patients via Healthwatch, NHSE desktop review, listening events	Ongoing	Communications/Primary Care	Mapping relevant actions to the communication campaigns as described above



## Action area 2 – Access Improvement Programme (Time for Care)



- Programme to target practices with greatest access challenges
- Build understanding of demand, make best use of workforce, implement new pathways as appropriate, strengthen and expand onward referrals to other services, implement change and measure impact
- Funding attached to support
- Outside of CCG control and influence – this is being fully led via the Time for Care Team

Action	Target date	Responsible	Notes
Gather outcomes of the Access Improvement Programme when available	TBD	Primary Care	
Share learning from the Access Improvement Programme when available	TBD	Primary Care	

# Action area 3 – Record keeping

Action	Target date	Responsible	Notes
<p>Develop an access audit checklist as a supportive and appreciative enquiry mechanism.</p> <p>To incorporate practices considering the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How different communication needs are addressed and adapt the methodology of communication accordingly.</li> <li>• How patients are asked for their preferred methods of communication either at registration, appointments, proactively asking</li> <li>• How to better record and identify patients with additional needs such as carers, language support, disability support</li> <li>• How they meet the needs of patients that require reasonable adjustments and support such as alternative communication methods, health and safety, signs, seating, outside space and car park, personal facilities</li> </ul> <p>Also include equality and diversity to the access checklist</p>	July 2021	Primary Care	<p>Access audit checklist to be developed as a supportive tool for practices but to inform what future support and guidance may be required. To work closely with the LMC on what this should look like.</p>

# Action area 4 – Digital Solutions

Action	Target date	Responsible	Notes
Review solutions around telephones due to the increased use of telephone consultations	July 2021	Primary Care/Digital team/Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MS Teams DDI lines being provided (1 per 2500 patients) – 67 currently requested</li> <li>Examine how we support practices with phone messages including language and tone (consistent messages)</li> <li>Telephone audit underway with some practices</li> </ul>
Support practices to re-examine delivery models considering the productivity around telephone triage then face to face which may be impacting capacity – link to GP appointment guidance	Ongoing	Primary Care/Digital team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Links to the digital work with practices underway</li> </ul>
GP practice websites – up to date information, how to book appointments	July 2021	Primary Care/Digital Team/Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include in access audit checklist</li> <li>Consider spot check audits</li> </ul>
Improved communication and utilisation of digital support methods for appointments and prescriptions including patient access, EPS and NHS APP	Ongoing	Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include as part of the communications messages</li> </ul>
To work with practices on the new GP appointment classification guidance	June 2021	Primary Care/Data Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GP appointment classification shared with practices</li> <li>Additional simplified guidance provided by data quality team and primary care on choosing correct consultation types and changing consultation type mid-session where appropriate</li> </ul>
Share guidance on good record keeping for remote consultations including video and obtaining photographs	TBD	Primary Care/Digital Team	To examine what guidance is already available. Link to the NHSE COVID general practice SOP

# Action area 5 – Quality, variation and resilience

Action	Target date	Responsible	Notes
Continue to discuss practice level intelligence regarding access as part of quality dashboard reviews and target and support those practices (linking to other actions as appropriate)	Ongoing	Primary Care	
Continue to review practice level consultation data and attendances/admissions at emergency portals to identify unwarranted variation and provide targeted conversations to those practices identified	Ongoing	Primary Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate as part of quality visit programme</li> </ul>
Support practices to review resilience and business continuity plans	July 2021	Primary Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plans were reviewed during covid – to support practices and PCNs revisit these</li> </ul>
Work with practices on PPG engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Circulate PPG toolkit development by Communications Team</li> <li>Stocktake of PPGs</li> <li>Identify any further support</li> </ul>	August 2021	Primary Care/Communications Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Toolkit sent</li> <li>Stocktake underway</li> </ul>

# Action area 6 – Training and development

Action	Target date	Responsible	Notes
Examine call handling training for receptionists	June 2021	Primary Care	
Examine resilience training and dealing with challenging patients training	June 2021	Primary Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Resilience training for practice managers has been taking place</li></ul>
Utilise the outcomes of the receptionist survey to identify any further training and development that may be required	July 2021	Primary Care	

# Action area 7 – Workload

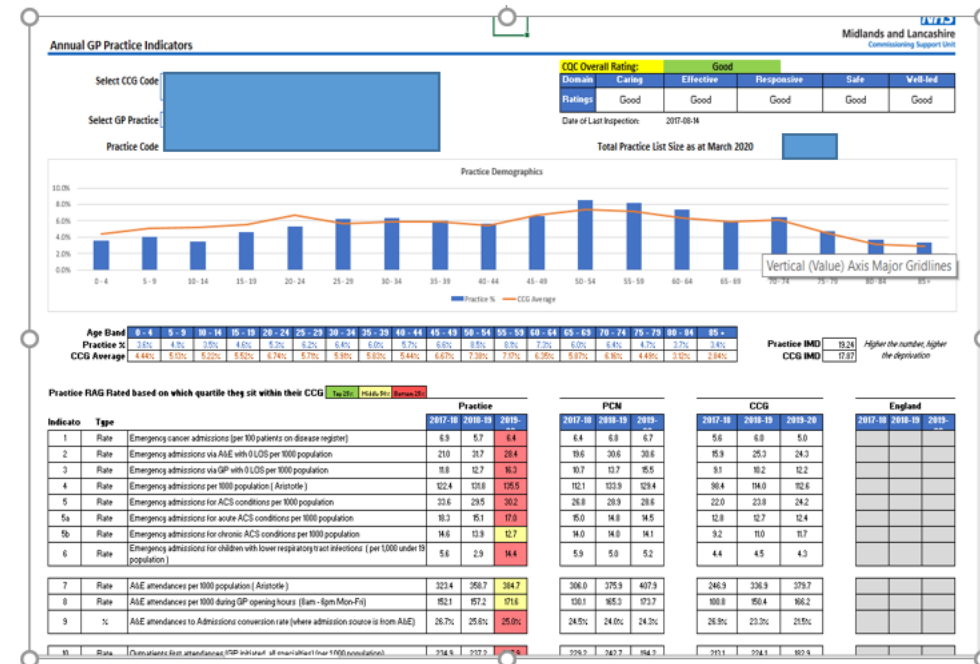


Action	Target date	Responsible	Notes
Reinvigorate care navigation and active signposting	Ongoing	Primary Care	Package of support in place for care navigation and active signposting as part of GPFV (final year funding was 2020/21)
GP referral to community pharmacists scheme to be developed	Ongoing	Primary Care/LPC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Working with LPC to develop this referral service</li></ul>

# How will we know we are making progress?

## Example 360 report

- Primary care data sets from ICS, ICP down to clinician level
- Website to 'house' the data sets which can be easily accessible to clinicians, practices, PCNs and ICPs and kept up to date
- A comprehensive educational suite to support clinicians with development and keeping up to date.



- 3 year trends
- Practice, PCN, CCG, England benchmarking
- Demographics
- 61 indicators