

03 April 2020

Dear Colleagues,

Firstly thank you for all the work that you are putting in to keeping general practice running in North West London. We are facing unprecedented challenges across the health system and the commitment of our GPs to maintaining general practice has been exceptional.

As levels of sickness continue to rise we strongly recommend that you discuss your business continuity plans with your primary care network and clinical directors to ensure that mutual support and contingency arrangements are robust. This is particularly pertinent with Easter approaching next week.

Across NW London we are taking measures in order to meet demand in the community, support the resilience of the primary care workforce and provide a coordinated response to guidance and requirements from NHS England.

A key part of these measures is an 'in hours home visiting service' model being set up in each borough. This service will take on all home visiting within the borough on the basis that we cannot reliably identify whether or not a home environment is Covid positive. As this is an in hours service it will only be able to function on the basis that practices commit to release staff members for the rota or fund the equivalent cost to cover. This is optional and practices may choose not to participate however will need to continue to provide all in hours visiting for its population.

We are supporting this service model as it will help you and your patients as the complexity and number of home visits in the area increases. Those GPs taking part will have the nationally mandated PPE, support from colleagues in what will be stressful and complex care decisions and functioning IT to make communication between colleagues effective and timely. This service is about the GP community responding together to meet the needs of the population in their area at a time of national crises so we urge you all to take part.

The rotas for the borough services will be managed by LCW (West London, Central London and Ealing) CareUK (Brent, Harrow, Hillingdon and Hounslow) and Hammersmith and Fulham Partnership PCN (H&F).

We know this is a different way of working but hope that it will both alleviate some of the pressure on practices through taking on visiting and support the delivery of care in people's homes where absolutely essential.

With continuing thanks for your hard work,

Yours sincerely

Dr Genevieve Small
Chair NHS Harrow CCG

Dr Mohini Parmar
Chair of NHS Ealing CCG

Dr James Cavanagh
Chair of NHS Hammersmith & Fulham CCG

Dr Annabel Crowe
Chair of NHS Hounslow CCG

Dr Ian Goodman
Chair of NHS Hillingdon CCG

Dr MC Patel
Chair of NHS Brent CCG

Dr Andrew Steeden
Chair of NHS West London CCG

Dr Neville Purssell
Chair of NHS Central London CCG