

Proposals for the future of the Rowans Surgery

Merton OSC - September 2022



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Introduction

- The current GP Partners and Managing Partner who run the Rowans Surgery hold a contract with NHS South West London which is due to end on 31 October 2022. This means that important decisions need to be made very soon about how GP services are provided.
- Discussions have been ongoing for a number of years about the challenges facing the Rowans – particularly related to the premises and staffing. If services continue to be provided from the Rowans Surgery, we are concerned that these issues will impact on patient safety and the quality of care delivered.
- After considering all the options, NHS South West London is proposing to close the practice and ask that patients register with another practice of their choosing. All patients would be fully supported in making this move.
- A final decision is needed in the next few weeks in order to ensure this dispersal process can be managed effectively.

What are the challenges?

- The only GP at the practice gave notice of his resignation in July and the GP partners do not wish to renew their contract.
- GP partners have told us the building isn't safe and they're unable to recruit clinical staff – which makes the practice unsustainable in the long term.

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The issues at the Rowans Surgery are not new – NHS South West London has put extra funding into the Rowans over many years to address longstanding issues, but the building is just not fit for purpose.

- The Rowans Surgery has been managed by four different GP providers over the last five years. Even with extra funding, they have not been able to solve problems with the building and staff. Most recently, patients have needed to be seen at other practices in the area because of the inability to recruit.
- We are committed to developing a new health facility as part of the Rowan Park development, which will offer GP and community services, estimated to be deliverable in about 2-3 years.

What options have we considered?

- Extend the contract – *This is not an option*. The current Partners (East Merton Primary Care Network) have agreed an extension of one month to 31st October 2022 however they will not extend beyond this date. They can not continue to deliver the contract without impacting service delivery at their own practices.

Procure a new provider – *This is not an option*. The list size is less than 5000 patients and therefore the contract will not be attractive to bidders. Any new provider will be subject to the same premises and recruitment issues as the preceding four sets of Partners.

- Disperse the list – *recommended option*. The practice will close and patients will be supported to re-register at a local practice of their choosing, where they will receive a better quality and more consistent service offer.

What are we proposing to do?

- After considering all the options, we are proposing to close the Rowans Surgery and ask patients to register with another practice of their choosing. We believe this is the only viable option to ensure patients receive high quality care.

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Over the coming weeks we will be seeking views on this proposal - the impact, what extra support could be offered, as well as any alternative solutions we might not have considered.

- Patients registered at the practice have been written to and invited to join one of a series of engagement events where we can share more information and answer questions.
- Events have been advertised on the NHS SWL, practice and surrounding practice websites. We're also reaching out to local community organisations who support people who might be impacted.

Is there capacity at local practices?

- If the decision is made to disperse the practice list, patients will be asked to choose a local surgery and register there for future treatment.
- We have assessed the capacity of local practices using local workforce data and have spoken directly with Partners at these practices to understand their views.

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In Merton, there is an average of 1 Full Time Equivalent GP to 1783 patients. In East Merton, there is a better ratio, with 1 FTE to 1352 patients*. The national average is 1 FTE GP to 2222 patients.

