

HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE

Title	Proposal to change the opening hours of the LGT Sexual and Reproductive Health Service		
Key Decision	No		Item No. 5
Ward	The overall service is borough wide		
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Class	Part 1	Date: 27 June 2018	

1. Exclusion of press and public

NA

2. Summary

NA

3. Purpose

This report outlines a proposal to change the opening hours of the Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) Service provided by Lewisham and Greenwich Trust (LGT), and seeks agreement to proceed with proposed changes subject to a staff consultation being carried out.

4. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee review and comment on the proposed changes to opening hours of the SRH service described below including that that LGT proceed, following a staff, but not public, consultation.

5. Policy context

5.1 The services within this paper meet two key principles of the Lewisham’s Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2020:

5.1.1 Reducing inequality – narrowing the gap in outcomes for citizens

5.1.2 Delivering together efficiently, effectively and equitably – ensuring that all citizens have appropriate access to and choice of high-quality local services

5.2 These services also contribute to the following priority outcome:

5.2.1 Healthy, active and enjoyable – where people can actively participate in maintaining and improving their health and well-being

5.3 The services in this report also support the council’s corporate priority of:

- 5.3.1 Caring for adults and older people- working with health services to support older people and adults in need of care
- 5.4 Sexual Health is an important public health priority at both a national and local level. In 2013, Lewisham's Health and Wellbeing Board identified sexual health as one of the 9 priorities for Lewisham. Lewisham continues to experience high demand and need for sexual health services reflected through high rates of teenage pregnancy, abortion and sexually transmitted infections. Contraception and sexual health services for diagnosis and treatment of STIs are commissioned from Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust (LGT).
- 5.5 Under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, the Council is responsible for ensuring the delivery of open access sexual health services in the borough. It currently achieves this through the commissioning of sexual health clinics delivered by Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust. The provision of an easy to access, online testing service will support delivery of these responsibilities.

6. Narrative/Background

- 6.1 In May 2018 LGT put forward a proposal to service commissioners to change the hours of the community Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) service. This proposal is one of the transformation measures put in place by the Trust to implement the Integrated Sexual Health Tariff (ISHT) and the greater use of online STI self-testing services in Lewisham.
- 6.2 The service currently operates from four sites:
- Two core clinics:
- Waldron Health Centre
 - Hawstead Road Primary Care Centre (Rushey Green)
- Two outreach venues:
- Sydenham Green Group Practice
 - Downham Health and Leisure Centre.
- 6.3 Currently the service is available at these sites for a total of 80 hours per week.
- 6.4 The SRH service is currently operating on extended opening hours across four sites, which has resulted the thin spreading of staff resources, therefore increasing waiting times and the number of patients being turned away from services.

Proposed changes

- 6.5 LGT are proposing to make slight reductions in opening times and change staff shift patterns to ensure that there are more staff operating during the busiest times in each clinic, thus improving the patient experience.
- 6.6 This proposal will not reduce the total hours that staff provide clinical services for patients, but will simply concentrate staff time within shorter opening hours, so that staffing is at full capacity whenever the clinic is open.

- 6.7 As part of these changes LGT will begin running an early morning clinic on a Friday, and continue to maintain the clinic on a Saturday, both at the Waldron Health Centre, to ensure opportunity and choice of access.
- 6.8 Changes will be made to staff shift patterns so that all staff start their working days at the same time, allowing for better colleague support, greater skill mix and improved communication.
- 6.9 An increase or decrease of hours will be offered to staff to enable hours to fit within the planned shift patterns. This will vary from half an hour per week to one and a half hours per week. The minimum number of hours to be worked will be 15 hours per week, meaning that two members of staff will be required to increase their hours. Shift patterns will also be changed to ensure that there is always a senior clinician available to support staff across all sites. There will be no loss of staff due to these changes.
- 6.10 Despite these changes resulting in no loss of clinical time and being designed to increase clinical availability they will mean a physical reduction in opening hours in order to better concentrate resources. This will result in an overall reduction of 12 hours of opening time per week as follows:
- 1 hour at the Waldron Health Centre
 - 3 hours at the Hawstead Road Primary Care Centre
 - 8 hours at the Sydenham Green Group Practice. This will mean that there will no longer be an outreach offer available for young people from this site, however the GP practice and other clinical services will remain.
 - No change at Downham Health and Leisure Centre

Increasing access

- 6.11 Overall it is expected that the proposed changes will increase access to the SRH service and improve patient experience through:
- Reducing the likelihood of clinics closing before the advertised time due to reaching capacity
 - Reducing waiting times and the number of patients being turned away by increasing staffing capacity during opening hours
 - Establishing an early morning clinic to increase choice of access
 - Increasing support for staff by ensuring the consistent presence of a senior clinician, increasing the number of staff on shift at one time, and ensuring a greater skill mix amongst staff on shift.

