

HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 20 MARCH 2014

Question Submitted Under Public Participation Item 5

Question from Mr Pickersgill, a resident of Bracknell Forest:

The Health and Social Care Act was delayed to add protection against CCGs commissioning care conflicting with their own financial interests. As many local GPs (including those on the CCG) have a financial interest in "Specialist Services" which offers specialist musculo-skeletal services and this will be a service at the Urgent Care Centre in Bracknell, how can we be assured that there will be adequate safeguards against such a conflict occurring?

Response from Mary Purnell, Head of Operations, Bracknell and Ascot Clinical Commissioning Group

In line with any public body, Bracknell and Ascot CCG have procedures and safeguards against potential conflicts of interest. This can be a particular challenge for CCGs as CCGs are member led organisations, and our member practices are by definition providers of primary health services. For that reason, the measures to identify and manage conflicts of interest are rigorously applied. On a routine basis, the registers of interests are maintained and published on the website <http://www.bracknellandascotccg.nhs.uk/> and declarations of interest are made at each meeting (internal and public). Whenever a change to service is being implemented, and particularly where there is any procurement or other contractual issue, potential conflicts are managed by ensuring that no conflicted member of the CCG participates in the decision making process. Separate registers of interest are kept for those participating in any procurement, including staff and patient representatives who may be supporting the process. This is clearly stated in the Bracknell and Ascot CCG Standards of Business Conduct policy (see attached) and in the Bracknell and Ascot CCG Constitution.

In the particular case of the musculo-skeletal assessment and treatment service currently being procured for the Healthspace, these processes are being diligently applied. The procurement is not yet complete, and no contract has yet been awarded, so no details can be made available regarding any organisation who may have bid to deliver the service. It is hoped that the procurement will be completed shortly and an announcement will be made at a forthcoming Governing Body meeting. The service will not run from the Urgent Care Centre itself, but will be delivered from elsewhere in the Healthspace building.