



Cyfarfod a dyddiad: Meeting and date:	Senior Leadership Team (SLT)						
Teitl yr Adroddiad Report Title:	Vasectomy Services – East						
Cyfarwyddwr Cyfrifol: Responsible Director:	[REDACTED]						
Awdur yr Adroddiad Report Author:	[REDACTED]						
Craffu blaenorol: Prior Scrutiny:	Nil						
Atodiadau Appendices:							
Please tick as appropriate (note the Chair of the meeting will review and may determine the document should be viewed under a different category)							
Ar gyfer penderfyniad /cymeradwyaeth For Decision/Approval	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ar gyfer Trafodaeth For Discussion	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ar gyfer sicrwydd For Assurance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Er gwybodaeth For Information	<input type="checkbox"/>
Y/N i ddangos a yw dyletswydd Cydraddoldeb/ SED yn berthnasol Y/N to indicate whether the Equality/SED duty is applicable							
Situation							
<p>Vasectomy services in BCU have been provided by a GP practice based in East Area for a number of years by the Marches Medical Practice. In January 2018 the practice raised concerns with Area East management about a lack of uplift in their funding for their North East part of their service as well as a lack of governance. A Service Level Agreement (SLA) was agreed for the North East service in September 2019 to run from April 2024 which included a financial uplift and improved governance arrangements. The practice manager advised in May 2019 that the North West side of the service needed an SLA as well and this was communicated to West management. In July 2019, following no communication from West colleagues, the practice indicated that they would give notice and end their contract for the North West side of the service. A Service Level Agreement (SLA) was agreed at this point for the North West Wales service, but not signed.</p> <p>The current contract comes to an end April 2024. Due to current financial scrutiny we are not in a position to extend the contract beyond this without executive approval. After April 2024 there will not be a service to provide patients in BCU unless referrals are directed through BPAS.</p>							
Background							
<p>The vasectomy service was set up many years ago prior to the creation of the BCU Health Board (exact date not known). The service was initially set up for patients in North East Wales and then a North West Wales contract was developed separately with separate funding.</p>							
Assessment & Analysis							
<u>North East Service</u>							
<p>The North East service is currently managed by the EAST Community IHC. Funding was provided for 3 all-day sessions per month (2 doctors in attendance) which ran every 1st, 3rd and 4th Friday of the month at Deeside Community Hospital outpatients.</p>							

Payment was based on an amount per procedure but this has since been changed in the recent SLA to per session so that it encompasses Did Not Attends (DNA's). The practice reported repeated problems of extending honorary contracts for their doctors to carry out procedures.

The North East service has been accepting referrals from GPs in Wrexham, Flintshire and parts of Denbighshire as per the below attachment.



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The SLA that was agreed to run from April 2019 included an increase in payment to £1600.00 per session (£800.00 per doctor) and quarterly review meetings. The changes also included that they would no longer be paid via payroll, but through a Purchase Order and invoices aligning it to the North West arrangements. There was no change to which GP's could refer to the service. The increase in payment was agreed at the East Area Finance & Performance meeting in May 2019 where it was acknowledged that the Area would have to go at risk to a maximum of £25,300 per year in order to fund the uplift and maintain the service. The budget held in East Area includes £37,000.00 to pay the doctors their sessions and £13,000.00 to provide 0.37wte band 5 nurses to support the sessions in Deeside Community Hospital.

During Covid the service delivery was paused for both West and East BCU patients. The service was then recommenced in 2021. On recommencement a decision was made by the Marches Practice to combine the waiting list of both West and East BCU patients. This has now meant that there is a combined waiting time of 3 years. The Marches have also moved away from the service agreement of East patient's weeks 1, 2 and 4 and West patient's week 2. At the last operational meeting in July 2023 there was a request to the Practice Manager to revert back to the SLA contract agreement.

Due to the practice limited number of GPs available to conduct these sessions with 1 doctor only in attendance. The number of procedures performed on a weekly basis has decreased from 12 to 6. Due to the merge of waiting lists, there is a concern that East IHC may be paying for West IHC patients. The practice have raised repeated concerns about their inability to recruit GPs to undertake their core work which would affect their ability to continue this service. On average, 17 referrals are received per week for East. There is currently no plan to support recovery plans.

On discussion with the Marches, due to limitations around training GPs they have trained and available they could only offer ADHOC additional sessions. However, if any recovery sessions are to be provided, there is a request by the Marches to move these additional sessions to in-house at the Marches Practice in Broughton.

There are various complications that would possibly prevent in-house delivery including HDU collections for vasectomy surgical packs, as this practice is not on a contracted collection route. Deeside Vasectomy Nurses are only contracted to support on a Friday and there is no other funded support available during the week. Governance assurance would also be difficult to oversee by Matron who is not present at the Marches site.

It should be noted that a number of men when attending have reported that they have had further children whilst on the waiting list.

All Post procedure samples for both West & East patients are tested in the Wrexham Maelor Hospital pathology laboratory as no other laboratory provides this testing.

North West Service

The North West side of the service was set up in 2013 by the Surgery and Dental CPG that was in existence at the time. The practice were paid per session via a Purchase Order and invoices. Funding was provided for 1 session a month (week 2) which originally took place in Llandudno Hospital. In 2014/15, the practice were unable to continue in the room so it was temporarily moved to Deeside Community Hospital where the session has remained.

Referrals received as part of this agreement come from practices in Gwynedd, Anglesey and parts of Conwy and Denbighshire as per the below attachment.



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The contract for West was set up following the ceasing of GMS payments in 2013. The funding for this part of the service comes from a budget code based in West (N306) which has a budget of £15,000.00 to cover the costs of the sessions (which would add up to £15,600.00 if every month is covered). This budget remains in place and has not been used to fund the uplift for the North East part of the service.

Current North West wales payments are made via East invoicing and recharged.

In addition, the North West were managing a budget for admin support for the whole service as the practice state that managing the service requires a full time administration member of staff at a cost of approximately £18,000 per annum.

In 2018 the admin support was taken over by the Marches Practice to be delivered and managed in-house. There is one member of admin who supports with the referral, booking and waiting list duties for both West and East.

Strategy Implications

There is a lack of strategic direction with the Vasectomy service. The service is not monitored within any performance parameters, however inpatient vasectomy services are monitored within RTT treatment targets within Urology services.

There is currently a negative image around vasectomy services in East, to the public with increased number of PALS, primarily around length of wait which is currently 3 years.

At present the Health Board do not have control over waiting lists, which highlights a concern and lack of authority to manage the service.

Moving away from an SLA with Marches Medical Practice could impact relationships with the provider negatively, they are keen to take the service in house without following due process.

Financial and Contractual Implications

BPAS Cost Per Vasectomy

	£
Consultation	42.88
Procedure	219.73
Total	262.61

Marches Cost Per Vasectomy

	£
Direct Cost (contract)	133.33
Nursing Support - Internal	68.23
Admin Support - Marches	35.86
Total	237.42

Difference 25.19

Risk Analysis

Currently no other practices provide this service in BCU. The only other alternatives would be to commission a non-BCU service provider to undertake this work. Within the Central IHC, it is understood that the contract with the British Pregnancy Advisory Service (BPAS) had included vasectomy procedure. Some East GP clusters have been using this contract, to support vasectomy referral for patients to BPAS due to the long waiting times.

The current providing practice (Marches Medical Practice) have indicated that they would prefer to move towards an In-house delivery model.

The financial difference is illustrated above with a slight increase in BPAS service, which gives us the flexibility to increase throughput and clear the backlog whilst we work through a pan BCU model.

Recommendation

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Given the contract is due to end April 2024, the short term proposal would be to direct referrals to BPAS. This would require communications to be sent to GP practices advising of short term arrangements, whilst BCUHB work through service plans across North Wales for Vasectomy services. This would result in the waiting list remaining stagnant. There would need to be a discussion around waiting list recovery for those longstanding patients on the current waiting list.

Long term recommendation would be for option 2 based as the evaluation below:

- 1) **Do nothing** - This would carry a continued risk to delivery of the vasectomy service as the GP practice struggle to meet the current demand, backlog due to difficulty in recruiting GPs and training. Additional costs of BCU East patients be treated via BPAS ????. Risk of incorrect invoicing of East sessions due to west patients being undertaken ????
- 2) **Commissioned tender for North East Wales IHC** - Due to a significant reduction in delivery and repeated failure to meet existing SLA agreement, as well as lack of provision to address the current backlog and an absence of a recovery plan, it is recommended that this service be commissioned for tender for the EAST IHC cohort. The outcome of the commissioned tender could impact the operational delivery of the North West Wales service, since it is currently provided at an East site. However, due to the fact that this service is currently managed by two IHCs there should also be consideration for the long term plan of the service and how it should be managed within the IHCs