



St David's Surgery

Focused Communication and Engagement Plan for the termination of the GMS Contract

This plan is a live document and is subject to regular review in conjunction with Llais

Background

On 18 April 2024, St David's Surgery served notice to the Health Board on their General Medical Services (GMS) contract giving the required six calendar months' notice as a single-handed Contractor under the new Unified Contract. The Practice will cease providing General Medical Services within the North Pembrokeshire Cluster on 31 October 2024. St David's Surgery is the second smallest Independent Contractor list size in Hywel Dda at approximately 2728 patients and serves a rural population across north-west Pembrokeshire and the St David's Peninsula. The Surgery lies three miles from Solva Surgery which became a Health Board Managed Practice in April 2023. The age demographics for the practice show 32% of the registered patients as over 65 years of age, and there is a unit for adults with learning difficulties with approximately 28 residents spread over four registered care home addresses in the town.

Since May 2023 St David's Surgery has been single-handed under Dr Stephen Riley and has operated with support from two part-time salaried GPs. Attempts at recruiting a GP Partner or amalgamating with Solva as recently as 2022 have also failed. Increasing workload and changes to the GP team have been cited by Dr Riley as the reasons for his decision to resign the Contract with the Health Board.

The surgery premises leased and is the ground floor of a converted house situated on the one-way system in the town centre. There are no Community staff based in St David's or Solva, and these services are provided through the Integrated Care Networks operated through Fishguard or Haverfordwest.

The Practice provides GMS core services under the Unified Contract, plus a range of Supplementary Services to its population:

Learning Disabilities	✓
Care Homes	✓
Diabetes Care Reviews (tier 2)	✓
Minor Surgery (injections and aspirations)	✓
Warfarin (level A&B)	✓
DOAC Annual Review	✓
DOAC initiation	✓
Denosumab	✓
Treatment Room	✓
Near Patient Testing	✓
Gonadorelin	✓
LARC	✓

Other local services aside from GMS include a busy Community Pharmacy and small NHS Dental Practice in St David’s. St David’s Community Pharmacy (Well) has successfully absorbed the dispensing patients from Solva Surgery on the closing of the dispensary in March 2023. This involved employing new staff and a refit of the dispensing area to hold additional stock. There is a regular Pharmacist and a Technician, and Well have reported that they feel the Pharmacy has adapted positively to the increased workload over the last twelve months.

Proposed approach for engagement activity

Engagement will need a broad approach to encompass the whole practice population,

The purpose of this engagement exercise is to:

- To **raise awareness** of the engagement and provide opportunities for feedback
- **Provide opportunities** for our patients and stakeholders to give their views, to include a public engagement drop-in event in City Hall in St David’s and a questionnaire (online and paper)

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- **Target** those who use the service through engagement methods that are most appropriate for these groups. This should include the residents of Care in the Community care home for adults with learning disabilities
- Identify appropriate engagement and communication **tools and methods** to effectively engage

The engagement activity period for this work will be led by the Health Board and will take place over a 5 week period from Monday 13th May to Wednesday 19th June.

This period will provide those who wish to engage an opportunity to participate through providing their views in response to the following questions (text from questionnaire posted to all registered patients, bilingual):

IMPORTANT UPDATE: on 22 May the Prime Minister called a General Election for 4 July 2024. As a result, the public engagement period falls within the Pre-election period.

Guidance has been sought by Corporate Services and it has been decided that the process will continue on the following basis:

- **we proceed on the grounds that not to do so would impact on the safety and quality of services to patients**
- **that the HB has a statutory duty to provide GMS services and to defer this contractual process may lead to a gap in provision**
- **our primary engagement is with patients of the Practice**

Social media and press releases will be confined to essential information.

The public engagement drop-in event of 14 June 2024 will go ahead.

Accompanying narrative and questions below:

The Health Board is working with stakeholders to find a solution for how services can continue to be delivered to patients after October 2024. Recent attempts by the Practice to find another GP Partner to share the responsibilities and workload shouldered by Dr Riley have failed, and there has been no interest from local independent GP Practices.

Small single-handed GP Practices can struggle with business pressures and with staffing which means they are at risk of becoming unsustainable. Unfortunately, both Solva Surgery and St David's Surgery have had contract terminations within the last eighteen months. There is also some uncertainty whether the St David's Surgery building would be available to lease once the current contract ends.