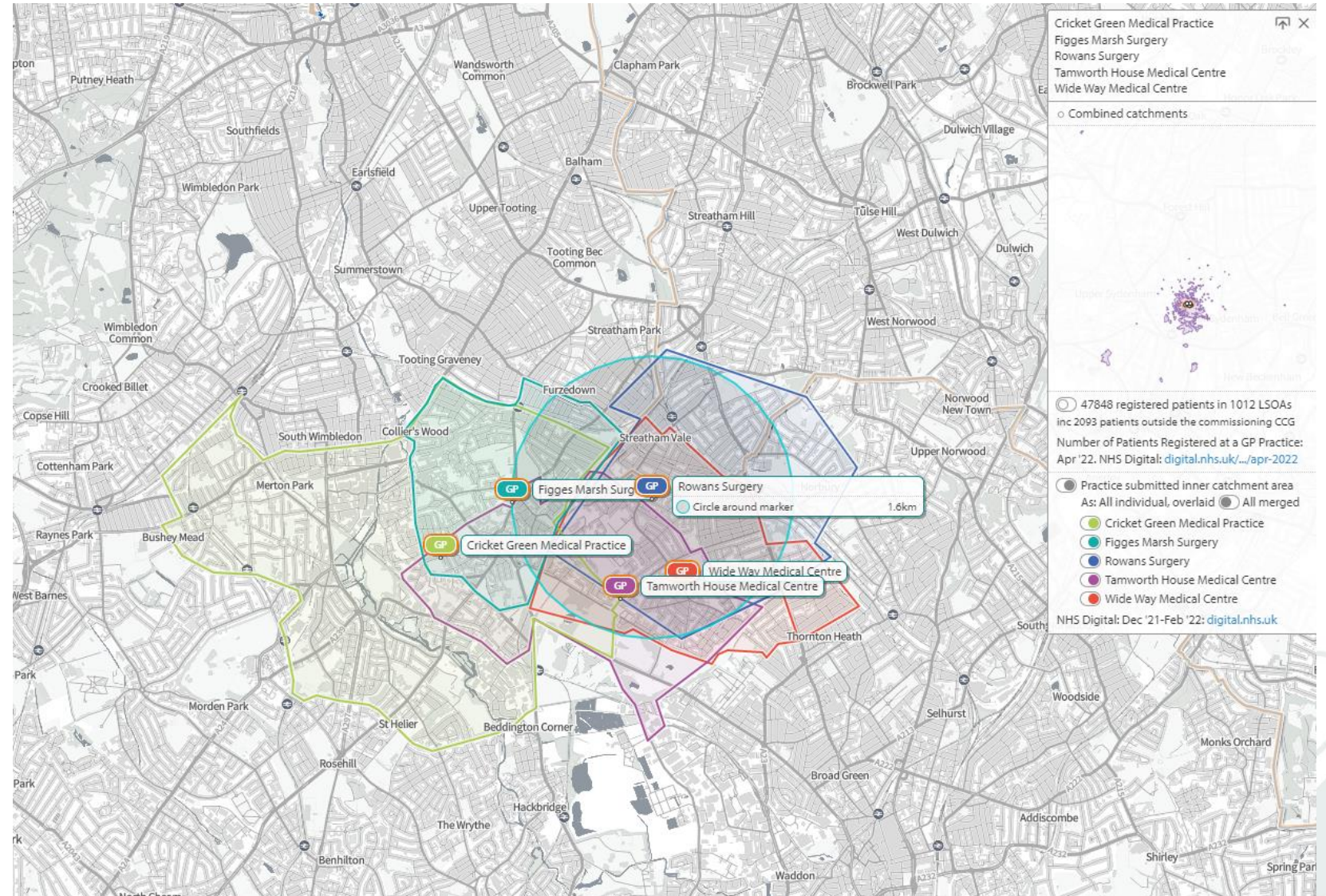
- The closest surgeries in East Merton have said they're willing and able to take on extra patients. They can offer better care with more doctors available for appointments. These practices are Wideway Medical Centre (0.8 miles from the Rowans); Tamworth House Medical Centre (1.0 mile) and Figges Marsh Surgery (1.3 miles).

(* based on local workforce data which reflects a fixed point in the year and therefore is prone to some fluctuation)

Is there capacity at local practices?

