

EMERGENCY AND URGENT CARE

Introduction

1. This is the Interim Report of the Emergency and Urgent Care Task and Finish Review Group to consider the Emergency and Urgent Care workstream of County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Clinical Strategy.

Membership of the Review Group

2. Councillors H. Scott (Chair) Newall and Nutt.

Acknowledgements

3. The Task and Finish Review Group acknowledges the support and assistance provided in the course of their investigation and would like to place on record their thanks to the following :-

County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust, Edmund Lovell, Associate Director of Communications and Marketing; Dr Alan McCullough, Lead Clinical Governance and Derek Murphy, Associate Chief Operating Officer and Abbie Metcalfe, Democratic Officer.

Methods of Investigation

4. The Task and Finish Review Group has met on one occasion and the notes of that meeting were reported to the Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee.
5. At the meeting, Members discussed the Trust's plan to integrate Urgent Care Centre with Emergency Departments which includes moving the Urgent Care Centre at Dr Piper House to Darlington Memorial Hospital. The proposal is to enable patients to be directed more effectively and faster into the more appropriate environment for their care.
6. Members expressed their frustrations that this initiative has been muted for a long time yet appeared not to be moving forward. Members suggested that a briefing should be arranged with all NHS organisations to establish the issues.
7. Members were informed that the Trust had had success in reducing the number of unnecessary hospital admissions through the introduction of the Rapid Access Medical Assessment Centre (RAMAC) and of the plans to introduce further services in the hospital and community that GP's could access as an alternative to hospital admission.
8. The Trust were keen to improve the service in respect of unplanned care and emergency responses given that there has been a percentage

increase in the number of emergency admissions into hospital within the last year and Members were reminded that Darlington Memorial Hospital has Trauma Unit status for the next three years.

Conclusions to date

9. Members welcomed the opportunity to meet with Officers and receive an overview of the Emergency and Urgent Care workstream.
10. At the meeting, it became apparent that this issue was broader than first realised and needed to involve all Members of the Committee. There was also a duplication of work that the Committee was involved in and it could be beneficial to amalgamate the work being undertaken by the two previously established Task and Finish Review Groups (Urgent Care Centre and Emergency and Urgent Care).
11. The Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting in August 2012, agreed to disband both of those Review Groups and establish a new Urgent Care Services Task and Finish Review Group incorporating both strands of work.
12. A briefing was arranged for all Members of the Scrutiny Committee with representatives from County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust, Darlington Clinical Commissioning Group and NHS County Durham and Darlington and it continues to receive regular updates on the progress of integrating urgent care with emergency services.

Recommendation

13. That the position be noted.

Emergency and Urgent Care Task and Finish Review Group