

PROPERTY MATTERS

ISSUE: 6

Letter from Graham Roberts, Chief Executive of Assura



Welcome to the latest edition of Property Matters, an issue that celebrates innovation in healthcare development.

We're furthering our commitment to innovative design and build by bringing advanced sustainable development to practices throughout the UK.

Our piece on zero carbon surgeries looks to the future of healthcare property, as we explore the benefits of going green (page 2).

We're also getting creative with community care, as we join forces with our local rugby league club foundations, the Salford Red Devils and Warrington Wolves, to raise funds and awareness for mental and physical support through sport. The initiative will be continuing throughout the next year, with plenty of opportunities to get involved.

As community needs continue to evolve, intelligent design and creative thinking are more important than ever before. We have updated our website, www.assura.co.uk, where further information can be found on how we can assist you with your property needs. Please take a moment to have a look.

We hope you enjoy reading what's next for Assura, as we continue to pioneer new quality care premises solutions for our partners and their patients.

Graham Roberts



HEALTH INVESTOR AWARDS WINNER



HealthInvestor has honoured Assura by naming our team 'Property Developer of the Year' at its annual awards. Andrew Darke proudly collected the award on behalf of the team. We were recognised for our inventive approach to delivering efficient, integrated healthcare premises where needed.

Our 2015 win builds on previous awards received in 2010, 2011 and 2013, a track record that credits our role in the development of, and investment in, flexible, modern and essential primary healthcare premises.

We will be continuing to invest in and introduce new initiatives that facilitate additional service provision, cut energy waste, and enhance the quality of treatment and resources for surgeries throughout the UK.

HOW SUSTAINABLE INNOVATIONS ARE IMPROVING EFFICIENCY AND CUTTING COSTS



Advancing the services provided by general practice is integral to the evolution of NHS care.

Sustainability has long been at the forefront of our company ethos, with all of our new development projects incorporating innovative design measures and achieving the highest BREEAM ratings possible, ensuring that our surgery buildings are energy efficient and sympathetic to the environment.

Assura became a founding member of the Social Stock Exchange which showcases businesses who have a social impact and have taken the step to evidence their impact via the publication of an Impact Report.

Whilst modern buildings are more technologically advanced and relatively speaking, far more efficient, there are often increased running costs associated with larger buildings. Most GPs looking to upgrade their premises will be moving from small, domestic-style premises, to all encompassing, health centres which are often several times the size. The benefits of a larger building to both patients and staff are undeniable, enabling a more streamlined and efficient model of patient care whilst allowing the practice to grow and operate more smoothly. Feedback from Assura's occupiers confirms that patient experience and clinical outcomes are improved as a consequence of extended services delivered from modern premises. Nonetheless overhead costs are something we take seriously and for which we have innovative solutions.

Assura have been working in partnership with sustainability experts to explore ways to overcome these concerns and expand upon our green initiatives. NHS guidelines for premises developments actively encourage reduced carbon measures, but we aim to take this one step further and

achieve a carbon neutral status for our new healthcare facilities, which will not only be eco efficient, but drastically reduce wastage and running costs for GPs.

Heating, for example, is one of the main concerns when moving to a new build. It is important to maintain a comfortable, ambient temperature throughout the building, without the use of air conditioning (often not supported by the NHS) and opening windows, which may conflict with patient confidentiality policies. This therefore requires developers to take a more creative approach, working with sustainability surveyors and thermal modellers to look at more passive design initiatives; such as carefully planning the orientation of the building to reduce direct sunlight, whilst insulating specific windows to reduce susceptibility to fluctuating temperatures.

We have adopted further green initiatives such as the use of biomass boilers (fuelled by locally sourced biofuels to provide a highly efficient energy system), as well as ground source heat pumps and photovoltaic panels, which have had a significant impact in cutting costs and generating sustainable energy. Since completing our first 'zero carbon' rated surgery in 2013, we are dedicated to furthering our commitment to sustainable development by incorporating new and innovative 'green' technologies, enabling future healthcare buildings to attain the same status.

By sourcing new and inventive approaches to cutting costs and wastage, primary care is paving the way for innovative development for the rest of the NHS. Sustainable design not only has the ability to enable a more comfortable and effective patient experience, but significantly reduce running costs for GPs and indeed the financial strain upon the NHS.