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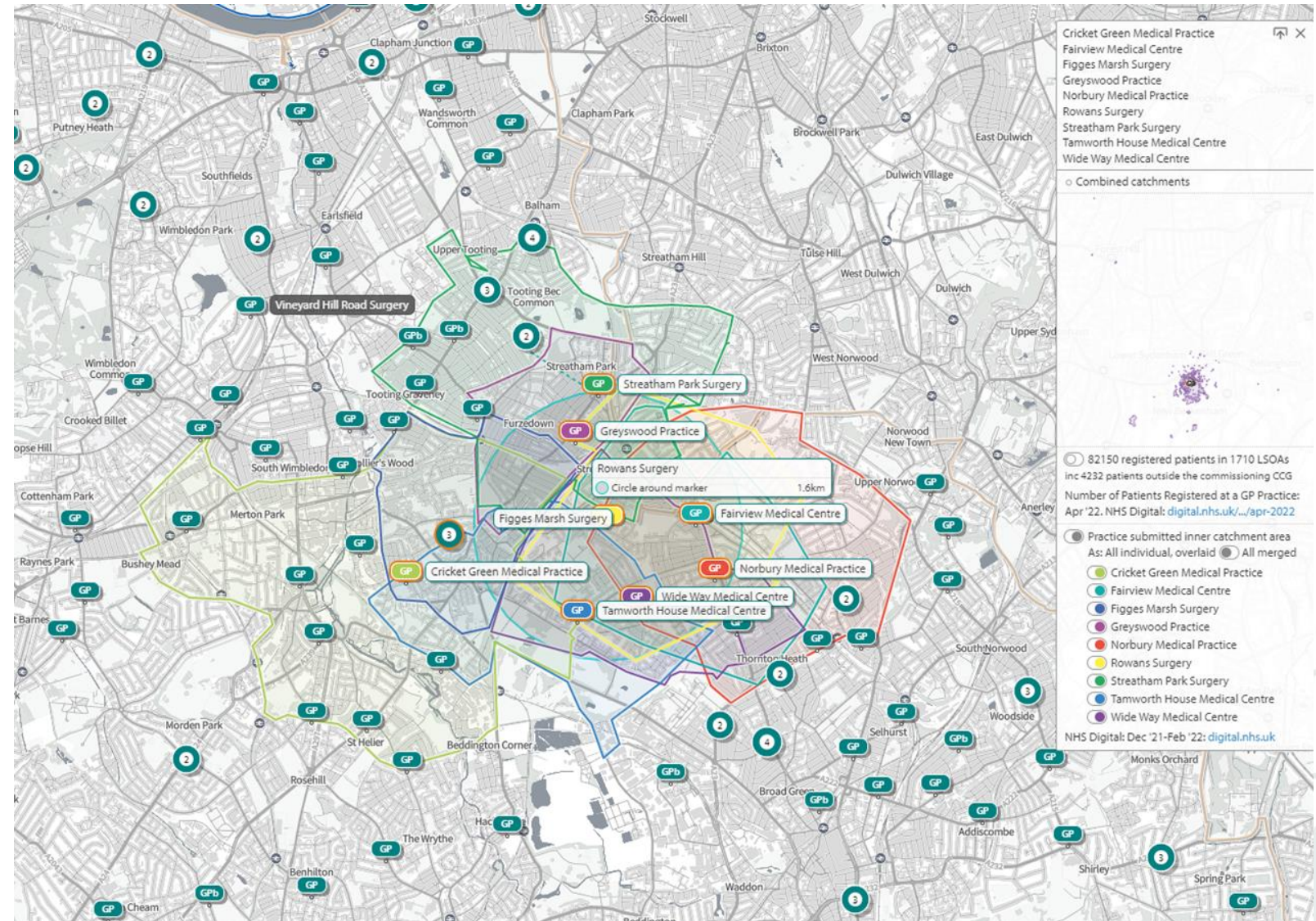
- We have mapped the patients registered with the Rowans Surgery and confirmed that they are included within the catchment area of the local practices referenced on the previous slide
- Map shows East Merton PCN combined catchment areas, in relation to 1 mile radius from Rowans Surgery



Is there capacity at local practices?

- Map shows East Merton PCN and inner catchment area of practices within 1.5 mile radius of Rowans Surgery

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How will patients be supported?

- If the decision is made to disperse the practice list, patients will receive a letter informing them of the closure and providing information on how to re-register. This will include contact details of local practices.
- Patients will need to complete a Patient Registration form to make the transfer. This can be done online as well as in person.

We have completed an Equality Impact Assessment to help us understand which people will be most affected by the change, and we have identified a series of actions to help mitigate the impact for these groups. These include:

- Support offered to help people with the re-registration process. This would involve staff working at the closest practices reaching out to offer support to people who have been identified as vulnerable.
- Partners at the Rowans practice have committed to mobilising a team of care co-ordinators to assist patients where needed, this could be with filling forms or identifying their most local practice. Patients will be able to contact this team via the usual Rowans contact lines.
- Information and advice around routes to alternative primary care settings and services such a dial a ride will be collated and shared with patients.

What are the longer term plans?

