

Report to: **East Sussex Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC)**

Date: **17th June 2010**

By: **Assistant Director - Legal and Democratic Services**

Title of report: **Improving access to primary care**

Purpose of report: **To update HOSC on progress with the development of GP-led health centre services in Eastbourne and Hastings and the extension of opening hours at other GP practices in East Sussex.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

HOSC is recommended to:

- 1. Consider and comment on progress with the development of GP-led health centres in Hastings and Eastbourne and the extension of GP practice opening hours in East Sussex.**
 - 2. Agree whether any further reports are required by the Committee.**
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1. Background

1.1 Lord Darzi, in his *Interim Report of August 2007 (Next Stage Review of the NHS)* gave a commitment to establishing at least 150 GP-led health-centres (one in each Primary Care Trust (PCT) area). These would provide access to GP services on an 8am - 8pm, 7 days a week basis for both registered and non-registered patients, and a walk-in service. The health centres are part of a wider national programme of improving access to primary medical services, which also includes extending existing GP practice opening hours.

1.2 Each local PCT was given the responsibility for procuring the new health centre for its area through a process of competitive tendering. The contract was to be offered for an initial term of five years.

2. Implementation in East Sussex

2.1 In East Sussex it was decided by NHS East Sussex Downs and Weald (ESDW) and NHS Hastings and Rother (H&R) (the East Sussex PCTs), in consultation with local people and groups, that centres would be located in Eastbourne (within one of the most deprived wards in the town – Devonshire) and Hastings (integrated into the new Primary Care Centre being developed as part of the Station Plaza scheme). A specific location within Devonshire ward for the Eastbourne centre was not identified prior to the tendering process. Instead bidders were invited to propose locations in their tenders.

2.2 The PCTs undertook the process of procuring providers of GP-led health centres during Autumn/Winter 2008. Details of the procurement process were shared with HOSC in September 2008. In February 2009 it was announced that the contracts to run both centres had been awarded to South East Health. South East Health is a not for profit organisation with over 500 GP members and it already provides the local out of hours GP service.

2.3 In March 2009, NHS ESDW/H&R and South East Health updated HOSC on progress. In Eastbourne, South East Health were working with the Lighthouse Medical Practice to establish the centre within Eastbourne railway station, with a view to opening the facility by September 2009. In Hastings, South East Health planned to deliver the service in partnership with three local GPs, to be located on the ground floor of the new Station Plaza Primary Care Centre which was due to open in June 2010. Station Plaza would also

