



Paper No. SET/30/23	
	Tick One ✓
For discussion	✓
For approval	
For noting	

Date of Trust Board Meeting: Wednesday 22 February 2023

Agenda Item: 9.7 - Provision of GMS Services to the Patients of Springhill / Priory Practice

1.0 Introduction

On 20 January 2023, the Department of Health (DoH), via the Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG), asked the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust at short notice to take on an Alternative Provider Medical Services (APMS) contract in order to ensure the continued provision of General Medical Services (GMS) to the patients of Priory Surgery Holywood, which has approximately fifteen thousand registered patients across two sites (Priory Surgery, Holywood, County Down and Springhill Surgery, Bangor, County Down).

2.0 Background

Strong communication and collaborative partnership working across the Trust successfully enabled the Trust to take on the APMS contract 8 working days after being asked to do so.

Trust Leads worked collaboratively across the system with SPPG and GP colleagues to ensure robust governance arrangements were in place and to manage ongoing risks relating to the development and delivery of safe and effective GP services to patients within a very tight timescale.

South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust assumed temporary operational responsibility for the Priory GP Surgery commencing 1 February 2023.

The Trust and SPPG have joint responsibility for the effective delivery of the project and for any risks which arise as a result of the interim arrangements, with a Memorandum of Understanding signed by both Chief Executives. As a result of the timescales involved and the clinical and operational complexity of the work, this project presents significant risk to the Trust which will require a high level of control and monitoring throughout the interim period.

3.0 Key Actions

In relation to project management, the Trust’s Clinical Director for Primary Care has taken on the role of temporary GP Clinical Lead, supported by the Assistant Director of Primary and Integrated Care and Assistant Director of Planning.

An internal Project Governance and Management Group has been established to ensure effective collaboration and the implementation of Key Actions across a

range of operational and support areas including clinical staff, senior management, Planning, Human Resources, Finance, Estates, Patient Experience, Infection Prevention Control, Pharmacy, Technology and Telecommunications.

The Trust has established joint governance and communication protocols with SPPG to ensure effective partnership working and to closely monitor progress and the management of risk.

A number of significant risks relating to the safe operation of the practice have been identified. The Trust has control measures in place to manage the risks, with robust governance and assurance arrangements in place. However, the residual risk, even with these mitigations in place, remains at a level that the Executive Management Team have agreed to add it to the Trust's Corporate Risk Register.

The most significant risk is the ability to secure adequate GP Cover. Lack of locum GP cover across the region will impact on the ability of the Trust to populate rosters to provide sufficient GP services. In the first instance, the Trust is offering urgent GP consultations only until GP staffing is stabilised and bolstered with multi-disciplinary teams.

The Trust clinical lead is working with DOH, SPPG and GP Federations and colleagues to secure the maximum amount of locum cover possible going forward.

The Trust and SPPG Communication Teams have worked closely together to reassure the community, elected representative and other interested parties.

The Practice Manger function has been bolstered with a Trust secondment.

4.0 Recommendation for Trust Board

Members to be apprised of work undertaken to date and level of risk to the Trust.

Lead Director: Nicki Patterson

Designation: Deputy Chief Executive, Director of Primary Care, Older People & Executive Director of Nursing

Date: 20 February 2023