

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee held at the County Hall, Durham on Friday 27 April 2007 at 9.30 a.m.

COUNCILLOR J PRIESTLEY in the Chair.

Durham County Council

Councillors Porter, Simmons, Stradling and Wade

Chester le Street District Council

Councillor Harrison

Durham City Council

Councillor Pitts

Easington District Council

Councillor Campbell

Other Members

Councillors Bowman, Cox, Myers and Williams

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G Armstrong, R Carr, Chaplow, Crosby, Gray, Maitland and Mason.

A1 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

A2 Healthcare Commission Annual Health Check: 2006/07 Declaration

The Sub Committee considered a report of the Head of Overview and Scrutiny on the performance of NHS Trusts as part of the Health Check process (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Sub Committee suggested the following responses to the NHS Trusts declarations:

County Durham PCT – The Health Scrutiny Sub Committee welcomes the aim, vision and strategic objectives of the new CDPCT. The direction of travel will be used to inform a Health Scrutiny committee work programme so that we continue to challenge and hold to account with a focus on the commissioning priorities. The Sub Committee notes the CD PCT annual health declaration, the areas of compliance, development and where relevant insufficient assurance.

County Durham and Darlington Acute Trust (CDDANHS) – The Health Scrutiny Sub Committee met on 5 February with both the CDPCT and CDDANHS Trust to better understand the issues associated with reconfiguration of health and hospital services in County Durham.

Key themes that emerged from the discussion relate to driving down access targets, matching capacity to meet demand, the effective use of resources, delivery of quality services and patient safety. The Sub Committee notes the annual health declaration and the area of non compliance C4a MRSA during 2006/07.

The Health Scrutiny Sub Committee will monitor progress in this regard and have requested that the CDDANHST provide information on their Improvement and Recovery Plan for this issue.

Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Trust

Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Trust and County Durham Primary Care Trust have just concluded a consultation exercise on a proposal to provide psychiatric intensive care services (PICU) on a permanent basis at West Park Hospital on the outskirts of Darlington.

The Health Scrutiny Sub Committee has responded with recommendations that relate to transport and transfer arrangements of patients, welcomed the free taxi service for families, carers and friends and is seeking assurances from the Trust that the new hospital at Lanchester Road has flexibility within its specification and is future proofed if clinical needs change for PICU beds to be installed.

The Health Scrutiny Sub Committee note the TEWANHST annual health declaration and that that they are reporting an in year lapse between October 2006 - February 2007 for Core Standard C5a as there was insufficient assurance that they were compliant, during this period.

In relation to domain five (accessible and responsive care) a member of the Sub Committee made the point that in his experience and that of some of his constituent's access to psychiatric care remains a concern.

North East Ambulance Service NHS Trust

Rural Ambulance services continue to be an area of interest for the Health Scrutiny Sub Committee post consultation. The Health Scrutiny Sub Committee looks forward to a detailed implementation plan to be developed by NEAS, in conjunction with the PCT. This plan will describe the steps required to establish the service and outline the other duties that the Community Paramedics will undertake including ensuring that the Paramedics can be released quickly from these other duties in an emergency situation.

The Health Scrutiny Sub Committee would like to see resolved at the earliest opportunity the issue of meal breaks. The JHOSC note that discussions have taken place between management and staff side representatives and in the interests of the service the JHOSC would welcome an early resolution with this issue.

The Health Scrutiny Sub Committee noted the NEAS annual health declaration.

Resolved:

1. That the areas of compliance and non compliance for each NHS Trust be noted and that these comments be shared with the respective NHS Trusts to

assist them respond to the Health Care Commission with their respective declarations.

2. That the areas of non-compliance be included in a future Health Scrutiny Sub Committee work programme so that progress can be monitored.

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