

Media Release

For immediate use

Date: 20 July 2020

Primary Care during COVID-19

Between April and June 2020, arrangements were in place between HSC and primary care to ensure that all islanders were able to access the services that they required, whether they were concerned about COVID-19 or needed to continue to access routine services.

From the development of the COVID-19 clinic, free at the point of delivery, to providing intensive support within care and nursing homes, primary care have played an integral role in a co-ordinated whole health system response during this unprecedented time. In addition, practices have adopted new ways of working for example the expansion of remote consultations in order to support social distancing and limit the need for face-to-face appointments. There can be no doubt that the Bailiwick finds itself in a strong position as a result of the combined efforts of all health and care providers and the Committee wishes, again, to put on record its thanks to primary care in this regard.

Since first being approached by primary care in early April expressing concern in respect of the impact of COVID-19 on how the community were able to access their services, HSC sought to work at pace to develop options on how primary care and HSC could work together to support islanders. Operationally, this has worked exceptionally well, demonstrating our collective responsibility and commitment as health and care providers to ensure services continued to be accessible to the public.

Two contractual proposals were developed, both of which predominantly focused on addressing the immediate challenges of COVID-19 and detailed how the management and funding of these novel ways of working could work. Both contracts were time limited to three months in terms of remuneration for services but one also contained a commitment to work in partnership with HSC towards achieving the aims of the future model of health and care, the Partnership of Purpose. The draft contracts were shared with all three practices and meetings were arranged to discuss the detail. While it was open to all three Practices to adopt the same operating and funding model, the Practices are, of course, individual private businesses, and this was reflected in their final decisions. Queens Road

Medical Practice committed to the partnership contract and separate agreements were reached with the HealthCare Group and Island Health LLP to pay for the services used.

HSC will continue to work with all three practices to deliver a new and improved model of care supporting the Partnership of Purpose and Revive and Thrive. However, the agreement reached with Queens Road Medical Practice provides specific opportunity for enhanced partnership working between the Practice and HSC over the next four years building on the work we've already undertaken together on familial hypercholesterolaemia testing where early indications have shown really positive results. Discussions are ongoing to develop a programme of work, focussing on trialling new initiatives to improve health outcomes.

The three Primary Care Practices have received payment as follows:-

	April	May	June
Queens Road Medical Practice	£231,700	£231,700	£226,826
HealthCare Group	£90,935	£36,205	£22,515
Islandhealth	£102,458	£31,671	£18,851

Working with Primary Care during the last three months has provided HSC with a breadth of experiences which will be used to inform the acceleration, on a pilot basis or otherwise, of key elements of the Partnership of Purpose. It has also helped further develop a Policy Letter on the future model of primary care which had to be paused in March to enable resources to be prioritised towards COVID-19. Further consultation will take place with Primary Care and other key stakeholders in respect of this Policy Letter and it is anticipated that it will be presented to the Assembly by the end of the year.

Ends

Notes to Media

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