

Beacon Medical and Dr A Kumar Proposed Merger

Key points for Primary Care Commissioning Committee

Background

- Both are PMS practices
- Both premises are owned by Octopus
- Both are members of the Panacea federation
- Both are members of the same 'buddy group' for delivery of the chronic and complex enhanced service

Why

Dr Kumar is considering retiring in around three years' time. She wants to ensure continuity of care for her patients. Beacon Medical has undergone significant change in recent years but now has a stable partnership and a new business manager.

Benefits

By merging with Beacon Medical, Dr Kumar will gain:

- Regular cover from Beacon GPs and nurses, instead of using locums. This will enable Dr Kumar's patients to get used to other clinicians before she retires, providing continuity of care
- Access to Beacon's clinical governance structure, such as MDTs, clinical review meetings, patient deaths/new cancer diagnosis discussions, peer support/review
- Support with the increasing workload, such as federation meetings, extended access
- Access to a broader clinical skill mix – eg Beacon's specialist respiratory and diabetes nursing team
- Access to Beacon's administrative team

Benefits to Beacon Medical:

- A larger patient population will allow the development of a more diversified workforce by clinicians developing areas of specialism, or bringing in specialist clinicians, eg clinical pharmacists

Impact

- Improved access and patient choice – either Stirling Medical Centre or Cleethorpes Primary Care Centre (Dr Kumar used to have a satellite surgery close to Beacon and around one third of her patients live in that area)
- Both sites will remain open and operational – there are no plans to close either, although Dr Kumar's practice will become a satellite site of Beacon Medical
- Consistency of provision and approach to a wider population
- Facilitation of the merging of back-office functions, such as telephony, summarising, document management, leading to more efficient workflow, greater efficiency and consistency
- Increased clinical opportunities should lead to improved recruitment and retention, leading to a more sustainable workforce (Beacon is a training practice for nurses, PAs and GPs, so should be able to offer trainees greater opportunities for a career at the practice once qualified)
- A larger practice will also offer more career opportunities for administrative staff
- Strengthening the chronic and complex team structure and, therefore, preventing more avoidable admissions and improving elderly care
- Introduction of e-consultation, online booking, improving continuity and convenience

- Provision for succession planning
- Combined PPG will broaden outreach to patients

Patient engagement

- Active PPG at Beacon has been consulted
- Virtual PPG at Dr Kumar's has been consulted
- Staff at both practices have been informed
- A letter will be sent to all registered patients of both practices explaining the reasons for the merger
- A FAQ document is being drawn up with the input of the PPGs
- Face to face engagement events will be held at both sites offering patients an opportunity to express their views