

## **Extended access to GP Services – Frequently asked questions**

Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) plan and buy healthcare services for the local population in your area.

National funding is available from 2018 for CCGs to commission improved access to GP services. This includes ensuring that everyone has more convenient access to GP services including a mixture of same day and routine appointments on weekday evenings after 6.30pm and at weekends based on local needs. This piece of work is known as 'delivering extended access to GP services'.

### **What does extended access mean?**

Extended access means being able to access a GP appointment (and/or another member of the team such as a practice nurse) on a weekday evening after 6.30pm and at the weekend according to locally determined need. There is likely to be a mixture of routine and same day/urgent appointments available. Extended access appointments are likely to be provided in a 'hub' in your local area.

### **How will you determine what's needed?**

As part of the engagement work on extended access, we will seek views from patients and the public on what services they would benefit from accessing and when during these times. We will also be looking at local information on the use of services such as GP Out of Hours, to sit alongside patient and public feedback to inform decisions about how the service might be provided.

### **How is it being funded?**

The GP Forward View (2016) sets out the national intention to improve access to GP services, a core feature of this is extending access in the evenings and at weekends. This document states that national funding will be available from 2018 onwards for local commissioning groups to commission extended access.

### **Does this mean every practice will need to open at evenings and at weekends?**

Delivering improved evening and weekend access does not mean that every practice will need to open 7 days per week, nor does it mean every GP will have to work 7 days per week. We know there is a national shortage of GPs and other primary care staff, so this may mean that extended access appointments might be delivered from a hub venue in the local area.

### **Will I be able to request to see my own GP if I book one of these appointments?**

No, it will not be possible to guarantee that you will get to see your own GP if you use one of these appointments. This is because extended access services maybe delivered through a group of providers.



**What does a hub mean?**

A building where extended hours access will be delivered from, this could be a GP practice, health centre or a hospital.

**How will I book an extended access appointment?**

In the first instance this will be by calling your GP practice as you would do now. As the service develops we would hope to widen this to on line booking systems and other points of entry.

**Will I be able to turn up at the hub and get an appointment then and there?**

No, extended access appointments will be pre-bookable only.

**If I book an extended hours appointment - will the person seeing me be able to access my medical records?**

Yes with your permission, you will be asked for your consent for the person seeing you to access your records when you book one of these appointments.