



South West London

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120 The Broadway
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To: Pete Flavell, Chief Executive Officer,
HealthWatch Sutton

Sent via email:
pete@healthwatchsutton.org

13 February 2024

Dear Pete

Thank you for the comprehensive Healthwatch report on the experience of Sutton residents accessing earwax removal services in SWL. The report highlights the many benefits to the health and wellbeing of residents who require and receive the service and also makes clear the difficulty that some residents have when requesting the service from their GP practices, I am aware that the offer of ear wax removal is also available as a fee paying service in some pharmacies and this has been accessed by residents.

Unfortunately providing additional NHS earwax removal is not a current priority. As you know, we have ongoing discussion with all partners to review the service we commission and how they are delivered to ensure we spend the NHS pound wisely. We have to make the best use of our resources, and that those resources are used equitably. The previous earwax removal pilot service in other boroughs would have cost £1million per year to extend.

In Sutton, all practices can sign up to the local commissioned service and the table below highlights as an example, the practices and PCNs who have carried out activity this year.. 17 out of 21 practices have signed up to providing earwax removal with an even spread across all Primary Care Network (PCN) geographies. So far, 1,660 episodes of activity have been undertaken demonstrating there is some take up of services across Sutton. Please see the table below which sets out the activity undertaken by practice and PCN.

We have again reviewed all local commissioned services as part of the planning process for 2025/26 and can now confirm there are no plans to change the existing service.

We will continue to ensure practices are aware of the local commissioned service and that they are able to sign up to provide the service. We will also continue to support the availability of services at local community pharmacies as this provides residents with choice.

Table 1 Provision of ear wax removal services, General Practice in Sutton

PCN	Practice	
Carshalton	Bishopsford Road MC	48
	Chesser Surgery	45
	Circle GP Surgery	37
	Sutton Medical Centre	61
	Wrythe Green Surgery	275
Central Sutton	Grove Road Practice	198
	Mulgrave Road Surgery	111
	Old Court House Surgery	91
	Robin Hood Lane	128
Cheam & South Sutton	Cheam Family Practice	98
	Cheam GP Centre	58
	James O'Riordan MC	75
Wallington	Beeches Surgery	0
	Maldon Road Surgery	35
	Manor Practice	0
	Shotfield Medical Practice	150
	Wallington Family Practice	247
		1,660

We recognise the benefit of earwax removal services and have therefore continued to provide access through a service specification which makes clear the eligibility criteria, based on NICE Guidance which we believe continues to be fair and reasonable.

I am the lead for working with HealthWatch Sutton should any further information or discussions be required.

The ICB is grateful for the work Healthwatch Sutton has undertaken and the report will be shared with all Place leads and their teams.

Thank you again for your continued support.

Kind regards
Michelle Rahman



Michelle Rahman
Strategic Director of Transformation
Development Director, Sutton Alliance