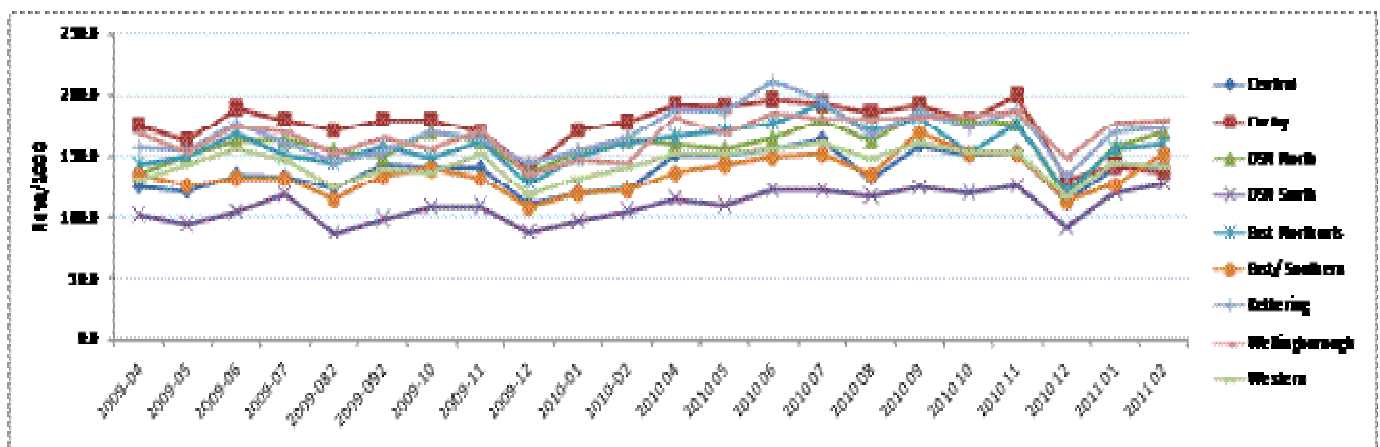


Acorn Awards 2011

Category – Best QIPP Entry

Prospective Review of Referrals

In October 2010, Corby Healthcare Clinical Commissioning Group was heading for a year end forecast overspend of £700,000. For a number of years, GP Practices within Corby have been referring the most patients per 1,000 patients out of all other localities within Northamptonshire (see figure 1).



‘Prospective review’ of all referrals was introduced in to all practices in December 2010 following the success of one practice significantly reducing referrals. No acute referral leaves Corby unless it has been peer reviewed (except for termination of pregnancy and cancer).

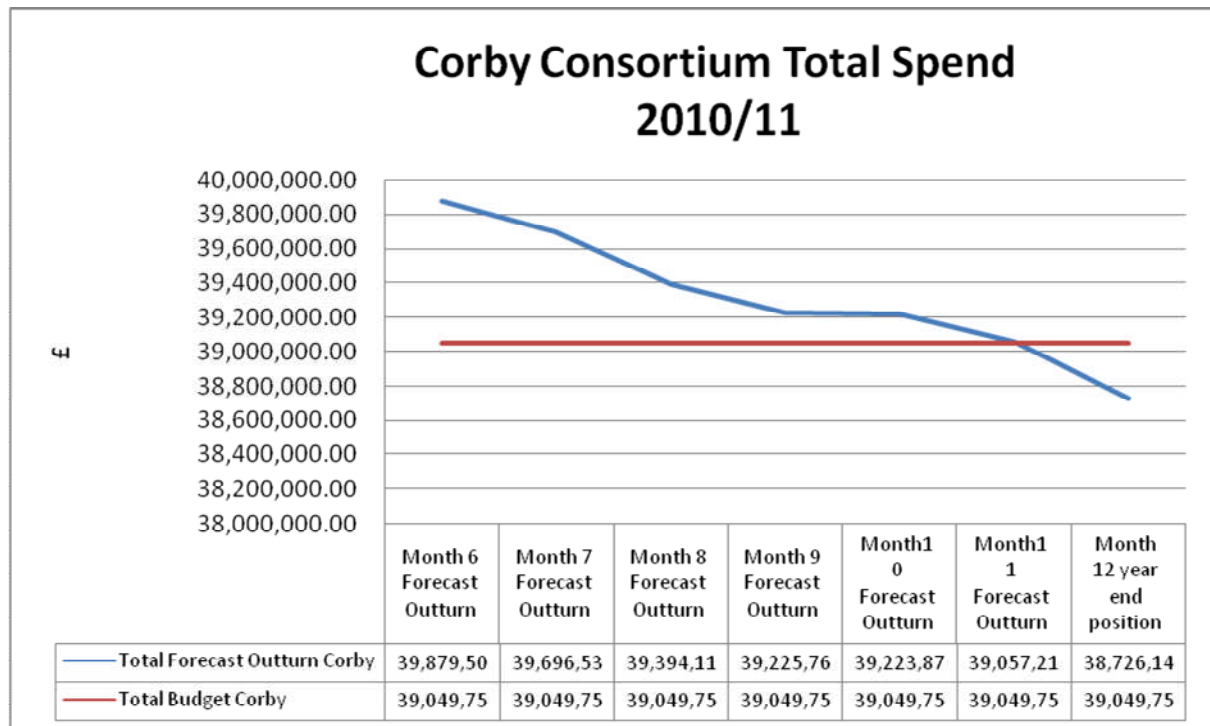
Most practices review all referrals at a weekly clinical meeting. The largest practice which serves 45,000 patients has a slightly different approach and has identified leads who receive referrals for a particular clinical area. Referrals in Corby are graded as follows:

A = Referral required

B = Patient to be treated within the practice / another practice i.e. by a GP with specialist interest or enhanced skills

C = Referral or no further action required.

In March 2011, the end of year position was £300,000 under spent, achieving a staggering £1m saving in 4 months (see figure 2).



**Figure 2**

In summary up to a 40% reduction in referrals was achieved with reductions in the following areas:

- Orthopaedics -41%
- Cardiology -28%
- Gynaecology -36%
- ENT -43%
- GI and Liver -51%
- Dermatology -36%
- Neurology -40%
- Urology -28%
- General Surgery (not spec) -40%
- Rheumatology -44%

Emergency admissions have also reduced by 10%. GPs where practicable are discussing the need for referral with either a GP or consultant colleague before taking the decision on whether to admit the patient.

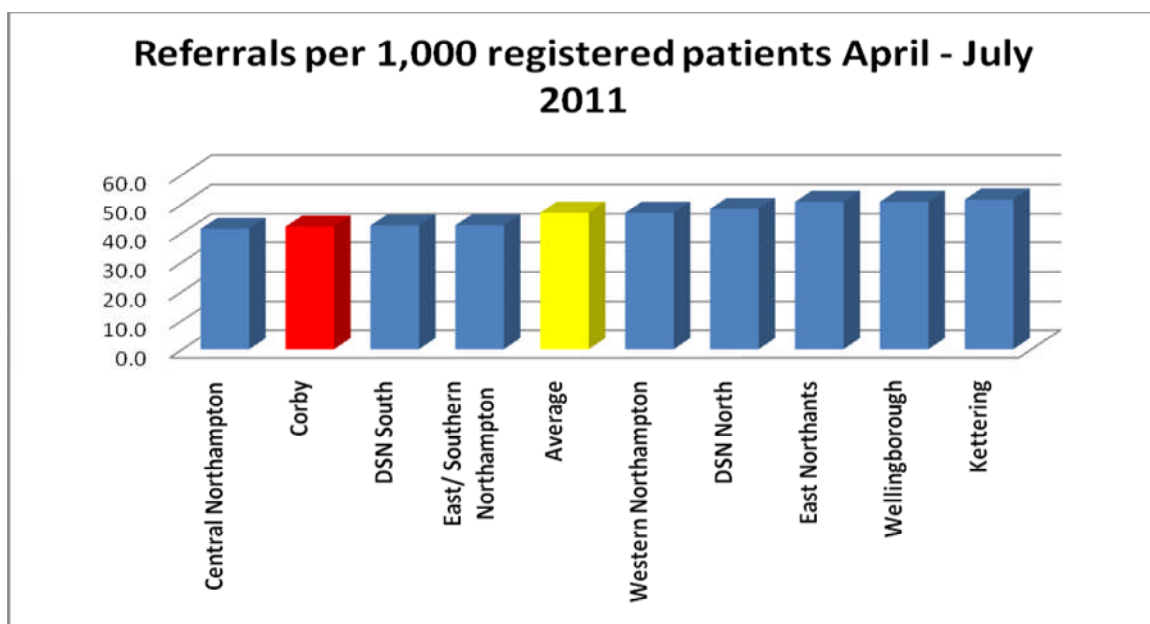
Prospective review is supporting GPs to maintain and improve their standards across all areas of their practice. Right care in the right place at the right time is what all Corby GPs are aspiring to provide to all patients.

Unexplained medical practice variation is not good for patients and drives unnecessary costs in the health system. Prospective Review has gone some way in tackling this variation, thereby making Primary Care in Corby more predictable in its response to presenting demand.

Success in delivering a high quality service is dependent not just on there being adequate resources, but on those resources being used to maximum effect. GPs in Corby are striving to find the right balance between primary and secondary care, and between treatment and prevention so that health gains are maximised and people receive care in the most appropriate and efficient way.

By ensuring limited resources are directed in the most appropriate way, investment has been freed up to divert in to screening for diseases. As a result of prospective review, the CCG is able to invest in a screening programme for arrhythmia and diabetes this year.

Due to the success in 2010/11, Prospective Review of Referrals has continued in 2011/12 and has proved be the most successful QIPP scheme. Corby is now one of the lowest referring localities within Northamptonshire (see figure 3).



**Figure 3**