

Patients' Forum LAS

Note on meeting with Nic Daw, Director of PTS - LAS
October 2nd 2008

Nic described some of the recent developments in the PTS. John Comerford is now the Deputy Director of PTS, Lisa Dickinson, the Group Manager and Ann Elliott the Business Manager for the East. There is a vacancy for a West London Business Manager. There are now two transport operational centres (Becontree and New Malden) and the Meridian system is being installed to provide an effective communication system between HQ and PTS operational staff. This system should be operational by April 1st 2009 and should create greater flexibility and competitiveness. As part of the Meridian system PTS staff will be given a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) to aid communication and effectiveness of the service. On line booking will also be facilitated by this new system. We discussed the opportunities for service users to raise issues and give opinions on the PTS through the use of their own mobiles and PDAs as the user population becomes more knowledgeable about and familiar with this type of technology. Another development will be the locating a member of LAS staff in the main hospitals where LAS have contracts to provide a better service for patients and the Trust.

London Procurement Programme (LPP) for PTS Contracts

The LPP has been set up by the DH Purchasing and Supply Agency. LPP works alongside Trusts in London to make savings and improvements to enhance patient care across London. They intend to promote collaboration to reduce costs and make the best use of London's £5 billion purchasing power. By April 2009 the LPP claim they will have helped Trusts save more than £80. The LPP is actively pursuing a new process of purchasing PTS across London and it appears that the LPP rather than PCTs will be in control of the commissioning process for PTS. The line of accountability of the LPP is vague and it appears that there is no public involvement in the process of commissioning despite the clear direction of Government policy that the public shall be closely involved in the commissioning process. The LPP is dominated by staff from Guy's and St Thomas' and is located on their premises. It is unclear whether Trusts could still contract for PTS outside the LPP process.

The First Phase of PTS Commissioning Cycle

Twelve PTS providers were successful in getting through the Framework Agreement which stipulates the standards that they must be able to achieve if they are to compete for PTS contracts in London. There were two parts to this agreement: cars and ambulances. Phil Thompson leads on this process for the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency and Mark Davies (from Guy's and

St Thomas') for the London Procurement Programme. The process should be completed by the end of November 2008.

The 12 providers include: the LAS, GSL, M&L, Caring 4 You, Thames.....

Other contractors, e.g. Parkwood, St Johns and Red Cross will not continue to be major providers of PTS in London.

Eligibility Criteria

There are significant differences in the way eligibility criteria are interpreted. The LAS rejection rate is 2% and G&T 6%. The 'eligibility centres' (calls centres) determine whether patients can use the PTS.

Current situation

There are six contracts out to tender at the moment in London including Great Ormond Street, Moorfields, Guy's and Thomas', King's. There will be a unit price per patient using the PTS.

TUPE

When contract pass from one provider to another all staff are TUPEd across from one contract to another.

Other issues

- Nic agreed to find out if there was a legal duty to provide PTS in the NHS.
- We discussed the right of carers to travel in a PTS vehicle with those they care for. Nic said there is no right unless the patient is a minor.

End

Malcolm Alexander

October 2nd 2008