The Health Board has a responsibility to ensure that all patients continue to have access to General Medical Services. The Panel that is considering the contract termination has recommended that a managed dispersal of the patient list take place at the end of October. This would mean that all patients would be allocated to the next nearest surgery to them, and for the vast majority of patients this would be Solva Surgery as the closest. This would create a single GP Practice that would be larger, more stable and more resilient for the future. The Panel felt this is the most viable option to ensure that patients can continue to access GP services in the area. **It is important to note that no decision has been made at this stage and that this is a recommendation that is subject to Board decision later this summer following the conclusion of public and stakeholder engagement.**

As Solva Surgery is a Health Board Managed Practice, if the Board supported the proposal for a dispersal, the single combined Practice would be operated by the Health Board through a period of careful transition and may involve bringing together the staff from both Practices from November 2024. The new Practice would offer similar services as the Practices did before and would be large enough to be able to build a more diverse and specialist workforce to meet the needs of the population it would serve. It is hoped this single combined practice would ultimately return to being an Independent Contractor Practice in the future.

In the short and medium term, it is possible that the new combined practice would need to operate mainly from Solva Surgery because it is much larger and purpose-built, with sufficient internal space and parking. The potential to deliver some services from somewhere suitable in St David's is being considered.

While the vast majority of patients currently registered with St David's Surgery would be allocated to Solva Surgery in October as the next closest to their home address, the small number of patients living closer to Fishguard or Haverfordwest than to Solva may be transferred to another Practice which is closer to them than Solva Surgery (based on drive-time).

The decision on how to deliver services from November 2024 onwards will be taken by the Board later this summer. Ahead of this, the Health Board wants to understand how this recommendation to disperse the patient list may affect you.

Please feedback your views by 19 June 2024. All feedback will be collated and will form an important part of the consideration and decision-making by the Health Board on how services will be delivered from October onwards.

Please also complete the equality monitoring questionnaire, as this helps us to make sure that we are gathering the views from all parts of the community.

Thank you

Please answer the questions below

1. Please let us know your full postcode eg. SA62 6SS

2. When was the last time you attended St David's Surgery?

- In the last month
- In the last six months
- In the last year
- More than a year ago

3. Thinking about the last time you went to the Surgery; how did you travel there?

- On foot
- By car
- By bus
- By taxi
- By bicycle
- Other (please state)

4. If you were transferred to another Practice, how would this affect you and the way you currently access services?

5. Under this proposal the vast majority of patients would transfer to Solva Surgery at the end of October as the next closest Practice to them. If you needed to access appointments and services at Solva Surgery how would this affect you?

6. What is most important to you about your GP Practice?

- Telephone access
- Appointment availability
- Seeing the same team
- Car parking
- Friendly staff
- Other (please state)

7. How easy or difficult do you find it to access care from other Primary Care providers in your area (community pharmacies, opticians, dentists). Please rate 1 – very difficult – 5 very easy.

	1 – very difficult	2	3	4	5 - very easy
Community Pharmacy					
Opticians					
Dentists					

8. Do you have any other comments or feedback?

Ends

Engagement and Communication methods employed and rationale

Method	Rationale
Engagement period	Engagement will take place from Monday 13 th May to Wednesday 19 th June (inclusive). Any feedback received after 19 th June will be integrated into the data analysis as far as possible until the final cut-off for the submission of the report.
Broad Approach	<p>Awareness of the focused engagement and opportunity to share views through the following methods:</p> <p>The following activities will be undertaken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A public engagement drop-in event for patients and stakeholders to be held on St David's City Hall, Friday 14th June - Information will be circulated to patients and stakeholders - Information made available on the Surgery website (with the consent of the practice) and in paper form in the Surgery and the Community Pharmacy - Information will be shared with the media and promoted through Health Board social media <p>People can share their views by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-Person at the public engagement drop-in event on 14th June at St David's City Hall • By questionnaire: collection boxes for questionnaires at St David's Surgery and St David's Community Pharmacy, or by FREEPOST. Other community collection points can be serviced at the request of the City Council. • By telephone - directed to the Communication Hub. All calls will be logged in Sharepoint for the Primary Care team to access and action on a daily basis.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By email - ask.hdd@wales.nhs.uk Emails will be logged in Sharepoint for the Primary Care team to access and action on a daily basis. • In writing: comments to be addressed to Hywel Dda FREEPOST address • Online: responding to a survey hosted on the Health Board's Have Your Say / Dweud eich Dweud sites • Feedback to Llais <p>An offer of a separate engagement meeting will be made to the residents of St David's Care in the Community (LD care home), although it is expected that many residents will want to participate using the methods above.</p>
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Activity Log

