



Integration Joint Board
Transformation, and Innovation/Futures Committee

13th February 2024

This Report relates to
Item 7 on the Agenda

General Medical Services Update on GP Sustainability Taskforce

Paper presented by Linda Bunney

For Discussion

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List of Background Papers:	N/A
Appendices:	N/A

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This paper is to provide an update on the work underway to address the current pressures and sustainability issues in General Practice in Dumfries & Galloway.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **The IJB Transformation, and Innovation/Futures Committee is asked to:**
- **Note this update**
 - **Invite the Primary Care Development Team to provide a workshop on the work of the GP Sustainability Taskforce**

3. Background and Main Report

- 3.1 General Medical Services in Dumfries and Galloway it is far more precarious now than it has been at any point in the last decade. In the last 7 years there have been 10 resignations of contract with the practices being returned to Board management.
- 3.2 For some years there has been a fundamental mismatch between demand and supply of GPs in Dumfries and Galloway. The number of GPs in training is rising generally, but this is still being outstripped by those leaving the profession. Furthermore, the remaining GPs are working fewer sessions than in the past in order to allow time to pursue other interests or simply improve their work life balance. A recent survey conducted by the LMC confirms this reducing workforce locally.
- 3.3 At the same time, demand for care continues to rise. The average person now presents to General Practice 8 times per year, compared to 3 times per year in the early 2000s. This is multi-factorial, including, an ageing population, deprivation, multi-morbidity and the after effects of the pandemic.
- 3.4 The effect is that General Medical Services in Dumfries and Galloway are incredibly pressurised. General practice is the front door of the NHS, and there are no effective ways of capping the workload. There simply aren't enough GPs currently available, with this position likely to worsen, so we will have to seek other solutions. Whilst it is true that the introduction of a wider MDT is helping, in the short term the issues being faced are so deep rooted and have been in play for so long, it is likely that further practices will fail in the short to medium term.
- 3.5 The Board has recently formed a GP Sustainability Taskforce, co-chaired by Julie White, Chief Operating Officer and Fergus Donnachie, Chair of GP Sub-committee and Local Medical Committee. The Taskforce draws upon the expertise of a number of stakeholders and will undertake a range of activities designed to sustain and improve GP Practice sustainability in Dumfries and Galloway.
- 3.6 The GP Sustainability Taskforce is meeting fortnightly and is working on immediate actions to support in the short term, as well as looking to the medium and longer term planning and service redesign needs all within the constraints of the independent contract model and the 2018 General Medical Services Contract.

4. Conclusions

- 4.1 The Primary Care Development Team together with stakeholders has initiated a General Medical Services Sustainability Taskforce.
- 4.2 The Taskforce will take forward a number of initiatives to support:
 - 4.2.1 GP Recruitment and retention
 - 4.2.2 Education of practice staff in order to promote efficiency and reduce clinical workload
 - 4.2.3 Maximise use of IT to support clinicians
 - 4.2.4 Minimise Primary/Secondary interface issues that cause additional workload
 - 4.2.5 Ensure the principles to the Right Care, Right Place are followed.
 - 4.2.6 Development of medium and longer term plans, supporting service redesign in Board Managed and independent contractor practices.

5. Resource Implications

- 5.1 The activities of the GMS Sustainability Taskforce are additional workload for the various teams involved.
- 5.2 Some of this work will be able to be absorbed, however, we recognise that additional support across the teams participating in this programme of work will be required. We will quantify as the work progresses.

6. Impact on Integration Joint Board Outcomes, Priorities and Policy

- 6.1 The provision of general medical services to the population registered with Dumfries & Galloway practices contributes to all of the National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes for Health & Social Care and aligns with all of the IJB Strategic commissioning intentions.

7. Legal and Risk Implications

- 7.1 There are no legal or risk implications to note.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 The Primary Care Development Team, Local Medical Committee Executive, Directorate of Strategic Planning, HSCP, Human Resources and Finance Directorate are actively involved in this programme of work.

9. Equality Impact Assessment

- 9.1 Not required at this stage, update paper.

10. Glossary

EQIA	Equalities Impact Assessment
IJB	Integration Joint Board
SPDC	Strategic Planning, Delivery and Commissioning
GMS	General Medical Services