



News and updates about the planning and funding of local healthcare

Thursday 7 April 2016

Welcome to the first edition of CCG Connect 2016/17



In this edition you can read more about how plans are progressing at Queen Mary's Hospital's new and innovative cancer centre, which will benefit Bexley cancer patients greatly.

You can also read more about our integrated cardiology service; find out about a new procurement Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) and Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA); learn more about how some of the changes we've made to end-of-life care are starting to positively impact those in their final years as well as their families and carers.

You can also read my April [blog](#), where I reflect on some the work we've been undertaking in the past two months. Don't forget, you can also watch my regular vlogs and follow my Tweets.

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Latest news

Plans progress at Queen Mary's Hospital's cancer centre

Two modern radiotherapy machines that will provide treatment for cancer patients in outer south-east London have been delivered to the new cancer centre at Queen Mary's Hospital, Sidcup.

The 10-tonne linear accelerators arrived on the cancer centre construction site on Monday (4 April), in anticipation of cancer service, run by Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Trust (GSTT), due to open to patients in summer 2016.

This is a significant milestone in the £30 million redevelopment of the Queen Mary's site by Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust.

When the new cancer centre opens, most Bexley cancer patients will no longer have to travel into central London for radiotherapy and chemotherapy because GSTT staff will provide these treatments at Queen Mary's.

The cancer centre will also include chemotherapy treatment facilities, and an information and support service for cancer patients and their families, provided by Macmillan Cancer Support and Dimpleby Cancer Care.

Limited chemotherapy is already provided at Queen Mary's but more patients will be able to have treatment when the new cancer centre opens - and radiotherapy will be available in outer south-east London for the first time.

Angela Francis, head of radiotherapy services at GSTT, says: "We have worked with patients and healthcare professionals in south-east London over a number of years to bring treatment nearer to where patients live.

"The arrival of the linear accelerators at Queen Mary's is a really exciting milestone in the development of our new Cancer Centre which will benefit many local people."

Ben Travis, Acting Chief Executive of Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust, adds: "The new cancer centre is part of our plans to develop Queen Mary's into a vibrant, modern hub for healthcare for the local community. This is one step in an exciting journey for the hospital."



NHS Bexley CCG rated the 'best in London at detecting and controlling hypertension'

Last month, NHS Bexley CCG was recognised by the London Hypertension Leadership group - led by NHS England and public health specialists at London Borough of Enfield - as being the best in London at detecting and controlling hypertension.

High blood pressure is one of the leading causes of premature death and disability in England. Half of all strokes and a quarter of renal failure are associated with hypertension and hypertension costs the NHS £2 billion per year.

Bexley Medical Group GP and NHS Bexley CCG clinical lead for cardiology, Dr Kosta Manis said: "Being recognised for detecting and controlling hypertension is great news for Bexley residents. The sooner patients have their blood pressure checked; the quicker healthcare professionals can detect any problems.

"Your heart pumps blood around your body to deliver energy and oxygen. A certain amount of pressure in your blood vessels is needed to do this. However, if there is too much pressure in your blood vessels, it puts extra strain on your arteries and heart, which can lead to serious conditions such as a heart attack, heart failure, kidney disease, stroke and even dementia."

As a major cause of adult mortality in Bexley, the CCG has focused its efforts on cardiology services and in 2014, awarded Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust (GSTT) with a contract to deliver all cardiac community and hospital care.

Speaking of the integrated cardiology pathway, which Dr Manis supported to put in place, said: "Our innovative cardiac pathway enables us to look at cardiology services as a whole. Hypertension is seen as one of several markers of the whole disease group under the general heading 'cardiology'. Increased education for GPs, access to community cardiology specialists for advice and readily available 24-hour blood pressure monitoring, and investing in providing blood pressure machines into every GP practice, has helped the CCG to achieve this rating.

"We really have sought to embed a patient-centred quality service. This announcement proves that our integrated approach to cardiology is

benefiting Bexley patients."

Dr Gerry Carr-White, clinical lead for cardiology at GSTT said: "It's crucial that hypertension is identified and treated as quickly as possible. Through raising awareness and designing clear clinical pathways for patients who are found to have hypertension, we're working to ensure that patients receive prompt care for keeping their hearts healthy.

"The integrated service brings important benefits to patients. It's an excellent joint working partnership between primary and secondary care and it's great that this approach is being recognised as a success."



Local services

Improved end-of-life care in Bexley

In 2014, NHS Bexley CCG's governing body approved a business case, which set out a plan to help improve end-of-life care services for residents in the borough.

The business case addressed five key areas:

- Increasing the ability for patients to be supported to die at home
- Giving patients more control and to make their own decisions through better care planning
- Preventing patients from being admitted to hospital unnecessarily in the last 12 months of their life
- Increasing bereavement support services for families and carers
- Increasing the knowledge and skills around end-of-life care with GPs
- Since 2014, the CCG's ambitions have been realised through the introduction of different approaches to improve the quality of end-of-life care. This has included:
 - Investment (£234, 589) in education, to help up-skill the community nursing workforce
 - Increasing the capacity of staff out-of-hours, in line with findings that many end-of-life patients were admitted out-of-hours
 - Recruiting of an end-of-life care administrator to embed a new electronic end-of-life record within a database system used by hospital and community clinicians - joining-up care and giving clinicians access to real-time data
 - Utilising funds from the CCG's Primary Care Innovation Fund (PCIF) to ensure patients and their families/carers are involved in the planning of their care and wishes for the last years of their life - this funding will be made available again in 2016/17
 - Investing in community bereavement support services providing both one-to-one and group sessions for family members and carers who have lost a loved one - more than 300 residents benefitted from this service between April and December 2015
 - Supporting patients and their families/carers to decide where they would like to spend their final days - the CCG has seen a reduction in the number of end-of-life care patients dying in hospital

Part of the business case was clear on the need for training, education and awareness. Dr Winnie Kwan, Crook Log GP and the CCG's cancer and palliative care clinical lead, has led the way in this area. Many events have taken place over the last few years, including a partnership event in September, which saw GPs, palliative care teams, consultants and nurses come together to help to establish a vision for end-of-life care in Bexley and

Greenwich.

Dr Kwan, said: "Death is simply the inevitable end-point of our life journey in this world. We can choose to plan ahead as to how we wish to be cared for towards the end of life and make our wishes known to those involved in our care. The planning may make it easier for those we leave behind - giving them direction and enabling them to cope better. I'm proud that we're engaged in best practice in Bexley, and it is our priority and privilege to deliver care and compassion in end-of-life care."



News in brief

Our Healthier South East London update

Download the latest edition of the [Our Healthier South East London newsletter](#), which includes information about how patients have been involved in the next stage of examining the ideas to improve orthopaedic services. There is also a focus on maternity services and what could be done to improve them.



Best practice

Procuring Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) and integrated advocacy services

NHS Bexley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) commissions a series of mental health services for Bexley residents.

One mental health service the CCG commissions is talking therapies. Talking therapies are most commonly used to treat anxiety and depression but can be useful for other mental health problems.

The CCG refers to talking therapies as Increasing Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT). Currently, IAPT services are provided by the MIND in Bexley. The contract the CCG has in place with MIND ends on 31 March 2017.

To ensure the IAPT service accessed by local people remains of high-quality, meets the needs of users and provides value for money, the CCG is starting a procurement process to ensure a provider is in place by 31 March 2017.

This also gives the CCG and people who access IAPT services, the opportunity to enhance the service. This will help to ensure residents get the support and care they need.

The CCG is also undertaking a separate procurement for an Independent Mental Health Advocacy (IMHA), which provides mental health support to patients needing inpatient care. London Borough of Bexley also commissions Care Act advocacy (helping people understand information, say what they want and what they need) and it is intended that this, together with IMHA, will be jointly commissioned into one contract to help deliver an integrated advocacy service.

The CCG is expecting to award one contract for IAPT, but multiple contracts for advocacy services. The contract award recommendations are expected to be presented to the governing body in November 2016 to enable the successful providers to mobilise services ready for a go-live on 1 April 2017.

The procurements will not affect the care and treatment patients receive. MIND continues to accept GP referrals and treat patients accordingly.



Public health and health improvement

Bexley GPs remind residents to be bowel cancer aware

April is bowel cancer awareness month and GPs in Bexley are reminding local people to ensure they take part in regular screening.

Bowel Cancer is the second biggest cancer killer in the UK. However, if diagnosed in the early stages, it's highly treatable. On average, 160 people are diagnosed with bowel cancer across the borough every year, but regular screenings can help to save thousands of lives.

Symptoms of bowel cancer may include:

- A change in bowel habits lasting three weeks or more
- Bleeding from the bottom
- Blood in poo
- Extreme tiredness for no obvious reason
- Unexplained weight loss

The chair of NHS Bexley CCG and Bellegrove Road Surgery GP, Dr Nikita Kanani, said: "Our bowels may not be on the top of our list of things to talk about, but it's important that we do.

"Screening plays an important part in the fight against bowel cancer, because the earlier the cancer is diagnosed, the greater the chance it can be cured completely.

"There are lots of things you can do to help reduce your risk of bowel cancer, like trying to maintain a diet high in fibre, for example by eating whole grains such as brown rice and granary bread, and avoiding too many processed meats, such as ham, bacon and sausages. It's also important to maintain a healthy weight, take regular exercise and stopping smoking."

Older people are most at risk of bowel cancer, but younger people can be affected too. Currently, everyone between the ages of 60 and 69 who is registered with a GP is offered bowel cancer screening every two years. People in this age group will automatically be sent an invitation followed by a screening kit so they can do the test at home.

Currently, too few people with bowel cancer are diagnosed in the early stages. Some people either find it uncomfortable to discuss the symptoms or simply do not know what they are.

For more information on screening and symptoms visit [NHS Choices](#) and [Bowel Cancer UK](#).



Bexley Clinical Commissioning Group

Changes to the CCG's governing body

The CCG bid a fond farewell to its patient and public involvement governing body lay member, Sandra Wakeford in March, who had supported the CCG for three and a half years.

The CCG's new lay member with lead responsibility for patient and public involvement is Katie Perrior.

Katie is co-founder of a communications consultancy based in Westminster. In April last year, Katie was appointed as a non-executive director for the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation, and is their community champion, promoting engagement and involvement with residents as plans for a new Garden City for 100 years emerges. Previously, Katie was a Bexley councillor, where she was cabinet member for children's services. She is also a school governor for West Lodge School in Sidcup.

The CCG has also recruited to its Clocktower locality representative post. Lisa Wilson, practice manager at the Albion Surgery has been successfully elected by Clocktower GP practices as the locality's representative on the governing body. As well as her work supporting the locality, Lisa has been very involved in the primary care working group, working with colleagues on the development of primary care in Bexley.