
**SEIZING THE FUTURE: DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR THE
NEXT FIVE YEARS – PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor Andrew Scott, Health and Leisure Portfolio
**Responsible Directors - Miriam Davidson, Director of Public, Darlington Primary Care
Trust**
**- Lorraine O’Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive, Darlington
Borough Council**

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. This report is to brief the Council on the current review of Co Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust’s (the “Trust”) hospital’s “Seizing the Future” consultation process.
2. The aim of the outcome of the review is that safe, sustainable and high quality services will be delivered for the 21st Century.
3. NHS County Durham (formerly County Durham Primary Care Trust) in its role as commissioner of health and healthcare services for Co Durham and Darlington is leading the public consultation on the case for change and proposed solutions.

Summary

4. Strategic drivers of the review include Lord Darzi’s report on the future of the NHS, “Our NHS, Our Future” (July 2008) and the NHS North East’s strategic vision for transforming health and health care services within North East England, “Our Vision, Our Future, Our North East NHS” (May 2008).
5. The consultation aims to balance the demands of providing high quality specialist care and treatment with the need to deliver services as close to home as possible.
6. The review has been led by a team of senior clinicians supported by the Trust’s governors and senior managers. The proposals were then developed by Trust clinicians including doctors, nurses, therapists and other health care staff as well as with patients and stakeholders. The clear clinical opinion is that no change is not an option.
7. A series of public meetings and events have been organised including a Darlington Partnership assembly which was held on 11 November 2008.

8. The consultation proposes two options to provide an improved quality of service under the principle of “centralised where necessary, localised where possible.” The Seizing the Future consultation proposes:
 - (a) concentrating acute services at Darlington Memorial Hospital and the University Hospital of North Durham including accident and emergency, planned and emergency surgery, diagnostics, obstetrics, paediatrics and outpatients;
 - (b) developing Bishop Auckland General Hospital as a world class specialist centre including planned surgery, cataract centre, hip and knee surgery, a midwifery-led unit and bowel cancer screening centre;
 - (c) plans to develop Bishop Auckland General Hospital into a rehabilitation centre of excellence.
9. Both options contain a much-needed investment plan for Darlington Memorial Hospital securing £30 million over the next two to four years in order to update the hospital to ensure the safety and quality of services. This will be of indisputable benefit for Darlington residents and has been warmly welcomed throughout the consultations.
10. Concerns about public transport have been raised during the consultation, an issue for Darlington in light of the mix of rural and urban population. In response, the Trust is developing a hospital link bus service. In an emergency, patients are transported by emergency ambulance where necessary and many patients use patient transport to take them to and from hospital.
11. Reducing health inequalities is included as part of the consultation assessment via Health Impact Assessments and will continue to be undertaken at all stages of proposed developments.

Recommendation

12. It is recommended that Council:-
 - (a) note the public consultation process and public views expressed to date;
 - (b) note the role that the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny committee has played in the consultation process to date;
 - (c) note the clinical specialisation issues and impact of the European Working Time Directive on the Trust which makes the status quo untenable;
 - (d) note the proposed development in both Option A and Option B including £30 million investment at Darlington Memorial Hospital; and
 - (e) support the Trust’s preferred option, ie, Option B

Reasons

13. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons :-

- (a) both options provide improved services at Darlington Memorial Hospital;
- (b) option B provides a new and important service which would significantly improve the care of patients needing rehabilitation following acute illnesses;
- (c) option B addresses inequalities in access to services and improve long term health outcomes.

Background Papers

Seizing the Future: Developing a strategic direction for the next five years. A public consultation document

author : Extension

S17 Crime and Disorder	Strengthening acute services including A&E and emergency care links to delivering the Alcohol Strategy
Health and Well Being	A direct impact on delivering health care services
Sustainability	The proposal aims to deliver safe, sustainable high quality services
Diversity	Health Impact Assessments will be undertaken on proposals
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	People requiring acute hospital services
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not recommend any change to the Budget or Policy Framework
Key Decision	Yes
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	Inequalities in access to health care services would be addressed

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

14. County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust provides hospital services from three main sites:

- Darlington Memorial Hospital
- Bishop Auckland General Hospital
- University Hospital of North Durham

In addition the Trust runs two community hospitals at Chester le Street and Shotley Bridge.

15. Health services are becoming more specialised which gives direct benefits to patients by improving outcomes of care. However, specialisation requires larger teams i.e. The Royal College of Surgeons recommends that acute hospitals should serve at least 500,000 people to retain staff specialist skills.

16. Specialisation and the European Working Time Directive are two key challenges which face all hospitals. They have a particular impact in relation to providing emergency care.

17. These issues have led to clear clinical advice that the status quo is not an option for continuing to deliver high quality services.

18. The consultation proposes options to provide an improved quality of service under the principle of “centralised where necessary, localised where possible.” The Seizing the Future consultation proposes:

- concentrating acute services at Darlington Memorial Hospital and the University Hospital of North Durham including accident and emergency, planned and emergency surgery, diagnostics, obstetrics, paediatrics and outpatients
- developing Bishop Auckland General Hospital as a world class specialist centre including planned surgery, cataract centre, hip and knee surgery, a midwifery-led unit and bowel cancer screening centre
- plans to develop Bishop Auckland General Hospital into a rehabilitation centre of excellence.

OPTION A proposes

Bishop Auckland General Hospital

Redeveloping Bishop Auckland as a planned care centre serving the whole Trust including:

- daycase and inpatient surgery
- cataract centre
- hip and knee surgery
- midwifery-led unit
- colorectal screening centre

Hospital services for the local community including:

- a full range of outpatient clinics in medicine, surgery and women and children’s services

- diagnostic tests, including X-ray, CT scanning and MRI
- an urgent care centre operating 24 hours a day
- intermediate care inpatient beds for the local population

Darlington Memorial Hospital and University Hospital of North Durham

Concentrating main acute services for the whole of County Durham and Darlington at Darlington Memorial Hospital and University Hospital of North Durham including:

- accident and emergency
- acute medicine
- emergency surgery
- planned surgery
- obstetrics
- gynaecology
- paediatrics
- outpatients
- diagnostics (eg X-ray, CT scanning and MRI)

OPTION B proposes the service changes outlined in Option A plus:

Bishop Auckland General

Additional services at Bishop Auckland would include:

- a Trust-wide rehabilitation centre of excellence – a completely new service for the area
- intermediate care inpatient beds serving the whole of the Trust
- rapid medical assessment centre for GPs to refer patients for an urgent consultant opinion
- paediatric rapid access clinic – where GPs may refer children for an urgent consultation opinion

Under the principle of “centralised where necessary, localised where possible”, all outpatient clinics and diagnostic tests (eg X-ray and other scans) would still be provided at all three sites.

Option B is the preferred option because it delivers all the benefits of option A plus new services for residents of Darlington and across County Durham. Because of the assets held by the Trust, it would not be possible to provide this service other than at Bishop Auckland.

Outcome of Consultation

19. The public consultation on *Seizing the Future* runs for 14 weeks, from 6 October 2008 until 12 January 2008. The main issues that arose throughout the consultations so far have been transport which the Trust is addressing and support for much-needed investment at Darlington Memorial Hospital.