- We are committed to developing a new health facility as part of the Rowan Park development, which will offer dedicated GP-led and community services and is estimated to be 2-3 years away.
 - We will work with the site developers and our partners to expedite this in any way possible.
- The New Rowans will provide vital additional primary care estates capacity for the people of East Merton.
- The Primary Care space has been designed for clinical and non-clinical activity.
 - In the coming months we would like to work with local stakeholders and residents to design the service model for the building and ensure our vision for the building meets the needs of the local population.

Longer term plan – challenges

In developing a service model for the new premises, the key challenges facing the existing Rowans Surgery must be understood:

1. A small registered list gives potential contract holders limited financial flexibility and a lack of resilience to enable delivery of a sustainable, high quality service. A standalone Rowans practice will always have this issue.
2. Consecutive providers have been unable to recruit permanent staff. National staffing shortages mean that a small standalone surgery remains unlikely to be able to offer the remuneration, flexibility and personal development opportunities needed to attract and retain highly sought after staff. This situation is exacerbated in areas of high deprivation.
3. Poor quality premises means the practice has been unable to retain workforce or take advantage of digital innovations and new ways of working e.g. group consultations. New premises must be designed to enable patients and staff to take advantage of new innovative modes of consultation and ways of working.

Longer term plan - enablers

In order to utilise the new Rowans premises effectively it is essential we make use of the key enablers the Borough already has in place:

1. East Merton Primary Care Network is made up of four practices with larger lists. Working together to pool resources and provide collective services for patients across East Merton, they will use the new premises as a hub site with one dedicated team delivering continuity of care to local residents.
2. More scale and a bigger budget means a better, more resilient service offer for patients and a more attractive package to encourage new primary care staff into East Merton. The site team will be GP led, with the addition of PCN new roles such as social prescribing and mental health practitioners making for a much more effective and high quality service offer.
3. The new Rowans premises will be fit for purpose and designed for modern primary care which requires not only traditional clinical space but space to enable a range of consultation types and other activities which are essential to enabling services to thrive.

Longer term plan – service model

The New Rowans will form a branch site of the practices in East Merton Primary Care Network (EMPCN), offering integrated GP services to patients across East Merton.

A dedicated, GP led team will operate from the site, delivering a range of clinical and non clinical services. These will include:

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- 1. Same day access** – so that patients can be given an appointment on the day where medically necessary
- 2. Complex care** – delivered by a multi-disciplinary team of staff including care coordinators, mental health practitioners, health and well-being coaches and link workers.
- 3. Planned care** – Specific clinical interventions focused on known population health needs for example, childhood immunisations, cervical screening clinics and the provision of additional diabetes clinics, delivered jointly with community and secondary care.

Longer term plan – service model

4. **(Novel) Innovative community based care** – group consultations focused on areas of need identified through population health data, including:
 - Health education for post-natal women
 - Health and well-being coaching sessions for those who are socially isolated
 - Care Coordination Group sessions for frequent A&E attenders
 - Together joint paediatric clinics with St Georges Hospital
5. **Preventative Care** – the co-ordination function for preventative care in East Merton will be delivered from the Rowans Branch site through bringing together the PCN care co-ordinators as a combined team

Longer term plan - summary

The New Rowans Site will form a hub for local residents, enabling EMPCN practices to jointly deliver a holistic high quality community focused service, for patients across East Merton, including those currently registered at the Rowans Surgery.

Benefits will include:

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- Improved access to effective care for patients
 - Increased primary care capacity, relieving pressures on ED/Urgent Care
 - A wider service offering, aligned to the needs of local communities
 - Additional physical space to support training capacity for health care professionals, thereby supporting recruitment and retention of the primary care workforce
 - A dedicated GP Led multi-professional team operating from the new branch site

In the coming months we would like to work with local stakeholders and residents to co-design the detail of this service model and ensure our vision for the building meets the needs of the local population.

Next steps

- We'll be talking to local people about the proposal to disperse the Rowans Surgery list through a series of events in the coming weeks.
- We'll be considering feedback and any other options put forward, including what additional support might need to be put in place for vulnerable residents.

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A final decision will be made by the South West London Primary Care Contracting Group at the end of September.

- Patients registered at the practice will have received a letter about the proposed changes and will receive a further letter once the final decision has been made.
- If the patient list is dispersed, we would share information about how patients can register at other local practices and vulnerable patients would be supported.
- In the meantime, patients will continue to be seen at local practices, who are working together to make sure people receive high quality care.

Q&A

