

## **London GP Registration for Offenders**

### **Rationale for the scheme**

People who come into contact with the criminal justice system can find that there are significant barriers that prevent them from being able to access primary care health services. There are many reasons for this, but they include: -Homelessness, poor literacy and chaotic lives. The London GP Registration for Offenders Scheme aims to reduce inequalities between people who come into contact with the criminal justice system and the overall population of London by ensuring that, as part of their integration back into the community, offenders are registered with a local GP. The project also aims to support offenders' rehabilitation into society, by reducing offending and improving social inclusion outcomes for this group.

### **How will the scheme work in practice?**

Where a person is homeless it has been agreed with NHS England that their registered address (for GP registration purposes only), will be the Probation office, Youth Justice or Substance Misuse Service in their local area. In addition to providing this 'proxy' address criminal justice staff will be able to confirm a person's identity. Probation, Youth Justice and Substance Misuse staff will have responsibility for identifying service users who do not have a GP and, where consent is given, will send a referral letter to the relevant GP practice. These arrangements are now incorporated into GP Patient Registration-Pan-London Standard Operating Principles for Primary Care 2015.

### **Continuity of Care**

By enabling better access to healthcare the scheme aims to improve the continuity of care particularly for people who have been subject to spells of imprisonment. In the summer of 2016 healthcare services in prisons will adopt a new electronic patient record system that will enable community-based GPs and Prison Healthcare staff to have shared access to patient records. This will improve the sharing of information between custody and community settings and support GPs with their prescribing for prisoners following release.

### **The approach to implementation**

There are a number of agencies involved with the delivery of health and allied social interventions to this group. Accordingly we are bringing together key stakeholders at a borough level and asking them to collaborate to ensure the smooth roll out of the scheme. Our partners in this initiative include Local Authorities, Clinical Commissioning Groups, National Offender Management Service, Probation (Community Rehabilitation Company and National Probation Service) and the Youth Justice Board. These organisations are already responsible for commissioning services for people in this cohort. It is important that all the agencies involved have a good understanding of what individual partners are able to bring to the scheme. Separate strands of work are also being progressed with Probation, Prisons and Youth Justice Services to establish consistent identification and referral processes which includes practical support for people to access the service.

For further information about the scheme please contact the Project Manager

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