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DORSET DIABETIC EYE SCREENING PROJECT (DDESP) PROGRESS REPORT – NOVEMBER 2006

Organisation

The Executive Group of the DDESP has continued to meet on a regular basis, chaired by Mr Denis Elkin, the Project Director. The members are: Dr Wendy Gatling, Clinical Director; Mrs Lynne Lacey, Project Manager; Mr Rob Dawson, IT Project Manager; and Mr Steve Taylor, Optometric Advisor. The secondment from the SHA of Ms Sandra Roberts, Service Improvement Manager, to assist with training and quality assurance ended in August. A representative of the Dorset and Somerset Strategic Health Authority attends the meeting together with the Somerset Project Manager for Eye Screening.

IT

The DDESP has faced many challenges with the various IT systems and communication between them over the past months and the project team has worked hard to overcome these.

The Server to host the Graphnet and Orion Software is operational at Poole Hospital and the interface between the two products has been tested.

The Graphnet data extraction software has been installed in 102 GP practices. Only 1 practice is outstanding. The first full data extraction took place on 13 October. There were no problems experienced by the GP systems but there were some issues relating to the manipulation of the data on the server which are now being resolved. Extracts from secondary care have been taken and the combined extracts will form the diabetic register on the Orion system.

Each optometry practice is being surveyed for the IT requirements and installations of PCs, 20" screens, broadband connections and related cabling are taking place.

Clinisys Diabetes have now resolved the national messaging issues and installations took place into the three acute Trusts and Ferndown at the end of October. Training is taking place in the Trusts in November. There are some outstanding issues relating to the communication systems between the optometry practices and the server which Clinisys are currently working on and installations will take place at the optometry practices as soon as these are resolved.

The Project Team are meeting monthly with all the IT Providers and the IT team at Poole Hospital.

Funding

Capital funding is being held at Dorset PCT and is being released in staged payments. A bid for additional capital funding for the increased number of optometry practices and the additional costs of providing an image capture service at Dorset County Hospital was successful.

Secondary Care

The Dorset-wide Multi Disciplinary Team (MDT) continues to meet six-monthly to discuss progress and plans as well as clinical items relating to grading of images and patient care pathways. The meeting is attended by consultant diabetologists and ophthalmologists from the three acute trusts, retinal screener graders and representatives from the nursing, business management and clerical teams from the acute trusts as well as two optometrists and a representative from Public Health.

Optometrists

There are currently 58 optometrists in 38 practices signed up to provide a full capture and grading service. Cameras are installed in 26 practices and 13 practices are participating in the interim system and are screening patients using digital imaging and sending the images to Poole by CD Rom or anonymised e-mail for second disease grading. Each practice has to undertake capture training at the practice, grading training at Poole Hospital and submit test images before the practice can "go live". The remaining practices are at different stages of this training but a further 12 are planned to join the interim system over the next month.

Additional practices have expressed interest in providing a capture only service and negotiations have been taking place with the Local Optical Committee concerning the split of fees between capture and grading. This has now been agreed and discussions are now taking place with those practices.

A list of participating optometrists will be published in November showing those who are currently screening digitally and those who plan to join the scheme over the next few months.

Patient and Public Involvement

A Stakeholders meeting was held in June 2006 and a further meeting is scheduled for 24 January.

Screening Office

The Screening Office is set up close to the Diabetes Centre in Poole Hospital and two part-time clerical assistants are in post.

Recall Office

The Recall Office is based in the Dorset PCT building in Ferndown and a part-time clerical assistant is in post. Plans are in hand to start patient recall in January based on the anniversary dates of previous annual screening. Where there is no previous screening information or screening is more than one year overdue, the patient will be allocated a due date between February and July 2007. The recall letter will include a list of participating optometrists and a Dorset DDESP leaflet giving details of the national and local schemes.

Training

The programme for the City and Guilds National Certification in Diabetic Retinopathy Screening became available nationally on 1 October. An induction day for candidates and assessors took place on 24 October with a view to fast-tracking key personnel through the programme. Initial seminars for fast-track candidates have been set up in November and December. Those members of the fast-track group who complete the required modules in the spring will become assessors for the further 75-80 participants in the Dorset scheme. DDESP was successful in obtaining some Workforce Development Funding to assist with the registration costs of the programme.

A local IT trainer has been seconded to the project in order to provide support and assistance to individual sites when the Orion software is live, both in person and by telephone. This trainer will attend hospital clinics as required in the initial live stages to support consultants and their teams.

Audit

The audit of patients being screened using Fundoscopy has continued this year in order that there is a record of those patients for whom alternative screening arrangements may be necessary.

Annual Report

There is a national requirement to produce an annual report in a nationally agreed format for the year to 31 March 2007 by October 2007.

Quality Assurance

The National Screening Committee is considering a pilot to look at external quality assurance and DDESP will consider this when further details are available.

Exclusions from Screening

Following an audit by two GPs and discussions between the Clinical Director and the members of the Dorset-wide MDT, guidance has been issued as to the criteria for excluding Dorset patients from screening.

Website

The website continues to be developed and now includes a Professional Zone with password access for use by clinicians. www.dorsetdiabeticeyescreening.co.uk

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Dorset Diabetic Eye Screening Programme