
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.

Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Stroke Services

2. Members have had concerns about the services available to stroke patients following discharge from hospital for some time. We are pleased that the CCG is now fulfilling its commitment to review the rehabilitation provision for stroke.
3. We welcomed a presentation from Karen Hawkins, Director of Commissioning and Transformation, NHS Darlington CCG, on the Stroke Rehabilitation Service Review and noted the importance of engagement as a crucial part of understanding the views of patients, public and carers to inform any future decision making.
4. Patient surveys have been carried out on the wards at Bishop Auckland Hospital and the University Hospital of North Durham and also engagement with the carer groups across County Durham and Darlington. Unfortunately there have only been 66 responses to date so additional funding has been secured to undertake further engagement to maximise input.
5. We also examined the emerging themes and the next steps following the engagement activity.
6. One emerging theme was a lack of support once patients are discharged from hospital and Members were keen to see that patients who had already been through the system were being captured in the engagement exercise for their feedback on the service. We felt that engagement with patients and user of the service was critical and also that information is fed back to the participants of the review with any service developments.
7. I advised the Members that I had met with the Stroke Club on 22 October and the lack of support following discharge from Bishop Auckland Hospital was a recurring theme. I also intend to make contact with the Darlington Stroke Recovery Service.
8. Members also discussed the potential lack of general knowledge around services for patients of stroke and a lack of signposting and agreed that promotion of the pathways was also key and that General Practitioners were aware of the services available to signpost patients effectively.

NHS CCG Darlington Governance Arrangements

9. Karen Hawkins, Director of Commissioning and Transformation, NHS Darlington CCG, gave a presentation on governance arrangements of the NHS Darlington Clinical Commissioning Group
10. CCGs are responsible for recruiting and selecting their leadership team under the NHS Act 2012 and Dr. O'Brien has been newly appointed as the Single Accountable Officer, across the five CCG's supported by a Joint Management Team.
11. The presentation highlighted the benefits of the five CCG's working collaboratively and confirmed that place-based commissioning was to continue and there was to be no change to existing governance or decision making and we will retain a local clinical voice and leadership.

Pain Management

12. We received a presentation from Katie McLeod, Head of Commissioning and Strategy, NHS Darlington CCG, on the procurement of new Persistent Pain Services.
13. The presentation outlined the rationale for the change due to the lack of equity of service across Durham and Darlington with the previous model; the high wait times for access to pain psychology and the high level of opioid prescribing; and described the new Biopsychosocial model, which adopts a holistic approach to the management of pain, and a tiered approach to the provision of care based on the level of intensity of pain.
14. There is to be a single point of access and a tiered approach to care with community based tier 1 and 2 services and specialised acute based tier 3 services at the Darlington Memorial Hospital.
15. It was acknowledged that there had been some initial teething problems which had now been recognised and addressed and performance reporting was in place.
16. Members were pleased to see that the psychological impact on pain management was being recognised rather than just focussing solely on relieving the physical aspects of their pain.
17. We welcome the service and recognise the importance of an alternative service away from the general practitioners for the management of pain.

Councillor Wendy Newall
Chair of the Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee