

Introduction

As I write this, whilst there has been a return to more normal times in many ways, we are very conscious that pressures for practices and for services are greater than they have ever been, with severe challenges relating to staff absences due to self-isolation and Covid infections, at a time when demand is unprecedentedly high.

Thank you for all that you are doing, and for working collaboratively with community based colleagues who are struggling with similar challenges.

When we asked you about this bulletin earlier in the year, we had requests for more information about the Consultant Connect service and that it would be interesting to hear from staff working “at the coalface” – please see our “Day in the life of....” article later in this edition. We hope to make this a regular item – if you would like to be featured, please let us know.

Gary Dover – Assistant Chief Officer, Primary Care and Early Intervention

Contacting us

We have now set up a generic mailbox for queries about primary care issues. Wherever you are in the city, if you have a primary care query, please send it to ggc.glasgowcityprimarycare@ggc.scot.nhs.uk

The mailbox will be monitored daily, and if your query cannot be dealt with immediately, you will receive an acknowledgement and confirmation that it has been passed to someone who will be able to advise you. We will also be using this address to send information and updates to your inboxes.

The housebound flu mail box (houseboundfluvaccinationprogramme@ggc.scot.nhs.uk) will continue to be your first point of contact for flu and Covid vaccination queries.

Consultant Connect

Consultant Connect - a service that provides immediate telephone professional to professional advice & guidance - is available to all GPs across NHSGGC. Clinicians from Acute, Mental Health and Paediatrics are involved, but there are variations across sites so please check your app or practice directory for services available to you.

The Consultant Connect app is available via Google Play and the Apple app store. If you do not have Wi-Fi or a strong mobile phone signal within your practice you can dial in via a landline or mobile by using your surgery’s dial-in number. This number is available on the poster that was sent to your practice. Dial-in numbers are also available from Garry Campbell garry.campbell@ggc.scot.nhs.uk

Two services available GGC wide are - The Medical Paediatric Triage Referral Service (MPTRS) and same-day mental health assessment via a Mental Health Assessment Unit (MHAU).

MPTRS is a dedicated telephone service which is available between 9.00am and 9.00 pm each day (including weekends) to discuss all acute referrals to General Paediatrics at the Royal Hospital for Children (RHC). GPs are requested to phone and discuss all referrals before children are asked to attend the hospital. The average call answering rate is 97%, with an average connection time of 17 seconds.

The same-day day urgent Mental Health Assessment service is

available for patients of 18 years and older who require specialist mental health assessment. Patients who need to be seen soon or routinely should be referred through the usual routes. GPs are invited to contact the MHAUs via Consultant Connect, 8.30am – 6.00pm, with any presenting issues that would benefit from discussion with a senior member of the Mental Health clinical team.

Where the outcome of this discussion is same day referral, the GP can then submit referral via SCI Gateway. The call answering rate is 89%, and answered on average within 18 seconds. If your call rings out, please call back in a few minutes as there is not an engaged tone.

Workstream: Vaccination Transformation Programme

Children’s Vaccination Programme: The HSCP is now delivering those early years’ children’s vaccinations that were traditionally provided by GPs. The Covid pandemic delayed the secondary school vaccination programme in 2020, and this is being delivered along with this year’s vaccination programme.

The teams are co-ordinating sessions with the flu teams in the extended secondary school programme. The extended flu vaccination programme commences in secondary schools this year, with ASN schools commencing in September, and full school roll out from 4th October. This major campaign is a joint effort between childhood immunisation teams and education services.

The pre-school immunisation team will, if needed, vaccinate up to a patient’s 18th birthday, and so can support practices who identify gaps in the immunisation schedule of a young person transferring in to their practice, or one who is immunocompromised and needs their schedule to be repeated.

Autumn Flu and Covid Booster Vaccinations Programmes: To complement the health board’s mass vaccination programme, the HSCP is setting up a core team and admin Hub at Barr Street – led by Ann Marie Jack, our newly appointed team leader. This will provide a more targeted

approach to flu and Covid vaccinations by focusing on adult care homes, house bound patients, asylum seekers, homeless people and other population groups where traditionally there has been low uptake of vaccinations.

Workstream: Community Treatment and Care (CTAC) services

We have been remobilising both Treatment Rooms and Phlebotomy across the HSCP, with a phased reopening of clinic space.

Both services are open to every GP practice, and their patients can attend whichever of the sites is most convenient for them. In the South Sector new Treatment Rooms, open to patients of all practices, have been established within Mount Florida Medical Centre. In the North West Sector, new Treatment Rooms have opened in Plean Street and the Community Centre for Health.

For phlebotomy, please ensure that all blood requests are entered on GP Order Comms to avoid delays and patients needing to be reappointed; if you are able to remind patients to have their CHI to hand when phoning the SPOA on 0141 355 1525 that too is very helpful.

We are very aware that demand for ear care clinics is high and that many patients are understandably frustrated. We are establishing ear care clinics across the HSCP, and appreciate your patience and support as we train more staff in all aspects of ear care. We will update you soon on progress.

We were pleased to welcome Anne Scott as our new Nurse Team Lead for CTAC and Phlebotomy in August. Anne has an extensive background in Primary Care with General Practice Nurse (GPN) experience. Anne will have an important role in practice and service development and her GPN experience will be invaluable.

Workstream: Community Link Workers

The expansion of the Community Link Worker (CLW) programme is ongoing; the procurement process has concluded in six clusters, with contracts awarded to “We Are With You”.

Over the summer 15 practices welcomed their new CLWs and recruitment processes are ongoing for the remaining 26 Practices, with CLWs joining their practice teams in October 2021.

We will shortly be issuing a survey to practices who joined the programme prior to our current expansion to gain learning and provide practices an opportunity to feedback on programme delivery. Across the programme we are encouraging practices to provide space to allow embedding of CLWs who have been home working during the pandemic. Discussions are taking place with practices where there is capacity for additional referrals to be made.

Workstream: Mental Health

Compassionate Distress Response Service

At the beginning of September, the Compassionate Distress Response Service (CDRS), a support service for adults experiencing emotional distress, celebrated the first anniversary of its daytime support service. The service operates from 9.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday with referrals from GPs and their multi-disciplinary teams.

As well as celebrating supporting over 2,000 people, the CDRS was delighted to announce the launch of a new service for young people aged 16 – 25 years. The service supports young people experiencing distress who are referred to the service by General Practice staff, first responders and a range of organisations working with young people.

The CDRS service is operated for Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) by Glasgow Association for Mental Health (GAMH), and it supports Glasgow City residents to manage their distress at their initial point of crisis. This is followed by short-term support, providing coping strategies and signposting where appropriate.

These new routes into the service are being developed and supported by a dedicated Pathway Development Worker. The routes are based on the experience of GAMH's Young Adult Wellbeing Service (YAWS), recent evidence about the impact of the Covid pandemic on young people's mental health

and current research being undertaken by the University of Exeter and University of Manchester on young people's experience of mental health, loneliness and isolation. For more information please contact Ruth.Donnelly3@ggc.scot.nhs.uk

Cross Cutting Issues

Collaborative Learning and Leadership

iHub Collaboratives

Following on from the Practice Administrative Staff Collaborative, sessions focussing on support for "patient signposting" are planned for October. Glasgow City practices will have a choice of two dates, and the sessions will be supported by our iHub colleagues. Please look out for your invitation in the near future.

Communication & Engagement

Primary Care Listening & Learning drop in sessions

In the spring we ran a number of listening and learning sessions, which were well attended by both HSCP and practice staff. We are planning to run similar events from late October to December. These will again provide an opportunity for informal discussion, leaning and sharing, and this time we hope to offer some topic based sessions. Please look out for information about these in the coming weeks.

Survey of Practices

In our response to the [GP survey](#) earlier this year, we highlighted actions that are already underway, and those that we are planning to take, and we are moving these forward. There will be information coming out very soon about support with signposting and workflow optimisation.

A day in the life

Working in a Pharmacy Hub

My name is Chris McConnell, and I am one of the Pharmacy Technicians working in the Glasgow South Pharmacy Hub.



The Pharmacy Hub offers a pharmacotherapy service to GP practices for immediate discharge letters (IDLs)

and clinic (OP) letters, throughout the working week. The hub is Technician led, with Pharmacy Support Workers also in the team. The Glasgow South hub currently has 10 GP practices benefitting from the service, with more expected to join in the coming weeks.

Each morning we remote access into those GP surgeries that are currently live at the hub. We are work flowing IDLs and OP letters through Docman (an electronic document management system used by practices). The Pharmacy Technician will carry out the medication reconciliation and update the patient's record on EMIS or Vision according to the IDL/OP letter. We will then contact the patient to discuss changes to medication and answer any questions they may have. If a supply of medication is required, we will generate a prescription and add it to Pharmacy Hub column on the practice appointment book, for admin staff to print off for signature and then send to patient's chosen pharmacy. We have a log where we record all the IDLs/OP letters which we have actioned.

The advantages of working in the Pharmacy Hub are the peer support of colleagues close by – we are able to speak to more experienced technicians for advice and to learn how they might complete a task and reducing the need to travel to and from different practices. With hub working, annual leave is covered so practices will receive a service across the week. We use our Pharmacy Hub as a “training centre” for new members of staff, where they will learn the different aspects of the role.

Working in the Hub releases pharmacists for clinical tasks in line with the GP contract e.g polypharmacy, clinical reviews, acute prescriptions etc. We don't have a Pharmacist working in the Hub every day, so for any queries we would contact them by e-mail/phone.

There are challenges, too. We have many practices, and each practice has different ways to contact the GP (by Tasks/EMIS messenger/Docman message/e-mail). We are conscious that although we can contact the GP directly we are not seeing people face to face so it takes longer to build relationships.

Overall the Pharmacy Hub is a great working environment, allows a quick turnaround in pharmacotherapy workload for GP practices, and ensures patients receive safe and accurate information about their medication changes.

Getting involved

If you would be interested in becoming involved in any of these work streams, please contact

ggc.glasgowcityprimarycare@ggc.scot.nhs.uk

Do you need further information?

If you have any queries about Primary Care issues, please send them to

ggc.glasgowcityprimarycare@ggc.scot.nhs.uk