
OVERVIEW OF HEALTH AND PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1. Since the last meeting of the Council, the following are the main areas of work the Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee has undertaken.

Work Programme 2016/17

2. We have given consideration to the Work Programme for this Committee for the Municipal Year 2016/17 and possible review topics. The work programme is a rolling work programme and items can be added as necessary.
3. Members also agreed a revised methodology for this Scrutiny Committee's work programme, to enable the committee to analyse information for each topic area aligning it to the eight outcomes and three conditions in the Sustainable Community Strategy and relevant performance indicators from the Performance Management Framework.

Maternity Services

4. The Scrutiny Committee sought assurances from County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust that the removal of twin births from Darlington Memorial Hospital (DMH) to James Cook Hospital was not a permanent arrangement following an external review of the service.
5. We were informed that the Trust needed to ensure that expectant mothers received the best quality of care and that once the best clinical services had been secured and leadership issues had been resolved twin deliveries would return to DMH.
6. Although two new consultants have been appointed there is a shortage of Junior Doctors which the Trust needs to address.
7. Scrutiny will continue to monitor Maternity Services within DMH and will receive regular updates.

Urgent Care

8. The Scrutiny Committee requested an update in relation to the long outstanding proposal to co-locate Urgent Care and Accident and Emergency at DMH. Members were disappointed and frustrated to learn that there is even further delay and the funding for this project is uncertain.

9. The Trust is awaiting the outcome of an application to the NHS England's Estates and Technical Transformation Fund. Nationally there have been many bids and if the application is successful the funds would not necessarily be released this year. If unsuccessful the Trust may indeed have to seek alternative funding sources.
10. Members were also advised that there were currently no funds available for the proposed Accident and Emergency improvement works at University Hospital of North Durham despite there having been recent publicity about the project.
11. Members raised concerns that the Better Health Programme (BHP) would have an impact on Urgent Care and Accident and Emergency services in Darlington and asked if this was the reason for the delay. The Trust advised that this was not the case and the commitment to the co-location remained.
12. Funding was also needed for other services including radiology and the purchase of MRI scanners. The Trust stressed that the Operating Theatres had also been developed due to obsolescence of the estate and that there were other priorities within the Trust against which it had to balance the need for development of the Emergency Department at DMH which Members were pleased to learn 'was working well'.

Access to GP Appointments – Six Monthly Report

13. The Scrutiny Committee received a PowerPoint presentation from the Darlington Clinical Commissioning Group relating to Access to GP Appointments. We were advised that the NHS Five Year Forward View stated that strong general practice and primary care services were essential for a high quality and responsive NHS although it was acknowledged that urgent action was needed as the services were under exceptional pressure.
14. Members welcomed the major programme of improvement for General Practice Development which included practical support for individual practices/federations and super-partnerships, a new National three year 'releasing time for Patients' programme to reach every practice to free up ten per cent of GP's time. There is to be integration of extended access with out of hours and urgent care services including a reformed 111 number and local clinical hubs. A new innovative voluntary GP contract will support integrated primary and community health services; and monies from the GP Access Fund (formerly Prime Ministers Challenge Fund) will target 'improved GP Access'.
15. The General Practice Resilience Programme will support practices to reduce workload and release time with other measures including simplification of the GP payment system; a streamlined Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection regime; proposals announced in July for professional indemnity costs; and changes to hospital contracts in order to release the administrative burden on practices.
16. We noted that all Practices had come together to share GP appointments data and extended hours were available and advertised on the websites of all eleven Darlington practices. Members were pleased to note that same day appointments

were offered especially for children and ten out of eleven practices had signed up to the 111 pre-bookable appointments service.

17. Scrutiny was astounded to learn that approximately 10,000 GP appointments were made across Darlington every day.
18. System Resilience Group Funded schemes to improve GP access included pre-bookable Saturday Clinics at Denmark Street Surgery from 8.00am to 1.30pm and an evening telephone advice service, operated by GP's who have access to all practice clinical systems, which received all non-emergency 111 calls for adults and children aged five years and over between 6.00pm and 10.00pm Monday to Friday.

Putting Victim's First – Police Crime and Victims' Plan 2016 - 2021

19. The Scrutiny Committee received details of the Police and Crime Commissioners 'Putting Victim's First – Police Crime and Victims' Plan 2016 to 2021' which was now out for consultation and three strategic aims, namely, inspire confidence in the police and criminal justice system; support victims and the vulnerable; and tackle crime and keep our communities safe. It was agreed that members would respond individually to the consultation.
20. Members noted that a Roadshow Stall was at Community Day Darlington on 12 September and Hurworth Country Fair on 17 September where views had been submitted.

Councillor Wendy Newall
Chair of the Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee