

Adults, Well-being and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee



20 December 2010

Short Breaks Reprovision, Heathway, Seaham

Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive

**Councillor Robin Todd, Chair, AWBH Overview and Scrutiny
Committee**

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The Adults, Well-Being and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee were asked by NHS County Durham and Darlington to agree a Communications and Engagement Action Plan and to support the move to relocate and reprovide short break provision from Heathway, Seaham to the Holly Unit, West Park, Darlington.
- 1.2 Following visits to both venues, and discussions with stakeholders, carers and parents, this report has been prepared with recommendations to be submitted to NHS County Durham and Darlington.

2. Background

- 2.1 NHS County Durham and Darlington (CD&D) for some years have commissioned and resourced short breaks provision at Heathway in Seaham, East Durham, from Tees Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV), for children and young people with increasingly complex needs and challenging behaviours. Heathway currently operates as a 4 bed unit serving approximately 20 young people across County Durham, for 4 days/nights per week.
- 2.2 The current facilities have been deemed unfit for purpose, and the owner of the building, Secretary of State for the Department of Health, wishes to dispose of this estate as soon as possible. CD&D and TEWV have been working together to develop an appropriate interim solution. Heathway no longer meets the health, safety and welfare of the young people, or the staff.
- 2.3 An interim solution would be to reprovide and relocate the short breaks provision for this group of children/young people, to Holly Unit, West Park, Darlington. This relocation would provide the same excellent service in terms of lengths of stay, in a new environment.
- 2.4 The AWBH Committee agreed to visit both locations (see section 6 below).

3. Legislation

3.1 The relevant legislation is as follows:

- NHS Act 2006
 - Section 242: Requirement for engagement with patients, carers and the public in the ongoing development and delivery of services:
 - Section 244: Requirement for the formal consultation with Overview and Scrutiny Committees around substantial variation in service/substantial service change
- Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007
 - Requirement to engage with Local Involvement Networks (LINKs)
- NHS Duty to Report on Consultation Regulations (2009)
 - Requirement to report on consultation and engagement activity, including impact of engagement on decisions.

3.2 The immediate proposal to transfer the current services to a different location would normally be classed as a 'Substantial variation in service' under the NHS Act 2006 Section 244, and thus requires a 13 week consultation with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. However, as the premises are unfit for purpose and pose an immediate health and safety risk, to both staff and patients, the exemption to this requirement would apply.

3.3 A communication and engagement plan (Appendix 1), focusing on parents/carers/guardians of child and young people using this service, and also local stakeholders, was developed and implemented. The aim of this being:

- To effectively communicate the reasons for the change and the details of future service provision;
- To provide an opportunity for questions, concerns and suggestions to be raised and answered (involvement);
- To ensure that issues raised are appropriately responded to and taken on board;
- To ensure that statutory duties under section 242 NHS Act 2006 and Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act are met.

4. Benefits and Risks

4.1 The **benefits** of this relocation would be:

- Holly Unit is new; purpose built; single storey; light, modern and spacious; has ample free parking
- Good transport links to the unit – linking with centre of Darlington
- Heathway staff would be transferred (continuity)
- Within current financial envelope (no additional financial impact)
- Meets clinical safety and quality
- Engagement and involvement: Open evening, 28th October 2010, at Holly Unit, with GP links through PBC Leads; public meetings; one-to-one meetings with parents, carers and guardians; focus/discussion group meetings/surveys
- Improvement and innovation (solution focussed in line with best outcomes for young people).

4.2 The **risks** of this relocation would be:

- A serious untoward incident occurring in relation to health and safety if the interim solution does not happen

- Extended travel time for young people to the proposed interim accommodation from their schools/home.