Outreach at the Sydenham Green Group Practice

- 6.12 Notwithstanding the overall positive impact outlined above, the proposed changes in hours will mean that there will no longer be an outreach offer available for young people from Sydenham Green Group Practice. Officers recognise positive patient feedback on the service delivered at the practice. However of the two outreach clinics, the assessment is that this will have less of an impact on patients than removing the equivalent service from Downham Health and Leisure Centre, for the following reasons:
1. The Young People's Health and Wellbeing Service, delivered by Compass, is now operating from the TNG Youth and Community Centre in Sydenham every

Wednesday evening, offering a full level 1 and 2 sexual and reproductive health service. This means that there will continue to be young person-focused provision in that part of the borough.

2. There are excellent transport links to Catford and New Cross from Lower and Upper Sydenham, whereas the Downham site is more isolated in the south of the borough. The Waldron Health Centre, Hawstead Road Centre and Downham Leisure Centre provide coverage of the north, south and centre of Lewisham, ensuring that there is still a good geographical coverage of services across the borough.
3. Data on attendances shows that the majority of young people that use the outreach offer at Sydenham Green also attend other SRH clinics across the borough, and so the assumption is that they can continue to do so. This was reinforced by the results of the patient survey (outlined below).
4. Attendance at the Sydenham Green outreach clinic is lower than at any other clinic.

Greater use of online and self-managed methods

- 6.13 Alongside this, the Trust will continue to increase choice and opportunity of access by making use of online self-testing services for asymptomatic patients. Enhancing the triage function at clinic front doors will encourage and empower patients to undertake self-management, whilst ensuring that those needing to be seen in clinic are able to do so.
- 6.14 LGT adopted the SH:24 online STI self-testing service within the clinic at the Waldron Health Centre in October last year, and in July will transition to Sexual Health London (SHL) – the new pan-London e-service. At this point the service will be extended to all clinic sites.
- 6.15 LGT have been successful in supporting over 2,000 Lewisham residents to access online sexual health testing since October, residents that would have otherwise been seen in clinic. As of this month access will be widened, with Lewisham residents have access to SHL's website, allowing them to order STI self-testing kits directly to their home address without attending a clinic. This will reduce waiting times and the number of patients being turned away from clinics, whilst increasing choice of access.

Consultation

- 6.16 A survey was carried out with young people attending the Sydenham Green and Downham outreach sites. Patients were surveyed over 4 weeks. The results showed that:
 - The majority of patients at Sydenham Green had attended other sexual health clinics in Lewisham or in neighbouring boroughs in the past
 - The majority of patients travelled to the clinics by bus
 - The majority of patients said that they would attend Downham Health Centre if they couldn't attend Sydenham Green, followed by the Waldron Health Centre.
- 6.17 The proposed changes will be subject to a 30-day consultation period, led by LGT, with all staff working in the SRH service. The consultation will not commence until the proposal has been agreed by the LB Lewisham commissioners and the Healthier Communities Select Committee.

6.18 As the changes outlined in this proposal are not substantial, in that they won't result in a loss of staff and are expected to have a positive impact on local residents, commissioners have indicated that they believe a 30-day staff consultation period is sufficient in this instance.

6.19 LGT and LB Lewisham are not proposing to carry out a public consultation on this proposal for the same reason.

7. Options (if appropriate)

N/A

8. Financial implications

There are no financial implications arising from this proposal for LB Lewisham.

9. Legal implications

There are no legal implications arising from this proposal for LB Lewisham. The proposal will not result in any change to the contract between LB Lewisham and LGT.

10. Crime and disorder implications

There are no legal implications arising from this proposal for LB Lewisham. The proposal will not result in any change to the contract between LB Lewisham and LGT.

11. Equalities implications

The Trust has completed an Equalities Impact Assessment on the impact of the proposed changes on patients. The conclusion of this assessment was that there would be a low-moderate positive impact on service users.

12. Sustainability implications

There are no sustainability implications arising from this proposal for LB Lewisham. The proposal will not result in any change to the contract between LB Lewisham and LGT.

13. Conclusion

Summary of reasons for report.

Background documents and originator

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