THE HEART OF THE HEALTH SERVICE

When it comes to providing care that matches the varying needs of the different communities throughout the UK, it is the GP that sits at the heart of the health service. Whether you're in a city or the suburbs, heading for a check-up or receiving long-term care, local practices play a vital role in treating and supporting a diverse spectrum of needs.

The position occupied by the general practitioner has gained wider recognition in recent years, with further investment and planning projected for new integrated care facilities nationwide.

This now leads to some important decision-making: we need to evaluate which care pathways can best contribute to strong service delivery, and how these might need to be tailored to meet the needs of different practices.

As a developer and an investor, we provide expert insight to any GPs considering expansion or refurbishment, helping them decide how to accommodate these changes in order to improve their practice. We can provide professional advice to those considering the route of sale and leaseback, or make introductions with other surgeries that have been through the process.

Each practice is different, but its influence in the wider delivery system of frontline and community care is growing. If you want to explore the options available to you, the Assura team can help progress your plans for practice sale or improvement.

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR SURGERY'S SPACE

The Frome Medical Centre is a 4,348 sq m purpose built healthcare building that opened in December 2012. With 35,000 patients, the medical centre is one of the largest in the country. Along with 61 consulting rooms, the centre contains an education room, tutorial room and a fully furnished operating theatre with the highest grade air extraction plant.

A vast number of services have also been accommodated, with a independent pharmacy, opticians, mental health services, community services, outpatients and Frome Chiropractic and Homeopathy all available on site.

The main atrium houses Bayfields Coffee Café, which provides healthy snacks for patients, visitors and staff of the health park, creating a more welcoming and less clinical atmosphere.

With patient satisfaction a key priority, the atrium houses six airport-style patient check-in screens for quick registration along with a repeat prescription desk, information point and patient education area equipped with four computer stations.

The centre is at the heart of the community in Frome and many local classes take place there, including Weight Watchers, health walks, stroke clubs, exercise groups and various support groups.

Alongside the medical centre is the Frome Community Hospital, with a 26-bed inpatient facility. The medical centre and hospital work closely together to provide a full range of services for the residents of Frome.

Assura is delighted to be partnering with the clinicians to support them on their service delivery aspirations going forward.



For more information on the service options available to your practice, including sale and leaseback, contact our in-house development team on

01925 420660

info@assura.co.uk

ASSURA CHALLENGE



Assura is working with the Warrington Wolves and Salford Red Devils as part of a charity initiative that supports each rugby league team's foundations.

Our work with both foundations kicked off with the Assura Challenge in May, and we will be continuing to promote sport and group activities as a means of improving self-esteem and mental wellbeing for young people in the local area.

We will be hosting events and running other fundraising activities in aid of the two foundations, which will be held at club grounds and key locations in the North West.

These provide opportunities to play a part and meet other professionals in the community along the way, while helping raise awareness of the healing powers that sport and outdoor activities can have for our communities.

Proceeds will go towards each rugby league foundation's community work, supporting those who wish to receive support in a social and active setting. Businesses wanting to get involved with the cause can contact the Assura team.

GIVE IT A TRY FOR CHARITY

Wednesday 22nd July saw the first event of the Assura Challenge take place at The Pitch at MediaCityUK. Salford Red Devils Foundation joined forces with Warrington Wolves foundation in an excellent Play Touch Rugby league tournament.

A huge thank you to all involved, including the businesses who came down for the event: PwC UK, EY, Deloitte, Havas Lynx, Mazars, Nabarro, Addleshaw Goddard, and of course our own team from Assura.

Congratulations to the winning team from PwC, who came out on top with an impressive 4-2 victory! It was fantastic to see everyone enjoy the day, and to raise awareness and funds for the local community.

We're looking forward to more working and fundraising with the North West business community as we provide support for health and wellbeing in Salford, Manchester and Warrington.

For more on the work that Salford Red Devils and Warrington Wolves do through their respective foundations, visit their web pages below or give us a call to see how you can get involved.

www.salfordreddevilsfoundation.co.uk
www.wolvesfoundation.com



If you are interested in more information or would like details on how Assura can help develop your property, you can get in touch in the following ways:

01925 420660
info@assura.co.uk

www.assura.co.uk