5. AWBH O/S Committee

- 5.1 The Committee were asked by NHS County Durham and Darlington to:
- a) Agree to the specific consultation period set out in the Communications and Engagement Action Plan (appendix 1).
 - b) Support the move to relocate and reprovide short break provision from Heathway, Seaham to the Holly Unit, West Park, Darlington as an interim solution, with a view to a longer-term planned solution for this group of young people, parents/carers/staff and stakeholders.
- 5.2 Following receipt of the report of the Joint Commissioning Manager (CAMHS) and Director of Public Health, Darlington at the AWBH O/S Committee on 21st October, 2010 it was agreed to carry out a Light Touch Review of the proposed reprovider from Heathway, Seaham, to Holly Unit, Darlington.

6. Visits

- 6.1 The Chair of the AWBH Committee stated he wished to visit both facilities, in order to provide comments on the suggested reprovider from Heathway to Holly Unit.
- 6.2 It was noted from the Communications and Engagement Plan that an open evening/drop in session for Stakeholders was being held on 28th October at Holly Unit, to find out the views of parents/carers/stakeholders. The Chair of the Committee attended to talk to the parents/carers and identify any areas of concern.

In order to compare both locations, the Chair also requested a visit to Heathway, Seaham to be arranged, which took place on 3 November 2010. The facility was closed for the day, therefore no children were in residence.

6.2 *Stakeholder Event, Holly Unit, West Park, Darlington, 28th October 2010*



There were very few carers/parents in attendance at the drop-in session, but general views from the two mothers and carer spoken to were as follows:

- All positive regarding building and facilities, it is much bigger and more suitable than Heathways – therefore possibility in future of extending the service.

- All on one level - 7 en suite bedrooms; one bathroom with specialised equipment; a separate dining room; a number of lounges; a large kitchen, where service users could be involved in cookery/housekeeping etc.; large garden; spacious walkways/corridors (for wheelchair users); office space.
- This facility is used to provide a countywide service, so some people would have to travel further than others (as with Heathway at the moment).
- Holly Unit is accessible by public transport, bus stops directly outside unit.
- Transfer of existing staff/carers (continuity)
- Education Transport (concern of some parents – see section 7):
- Some children are transported between Heathway and their schools
- Continuity for children who are used to the same driver/company, and vice versa, the drivers are used to the children, and recognise their needs, especially if it's a longer journey for them
- Would be a lot of change for children with autism, who can react badly to change in routines – move to new venue, plus new driver, possibly new staff.



6.3 **Heathway, Seaham, 3 November 2010**

Heathway Unit is a converted police house, on a housing estate, consisting of:

- A tiny kitchen; small lounge/dining room; 2 single bedrooms, 1 double bedroom with sinks, but not en suite; toilet/bathroom, with old fashioned equipment; 1 sensory room with specialist equipment; large garden.
- Upstairs office/storage, very steep flight of stairs (closed off to children).
- The best use of the venue has been made, re décor etc.
- There is very limited space for wheelchair users.
- Discussion about Education Transport, confirmed this will continue as now.
- Transfer of existing staff/carers – continuity – confirmed all staff will be transferring to Holly Unit.
- Children will be transferred over gradually, to get them used to the venue before overnight stays.
- Secretary of State (Department of Health), who own the building, want it to be vacated immediately, therefore no choice in relocating, and no other venue has been identified, other than Holly Unit.
- Intention had been for a purpose-built venue on site of Lanchester Road Hospital, but this has not happened.

7. **Education Transport – DCC Policy**

7.1 Durham County Council's policy for Education Transport is as follows:

Durham County Council's home to school transport policy provides for free travel to be awarded for pupils attending the nearest suitable school, where the distance from home to school is over two miles using the shortest available walking route. The parental home address is used to determine entitlement.

Where a child is entitled to home to school transport, if he/she is on occasion attending a respite facility/respite care, home to school transport will continue to be provided to the respite address for the school days when that facility is his/her home.

7.2 Therefore, where existing arrangements are in place for Education Transport, the arrangement will continue, using the new respite address of Holly Unit.

