

Seizing the Future – briefing

1. Background

County Durham and Darlington Acute Hospitals Trust was established in 2002 to bring about closer working between local hospitals, and to implement a series of changes to services to ensure they remained sustainable, following changes in medical practice.

These changes were proposed by Professor Ara Darzi, professor of surgery at Imperial College, and were subject to public consultation before being agreed by the Department of Health and health ministers.

The Trust includes:

- Bishop Auckland General Hospital
- Darlington Memorial Hospital
- University Hospital of North Durham
- Shotley Bridge Community Hospital
- Chester-le-Street Community Hospital

2. What is “Seizing the Future”?

Seizing the Future is a programme of change aimed at developing the Trust’s strategic direction for the next five years.

It will be supported by a major clinical service review which will include:

- An examination of current services
- An assessment of how these services adhere to best practice in clinical outcomes
- A review of achievement of national standards across all services
- The development of future service options

3. What will the review deliver?

At the end of the review, we will have:

- A five-year strategic plan
- A compelling clinical vision
- Agreed high quality clinical standards and outcomes for the future
- A decision on the way forward for our hospitals over the next five years

4. Why are we doing this?

It is five years since the service review carried out by Professor Darzi. We now need to look forward to the next five years and consider where the Trust needs to be in 2012, considering:

- What will services look like?
- How do we get there?

There are a number of key national policies which impact on our hospitals

- Patient choice - patients now have a choice of where they have their treatment. This can be their local hospital, or it could be another trust outside County Durham and Darlington, or in the independent sector
- Payment by Results - hospitals are now only paid for the patients they see. So if patients choose to go elsewhere, then hospitals in County Durham and Darlington do not receive income
- Increased competition from private hospitals - under choice, a patient must have the option of using an independent sector hospital, as well as options in the NHS
- Practice Based Commissioning - GPs now have a much stronger role in deciding where patients are treated. Many GPs are keen to develop services in their own practices, or across a number of practices.
- Shift of some of Trust's activity to Primary Care settings – in the future, more services will be delivered in primary care and community settings, and where possible, in a patient's own home – avoiding admission to hospital altogether
- 18 week patient journey - by the end of 2008, all patients must have their outpatient appointment, and tests, and have been admitted, or begun their treatment within 18 weeks of referral by their GP.
- Reduction in time spent in hospital by patients - primary care trusts have targets to reduce the number of days that patients stay in hospital. National data shows that patients have a longer length of stay in County Durham and Darlington, compared with similar hospitals.

We expect that these policies will mean a fall in the numbers of patients needing treatment in district general hospitals and therefore a reduction in the Trust's income.

5. How are we doing this?

Seizing the Future will be in three main phases, with a challenging timescale:

1. Scoping study (November 2007-January 2008)

This phase will include:

- Defining the scope of the review
- Discussions with key stakeholders

- Initial analysis of the impact of providing more care as close to homes as possible
2. Development of future service options (January-May 2008)
This phase will include:
 - Defining the scope of the review
 - Continued stakeholder involvement through workshops, and a Seizing the Future website
 - Development of evidence base
 - Testing options
 - Decision on preferred options for consultation
 3. Formal consultation on service options (Summer 2008)

The review will be aligned to key emerging drivers for change:

- Service Line Management, which is currently being piloted in the Trust, and which is about creating a better understanding of the relationship between clinical and financial performance and effectiveness
- The PCT commissioning strategy, underpinned by the public engagement programme, “The Big Conversation”
- The national review, “Our NHS our future”, led by Lord Darzi

6. The role of Matrix

The Trust has engaged Matrix Insight to support the review.

Matrix Insight is the consulting arm of Matrix Knowledge Group. Matrix offers consulting, research and informatics to international organisations, governments, public service providers including health and social care, businesses and the charitable sector. They have undertaken similar acute service review work in other NHS organisations.

Matrix’s role will be to:

- Facilitate dialogue between clinical teams, users and stakeholders
- Develop a rigorous evidence base
- Support development of options
- Test options with a range of internal and external stakeholders
- Support our approach to public consultation
- Provide objectivity to the process

7. End of year scoping study

The review timescale demands for the initial scoping study phase to be completed by January 2008.

There will be four elements to this phase:

1. Defining the scope of the review
 - Assessing the key issues involved

- Gaining an understanding of views and opinions of all staff
- Deciding on lead roles for the review process
- Developing a review project plan – tasks, timescales and deliverables

2. Stakeholder mapping exercise

- Carried out to ensure maximum stakeholder coverage and determine ways in which they can be engaged
- Creating opportunities to engage with
 - Clinical staff
 - Other internal Trust staff
 - Governors and members
 - Other major external stakeholders

3. Developing a stakeholder engagement website

- Creating a secure website which
 - Allows ongoing review and dissemination of key data and information for all staff
 - Assists discussion and decision making
- And which provides information for stakeholders including:
 - Background to Seizing the Future
 - Progress updates
 - Information on workshops and related activities
 - Analyses and evidence base

4. An initial analysis of Our NHS our Future

The national review led by Lord Darzi will set a framework for the NHS in the future. As part of the scoping study Matrix will work with the Trust to carry out an initial assessment of its implications for the Trust.

8. Next steps

The Trust is beginning work on the scoping study and will be seeking to engage with its internal and external stakeholders.

Once we have established the stakeholder engagement website, we will contact you to give details of how it can be accessed.

For more information on Seizing the Future, please contact:

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