The National Gold Standards Framework Centre in End of Life Care

27th November 2013

Dear Information Technology Lead,

Helping GPs identify and improve care for patients nearing the end of life, with better use of their IT systems.
See video clip https://vimeo.com/75341910

Your GPs may not be aware of all the vulnerable patients in your area that are approaching the end of their life, which can lead to poor quality reactive care, excessive hospitalisation and less effective use of services. Identifying patients who are approaching their **last year of life** is key to improving their care, to beginning proactive management and Advance Care Planning discussions that, in turn, will ensure good care, minimise unnecessary hospital admissions and save money for the CCG. With Jeremy Hunt's recent assertion that GPs should be more proactive for vulnerable patients nearing the end of life, including those over 75, this is of even greater importance. But how do you know which patients might be nearing the end of life?

This is a very difficult issue but to help GPs identify these patients earlier, The Gold Standards Framework Centre in collaboration with IT experts have developed an IT configuration package (GSF IT Solutions) that will work with all the main GP practice systems leading to earlier recognition of decline and thereby triggering key activities. This complements the current use of Foundation Level GSF as recommended in QOF and the further GSF training programme, Going for Gold, to make it easier for primary care teams to do the right thing, at the right time, for the right patients. It also leads to more being included on Locality Registers or EPaCCS (Electronic Palliative Care Co-ordination Systems) to improve electronic information transfer for these patients in line with national IT record sharing developments. As the IT lead for the CCG you will appreciate that this is not 'a piece of software.' We deliberately chose to go the configuration route for easy of applying over diverse systems.

The effectiveness of GSF IT Solutions and e-PIG (the Electronic GSF Prognostic Indicator Guidance) has been demonstrated in its implementation in all of the North Lancaster CCG practices, and recommended by Dr Peter Nightingale, a practising GP and the National EOLC lead for the RCGP (see GSF IT Solutions flyer attached) .

A very modest cost covers the installation of the configuration package and the first year's membership. There is no annual licence fee and the membership fee covers installation, guidance, 'webinars', newsletters and means to further improve and refine what is provided to meet local need .

The Secretary of State recently confirmed his three priorities – helping GPs become more proactive, better electronic data sharing and better integrated care. GSF and GSF IT Solutions programmes help with all three. Norman Lamb, Minister of State for Care, felt it is such an important issue that he wants to see End of Life Care and use of GSF 'turbocharged' now. As you consider your priorities for next year's CCG budget, we suggest you consider the GSF Primary Care Training (Going for Gold) and GSF IT Solutions package (half priced if commissioned together) and judge the results for yourself when you start to 'turbocharge' end of life care in your area.

I should be grateful if you would discuss this letter with the End of Life Care lead for your CCG. If you would like to know more about our IT Solutions package, including a tailored quote for your CCG, then contact us at info@gsfcentre.co.uk or on 01743 291 891 or see further details our website www.goldstandardsframework.org.uk including the video clip on our IT Section of our website or video clip link http://vimeo.com/channels/gsf/75346707

Yours sincerely

Graham Fell
Business Director