8. Conclusions

The Committee, after considering the issues and having visited both venues, concluded:

- i) There is no comparison between the two facilities
 - o Heathway is an old building, with poor facilities, and lack of space – and has Health and Safety issues.
 - o Holly Unit is a modern facility that is fit for purpose. It also has much more space for the users and carers compared to Heathway.
 - o However, feedback from parents/carers is that transport is an issue, both education transport and accessibility to Holly Unit for parents/carers.
 - o Staff continuity – wherever possible existing staff should be transferred to Holly Unit.

9. Recommendations

The Adults, Well-being and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee agree to the following recommendations:

- i) Agree to the specific consultation period set out in the Communications and Engagement Action Plan (appendix 1).
- ii) Support the move to relocate and reprovide short break provision from Heathway, Seaham to the Holly Unit, West Park, Darlington
- iii) Suggest that although this is an interim solution, with a view to a longer-term planned solution, this should be for an adequate period, so as not to upheaval service users by further relocation.
- iv) Ask that the comments of parents/carers comments should be considered, regarding:
 - o Education Transport - should continue as it is at the moment, and
 - o Staff relocation - continuity, to ensure minimal disruption to children.
- v) A letter to be prepared and sent to NHS County Durham and Darlington and Partners, and also to be shared with Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and Cabinet Portfolio Holder for information.

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Communication and Engagement Action Plan – October 2010

Short Break Residential Services for Children and Young People with learning Disability and Complex Health Needs

1. Informing & Involving

Date	Purpose	Audience	Activity	Location	Action	Progress/ Completion
October 2010	Informing & Involving	Parents of children and young people currently using the service	Letters sent to all parents/carers/ guardians outlining service change, inviting participation in involvement & pointing to future consultation	N/A	DK	Sent 07/10
October 2010	Informing & Involving	Durham Joint Health Scrutiny Panel & four local OSCs	Briefing Paper sent enclosing C&E Plan, plus letter inviting participation in involvement, offer to attend a meeting & pointing to future consultation	N/A	LR/LM	21/10
October 2010	Informing & Involving	Durham LINK	Briefing Paper sent enclosing C&E Plan, plus letter inviting participation in involvement, offer to attend a meeting & pointing to future consultation	N/A	DK	
October 2010	Informing & Involving	Key local stakeholders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ MPs ○ CLDC/CLMC/CLPC/CLOC ○ PBC Groups ○ Board ○ Professional Executive Committee (PEC) ○ VDAs ○ NESHA 	Letter sent outlining service change, inviting participation in involvement & pointing to future consultation	N/A	DK/LR	
October 2010	Informing & Involving	Voluntary and community sector stakeholders: to be determined	Letter sent outlining service change, inviting participation in involvement & pointing to future consultation	N/A	DK/LR	
October 2010	Informing & Involving	Parents of children and young people using the service, the public and local stakeholders	Information outlining service change, inviting participation in involvement & pointing to future consultation available at www.tees.nhs.uk & www.tewv.nhs.uk	N/A	LR	

October 2010	Informing & Involving	Parents of children and young people using the service, the public and local stakeholders	Press release to local media	N/A	DK/LR	
October 2010	Informing & Involving	NHS Durham and Provider Staff	Articles in staff newsletters outlining service/change, inviting participation in involvement & pointing to future consultation	N/A	LR	
October 2010	Informing & Involving	Independent Contractors and Staff (Dentists, GPS, Opticians, Pharmacists)	Articles in newsletter <i>Contractors' Chronicle</i> outlining service change, inviting participation in involvement & pointing to future consultation	N/A	LR	
October 2010	Informing & Involving	Local Authorities including Education	Meetings	TBC	LR	
28 October 2010	Informing & Involving	Parents of children and young people using the service and local stakeholders	Open Meeting 6.30 p.m.	Holly Unit, West Park	DK	
November 2010	Informing & Involving	Parents of children and young people using the service and local stakeholders	Collation of comments received during involvement, production & distribution of report.	N/A	DK/LR	