

REPORT TO: Health Policy & Performance Board
DATE: 7 June 2011
REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Communities
SUBJECT: Windmill Hill Access Centre
WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

The purpose of this report is to update to Board on the recent Patient and Public consultation regarding the potential closure of the nurse led Windmill Hill Access Centre.

1.1 A report has previously been submitted to Halton & St Helens PCT Clinical Commissioning Committee in October 2010 and to the Finance Performance Approvals Committee on 27th April 2011.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That the Board note the contents of the report.**

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 Prior to 1997 the residents of Windmill Hill had access to a singled handed GP practice for their health needs. However, when the GP left, the existing patient list was distributed between Castlefields and Murdishaw practices.

3.2 The Windmill Access Centre was then introduced and provided a limited service to the residents of Windmill Hill. This service, which is delivered by Bridgewater Community Health Services staff, is open from 9am until 5pm Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays). People access the service by telephoning for an appointment time, however, if they arrive without an appointment they can wait to be seen by a nurse.

3.3 Since opening, the access centre has provided health care for people who had coughs, sore throats, rashes, and many other minor illnesses. However, people who have more complex or long term conditions require the continuity provided by their own GP.

3.4 Throughout 2010 attendances to the Nurse led Centre averaged eight patients per day.

3.5 In January 2011 the average number of people attending were seven per day, and in February 2011 the average number was five

per day.

3.6 On 29th January 2010 the new Equitable Access GP practice opened to the residents of Windmill Hill, and now has a list size of 1173 patients.

3.7 The new GP practice provides an enhanced service to that available at Windmill Hill Access Centre. For example: Women's Health Clinic, Well Woman Clinic, Well Man Clinic, Mother & Baby Clinic, Travel Health, Smoking Cessation, Phlebotomy, Respiratory Clinic and many more.

The opening times are 8am – 6.30 Monday to Friday, and 9am – 1pm Saturday and Sunday.

3.8 In January 2011 the PCT completed a three month consultation with the residents of Windmill Hill regarding the access centre.

3.9 The results from the consultation highlight the need for access to health care. Some of the responses include: "Handy location/close to where I live" (59%); "I do not have a car/do not drive and this is convenient for me" (9%). Others (11%) stated they used the access centre if they were unable to get a GP appointment.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None.

5.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

5.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

Children and Young people who may need to access health care will be able to register with the GP practice.

5.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

None identified.

5.3 **A Healthy Halton**

The health of all residents in Halton continues to be a priority. The residents of Windmill Hill now have an enhanced service on the estate.

5.4 **A Safer Halton**

None identified.

5.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

None identified.

6.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

6.1 In order to allay fears of 'losing' the nurse-led service, specific targeted and timely communications will be developed for local residents, leading up to the closure. Key messages will include:

- The reasons for the closure, including the need to improve access to Primary Care Services locally
- The availability of nurse and GP appointments at the Windmill Hill Practice (with full explanation of the need for patients to be registered with Windmill Hill GP Practice in order to access these services).
- Advice on how to change GP practice.

7.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

The PCT has undertaken an impact assessment. This concluded that individuals with protected characteristics would not be disadvantaged by the proposal. However as part of the assessment the practice will need to report to the PCT how the actions taken have mitigated any risk