

Report to the Somerset Primary Care Commissioning Committee Meeting on 7 December 2020

Title: CCG Communication about Primary Care Services	Enclosure G
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Summary and Purpose of Paper

The purpose of this paper is to provide a summary of the communication activities that have been taking place to help raise awareness of the range of primary care services available to the public and how services have changed as a result of the pandemic.

Recommendations and next steps

The Somerset Primary Care Commissioning Committee is asked to note this paper.

Impact Assessments – key issues identified

Equality	Communications have been issued through a wide range of platforms, including video and social media. Where possible infographics have been used to help convey messages and translation of communications into other languages.			
Quality	Communications will help ensure people are able to utilise the right medical service for their healthcare needs.			
Privacy	Not applicable.			
Engagement	Work has been undertaken with the LMC, primary care cell, pharmacies and PPGs.			
Financial / Resource	There are no financial implications.			
Governance or Legal	Issues in line with national guidance.			
Risk Description	Not applicable.			
Risk Rating	Consequence	Likelihood	RAG Rating	GBAF Ref

CCG Communication about Primary Care Services

1. COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

- 1.1. We are committed to engaging widely with our public and over the past few months our communications approach has adapted and evolved to respond to the coronavirus pandemic.
- 1.2. We are working closely with our health and care, voluntary and provider partners to support the communication of healthcare services across Somerset. In response to COVID-19 the pace and volume of communications shared with the public has been extremely high; sharing central government communication messages as well as those that have been developed locally.
- 1.3. Our communication activities have been developed with the following aims:
 - To support our GP practices with communication resources for staff and patients,
 - To share and amplify national communications materials and messages,
 - To provide information and reassurance to the public,
 - To work with health and care, voluntary, provider partners and patient groups to develop and share communication messages.

2. SHARING NATIONAL AND REGIONAL COMMUNICATION MESSAGES

- 2.1. In response to the coronavirus pandemic, information materials and resources have been cascaded and shared through our local communication channels such as through our CCG website, partner websites, GP practice websites, social media, through engagement networks and local authority partner bulletins and the community publication – Your Somerset.



3. HELP US HELP YOU – NATIONAL CAMPAIGN

- 3.1. On a local level we have supported and shared a variety of communication messages developed for the public as part of the national Help Us Help You campaign – designed to raise awareness about healthcare services, including those promoting primary care services. These include media releases, social media messages, local adverts, radio and press activity. Example media releases include:
 - [Get cancer symptoms](#) checked
 - [Lung cancer symptoms](#) – promoting access to GP services

- [People encouraged](#) to attend NHS appointments and diabetes health checks
 - [The NHS is still here for you](#) – preparing for the August bank holiday
 - [The NHS is still here for you](#) – protect babies from Whooping cough
 - [Local testing arrangements in Somerset](#)
- 3.2. Local media releases have also focussed on important information and reassurance for the public:
- [NHS services are here for you](#)
 - [Working together to tackle health and care inequalities during the coronavirus pandemic](#)
 - [Somerset doctors](#) ask everyone to follow Hands, Face and Space
 - [GP surgeries – online services](#)
 - [ARCS surgery launch](#) for local homeless charity
- 3.3. Radio interviews have taken place on BBC Somerset to promote:
- What to expect though primary care services / the NHS is open / GP appointments,
 - Flu vaccinations.

4. ENGAGEMENT AND LOCAL MESSAGES

- 4.1. We have worked closely with our GP, LMC and local pharmacy colleagues to develop some key messages to help provide reassurance and additional information on the services that are available across primary care.
- 4.2. These were tested and adapted after feedback through our Somerset PPG Chairs group. Volunteers gave feedback on the proposed messages which were then used across social media posts and shared with health and care partners.
- 4.3. Communications messages are also shared in the CCG engagement bulletin that is sent to a variety of stakeholders. In addition, adverts and regular content has been shared in Somerset County Council's Your Somerset that is sent to households across Somerset and information has been shared through partner communication channels.

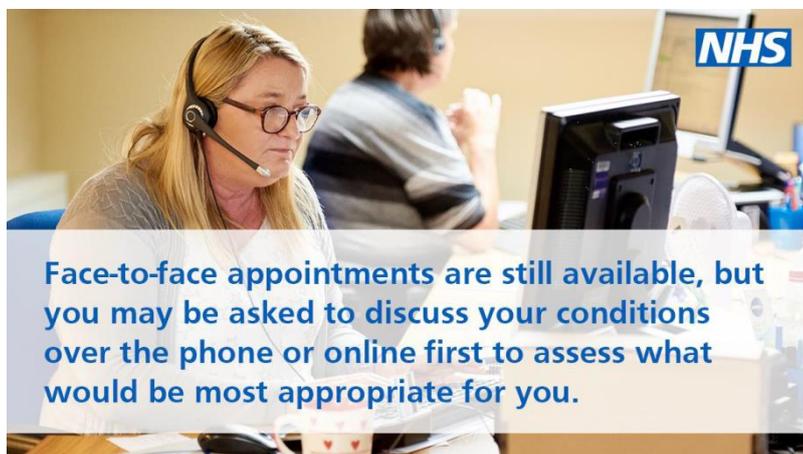


5. GP PRACTICE COMMUNICATION TOOLKITS

5.1. We have also developed a range of communication toolkits to support GP practices in communicating with their patients. These include suggested content for:

- Phone lines,
- Websites,
- Social media posts / images for digital communications,
- Local press template,
- Content for practice newsletters and local patient communications,
- Video / infographic content where appropriate that can be shared.

5.2. The content of these resources for patients are continuously evolving in line with new developments and changes in healthcare services and in our local response to COVID-19. More resources are currently being developed.



6. OPEN LETTER

6.1. An open letter was recently shared across our social media platforms, through local media, on partner websites, in our engagement bulletin and through a range of stakeholders and partners across Somerset. The letter can be found here: <https://www.somersetccg.nhs.uk/open-letter-to-everyone-in-somerset/>

6.2. The letter was also translated in to an easy read version and translated in to a number of different languages. Our letter thanked the public for following social distancing guidelines and outlined how to get help and medical advice from GP surgeries and local pharmacies, what safety measures are in place and where else to get healthcare support and advice:

- Calling or visiting NHS 111
- Visiting your local community pharmacy for advice on a wide range of minor ailments
- Self-care
- Minor injury units
- Visiting a local A&E
- Calling 999 in an emergency



GP surgeries are safe to visit for your appointment as normal.

If you cannot make your appointment, it's important that you ring to cancel it.

The NHS is still here for you

The graphic features a purple background on the left with white text. On the right, there is a photograph of a calendar with appointment cards for the 17th and 24th, and a yellow pillbox containing pink pills. The NHS logo is in the top right corner.



Worried about your health? Don't delay.

Go online or give us a call.

#StayWellSomerset

The NHS is still here for you

The graphic features a blue background on the left with white text. On the right, there is a photograph of a young woman with red hair sitting on a couch, looking distressed and holding a mobile phone to her ear. The NHS logo is in the top right corner.

7. FLU COMMUNICATIONS

- 7.1. Communication messages have also been developed and shared to promote the flu vaccine across Somerset. An additional toolkit has been created and shared with GP practices and shared across health and care providers.
- 7.2. Social media messages have been boosted and shared across online community support groups to extend the reach of messaging.
- 7.3. A number of videos have also been created and are due to be shared very soon and we have continued to work closely with our engagement partners help raise awareness. Flu updates were also shared through our Somerset Engagement and Advisory Group.
- 7.4. More communication activity is underway to promote the availability of flu vaccines at GP surgeries and community pharmacies for people in the most vulnerable and extended patient groups.



- 7.5. Video resources and animations have also been developed to promote the flu vaccine. In addition, a translated video is also available in multi-languages.

8. WINTER COMMUNICATIONS - #StayWellSomerset

- 8.1. A wide range of communication activities are being developed as part of our winter communications plan. These will include local radio campaigns, promotion across digital platforms, outdoor media, press releases and interviews on particular topics, social media and more resources to support GP practices with patient communication.
- 8.2. The winter campaign will focus on raising awareness of the healthcare services available, the ongoing safety measures that are in place so that patients can be seen safely and advice on how to stay well this winter.

- 8.3. In addition, any new guidance around our local and national response to Covid-19 will continue to be shared as well as advice on any changes to local healthcare services.



Stay well this winter
The NHS in Somerset is here for you

NHS

Online

There is lots of support available online

- Visit the NHS website for information and advice
- Visit NHS 111 online
- Download the NHS app
- Order your prescriptions online
- Visit your GP practice website to see what options are available to you
- Mental health support
- HandiApp

Visit www.nhs.uk for more tips on how to stay well this winter.

On the phone



Your GP surgery is here to support you. You will be triaged over the phone and offered a phone, virtual, or face to face appointment, depending on your clinical need.

Call NHS 111 or go online - for immediate healthcare advice, you will get the help that you need.

In person

If you have a medical emergency call 999

Get your flu jab - find out if you are eligible for a free flu jab online. Contact your GP or local pharmacy to book an appointment.

Your local pharmacy can help with a range of minor ailments, like colds, sore throats, tummy trouble and aches and pains.

Please still attend your appointments

#StayWellSomerset

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1. The Somerset Primary Care Commissioning Committee is asked to note the updates provided in this paper.