



North Central London

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Date: 28 August 2011

Mike Sheriff
Voluntary Action Islington
Via email

Dear Mike Sheriff

Re: Extending Patient Choice of Provider

Across England people have for some time been able to choose which hospital they attend for routine tests and treatments and which GP they register with for primary care services. Since 2010, the Government has been committed to further increasing choice and personalisation in NHS-funded services.

Choice for patients can be about the way care is provided, or the ability to control budgets and self-manage conditions. Providing greater choice is intended to drive up quality, empower patients and enable innovation as well as improving access and addressing gaps and inequalities in service provision.

Additionally, the NHS Constitution states that "You have the right to make choices about your NHS care and to information to support these choices".

Over the past few months, the Department of Health has engaged with clinicians, providers, commissioners, patient groups and voluntary organisations on how best to extend patient choice of provider through the use of an Any Qualified Provider approach.

This will mean that when patients are referred (usually by their GP) for a particular service, they should be able to choose from a list of qualified providers who meet NHS service quality requirements, prices and normal contractual obligations. They have discussed with the various groups what services should be subject to choice, what qualification criteria for providers should be employed, and how the mechanism for patient choice of Any Qualified Provider should operate.

Between them, they have identified eight services to test a phased implementation of extending patient choice of provider, treating 2012/13 as a transitional year, starting with a limited set of community and mental health services.

The eight services identified are:

- Musculo-skeletal services for back and neck pain

Chair: Paula Kahn
Chief Executive: Caroline Taylor

**NHS North Central London is a collaborative working arrangement between
Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Haringey and Islington Primary Care Trusts**

- Adult hearing services in the community
- Continence services (adults and children)
- Diagnostic tests closer to home such as some types of imaging, cardiac and respiratory investigations to support primary assessment of presenting symptoms
- Wheelchair services (children)
- Podiatry services
- Venous leg ulcer and wound healing
- Primary Care Psychological Therapies (adults).

Over the next few weeks we would like you to consider the eight services and identify which three you believe should be prioritised for extending patient choice of provider in North Central London in 2012 and to indicate if you feel other local community or mental health services are more of a priority than those listed.

You may like to consider the following:

- Which of the eight services do you think would most benefit from extending choice of provider and why?
- Are there other community and mental health services locally not on the list that you feel are more of a priority for an Any Qualified Provider approach in order to improve choice and service quality and why?

To help provide you with further details to aid your thinking and discussions, I attach a short briefing document and I look forward to receiving any thoughts you may have on the services you believe should be selected.

If you could send your response to Uche Onyeabo by 30 September 2011 at uche.onyeabo@nclondon.nhs.uk or by post to Uche Onyeabo, Communications & Engagement Department, 5th Floor, Drummond Street Wing, NHS North Central London, Stephenson House, 75 Hampstead Road, London NW1 2PL.

If you would like to discuss this further before responding please contact Archna Mathur, Head of Non-Acute Commissioning for NHS North Central London on 020 7685 6532 or archna.mathur@nclondon.nhs.uk.

Yours sincerely



Sylvia Kennedy
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 NHS North Central London