

Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee

8th January 2007

Consultation on the future provision of psychiatric intensive care services for County Durham and Darlington



Report of the Head of Overview and Scrutiny

Purpose

1. To inform members of the consultation on the future provision of psychiatric intensive care services for County Durham and Darlington; to consider a Health Scrutiny response to the consultation.

Background

2. At the 2nd October 2006 Health Scrutiny Committee, members received information on the modernisation of adult mental health services and progress against the adult Mental Health Strategy for County Durham and Darlington.
3. As part of this strategy, Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Trust and County Durham Primary Care Trust have launched a consultation on a proposal to provide psychiatric intensive care services, on a permanent basis, at West Park Hospital on the outskirts of Darlington.
4. The services for the north of County Durham transferred to West Park from the County Hospital in Durham in April 2005.
5. This move followed a three-month public consultation and was agreed as a temporary measure to provide improved accommodation and a more suitable environment for people experiencing acute mental health problems.
6. The original plan was for the service to move back to Durham once the new Lanchester Road Hospital opened, but both trusts now believe it may be more appropriate for the service to remain at West Park Hospital.
7. A relatively small number of people from Durham and Derwentside need to receive intensive care (approximately 50 people each year). These people normally only need to stay on the unit for a short period of time - the average length of stay at West Park Hospital is less than 30 days which is well within the recommended maximum of 56 days.

