



NORTH AND SOUTH ESSEX LOCAL MEDICAL COMMITTEES

SPECIFICATION for a LOCAL ENHANCED SERVICE for PATIENTS with LEARNING DISABILITY

Background

The area covered by Colchester PCT has historically had several major in-patient units for patients with learning disability – Essex Hall Hospital, Turner Village Hospital and the Jane Walker Hospital at Wissington near Nayland. These units in their time provided care for approximately 1000 patients from North East Thames region and East Anglia. All these hospitals have now closed and their patients are cared for in small group homes or private residential homes – many of which are managed by the former hospital nursing staff. The local expertise in the management of this patient group has attracted patients from other areas of the South East and Colchester PCT now has a disproportionate number of such patients on local GP lists.

In the past the hospital patients received their specialist care from the psychiatrists of New Possibilities Trust and local GP practices were employed on sessional rates to provide 24 hour general medical care (approximately 1 clinical assistant or hospital practitioner session for each 40 residents). In 1989 a number of residents of group homes run by New Possibilities Trust were transferred to ordinary GP GMS list and additional sessional payments made to cover the additional work involved. These homes have now been closed or transferred to the private sector.

These patients often have multiple medical problems and consult more frequently than the general population. Because of communication and behavioural difficulties, consultations are often prolonged. A few unsupervised individuals make frequent and excessive calls to the primary and emergency care services. Even if they are not always seen, they consume considerable staff time. Many have complex and expensive drug regimes which may distort capitation based practice drug budgets.

Proposed enhanced service:

Maintain register of patients aged over 18 with learning disability – IQ below 70 or severe autism

Maintain register of carers for such patients

Provision of home visits for convenience of carers when medical condition does not necessarily justify visit.

Annual physical check with relevant screening tests for IHD, diabetes, hypothyroidism etc

Provision and maintenance of hepatitis B immunity and other immunisations against infectious disease

Annual sexual health screening

6 monthly review of those patients on 4 or more different drugs

Attendance where possible at routine Care Planning Meetings by a member of the primary care team.

The service does NOT include the provision of an immediate visit by a doctor or practice nurse in the event of an epileptic fit.

Suggested fees:

Basic £1000 per practice providing this service and a fee per patient of 1/40 the current clinical assistant sessional rate ($\pounds 3970/40 = \pounds 99.25$) per annum.