Communications and Engagement Plan preparation			
Date	Event / Activity	Comments/ Action	Achieved (RAG) By (Team)
15/05/2024	Draft focused communications and engagement plan, sign-off internally	Comments received from PE team	PC team
14/05/2024	Share draft focused communications and engagement plan with Llais		PC team, LLAIS
15/05/2024	Set up Have Your Say/Dweud eich Dweud pages		Engagement team

Communicating and Engagement Plan preparation				
Date	Event / Activity	Staff / resourcing required	Comments	Achieved by
23/04/2024	#1 media statement and social media update	PC team, Comms	Contact details for patient responses included	23/04/2024
From 4 th May	#1 letter to patients delivered	PC team, SSP	Contact details for patient responses included	Letter dated 22/04/2024
08/05/2024	Meeting with Llais to discuss PE plan	PC team, Llais	Meeting with Sam Dentten	08/05/2025
15/05/2024	#2 media statement and social media update	PC team, Comms	Contact details for patient responses included	15/05/2024
From 20/05/2024	#2 letter to patients delivered	PC team, SSP	Contact details for patient responses included	Dependent on Royal Mail delivery

Week 1: w/c Monday 13 th May 2024			
Date	Event / Activity	Comments	Achieved (RAG) By (Team)
w/c 13/05/2024	#2 letter to patients with invite to public engagement drop-in event at City Hall in St David's on 14 th June	PC team, SSP bulk mailing service	Questionnaires included, also QR code to Have Your Say site
	Social media updates to mirror letter		Comms team
	Questionnaire collection box in St David's Surgery and Well Community Pharmacy	Practice and CP have agreed to hosting a collection box, large print paper copies of the questionnaire available	PC team
	Questionnaire and narrative to be uploaded to Have Your Say website	Bilingual	Engagement team
	Llais to share information via website and social media		Llais

Week 2: w/c Monday 20th May 2024			
Date	Event / Activity	Comments	Achieved (RAG) By (Team)
	Continue to circulate social media updates	Media reduced owing to Pre-election period	Comms team
	Questionnaire collection box at St David's Surgery and CP – refresh and collect	Collections 24/05/2024	PC team
	Llais to share information via their website and social media		Llais
	Monitor responses / feedback to identify any additional action required		PC team
22/05/2024	General Election called for 4 July, Pre-election period	Pre-election period overlaps with engagement period.	

Week 3: w/c Monday 27th May 2024			
Date	Event / Activity	Comments	Achieved (RAG) By (Team)
	Questionnaire collection box at St David's Surgery and CP - refresh and collect		PC team
	Monitor responses / feedback to identify any additional action required		PC team

Week 4: w/c Monday 3rd June 2024			
Date	Event / Activity	Comments	Achieved (RAG) By (Team)
03/06/2024	MIDPOINT REVIEW MEETING WITH LLAIS & ENGAGEMENT TEAM	Llais satisfied with management of the engagement. Very little feedback received by Llais direct. Anonymised interim report shared on feedback.	Llais/ PC team
	Questionnaire collection box at St David's Surgery and Community Pharmacy	Collections 04/06/2024	PC team

Week 5: w/c Monday 10th June 2024			
	Event / Activity	Comments	Achieved (RAG) By (Team)
	Questionnaire collection box at St David's Surgery and Community Pharmacy	Collections 10/06/2024	PC team
14/06/2024	Drop-in event, City Hall		

Week 6: w/c Monday 17th June 2024		
Event / Activity	Comments	Achieved (RAG) By (Team)
Questionnaire collection box at St David's Surgery and Community Pharmacy	Collections 17/06/2024 and 19/06/2024	PC team
ENGAGEMENT PERIOD ENDS Wednesday 19 th June. Commitment to keep processing late returns until cut-off for papers later this week		

Post consultation / Next steps			
Date	Event / Activity	Comments	Achieved (RAG) By (Team)
20/06/2024	Engagement team to collate Freepost returns of paper questionnaires for Primary Care team to collect (final)		Engagement team / PC Team
20/06/2024	Upload remaining paper questionnaires feedback onto Have your Say / Dweud eich Dweud		PC Team

20/06/2024	Download questionnaire responses from Have Your Say/ Dweud eich Dweud pages and send to the Primary Care team (final)		PC Team / Engagement Team
20/06/2024	Communications team to send any feedback on Social media posts to Primary Care team		Communications team
21/06/2024	Primary Care team to develop feedback report from all feedback received		Primary Care team
24/06/2024	A report including appendices with anonymised feedback will be submitted Llais		

A virtual meeting with local elected representatives will be scheduled if necessary.

A report including appendices with anonymised patient feedback will be submitted to the LLAIS and will inform the Vacant Practice Panel review of the public engagement work. This report will form part of the report to the Board for final decision-making.