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9 March 2016

Dear Stewart,

**Durham Dales, Easington and Sedgefield Clinical Commissioning Group –  
 Review of Urgent Care Services**

At a meeting of Durham County Council's Adults Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 1 March 2016, members considered a cover report from the Assistant Chief Executive and a series of papers from DDES CCG including:-

- A letter from Sarah Burns, Head of Commissioning , DDES CCG in response to the letter from Cllr John Robinson, Chair of the AWHOSC regarding a series of issues raised at the Committee's meeting on 19 January 2016
- Draft copies of a long and short consultation document
- The draft communications and engagement plan
- An options appraisal briefing paper setting out the process through which the DDESS CCG arrived at the options shortlisted for consultation.

The CCG provided information around the availability of GP appointments for those patients who had presented to the existing Walk-in Centres at Bishop Auckland Hospital; Peterlee Community Hospital, Seaham Health Centre and the Healthworks Centre, Easington. In discussing the proposed options for consultation and the communications and engagement plans the Committee made the following observations and comments which were to be relayed back to the CCG:-

**Members**

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## **The Urgent Care Service and proposed options**

- 1) How will the recent announcement by the Government that there is to be a £170m reduction in pharmacy funding impact upon the health economy within the DDES Locality and patients' ability to identify and access the appropriate services including self-care and pharmacy advice?
- 2) There remains amongst elected members and the public, concern at the GP capacity to support the proposed models being consulted upon. This is based upon information both regionally and locally around the issues of recruitment and retention of GPs.
- 3) There appears to be a need to improve GP accessibility and to increase the information about services available through GPs and what they are including the potential location of extended GPs and GP Hubs.
- 4) Members are concerned that GPs aren't filling their appointments.
- 5) Access to services and transport options available to those patients who need them, particularly the frail and elderly, including those with Long Term Conditions need to be addressed and assurances that these are robust.

## **The Consultation and Engagement Plans and associated publications**

- 6) The CCG needs to be clear within the documentation about what is meant by "extended GP services", GP Hubs and Minor Injuries Unit. There needs to be clarity about what services will be available and, in the case of extended GP services, whether this means additional services as well as longer opening times.
- 7) Whilst appreciating that there needs to be a consistent approach to the consultation and engagement exercise, there also needs to be an acknowledgement that some degree of targeting should be adopted in each of the public consultation events meeting explaining what each of the options might mean for the people of those localities.
- 8) How exactly will local people be able to influence where extended GP practices and GP Hubs will be located?
- 9) Members welcomed the proposal to utilise as many engagement opportunities and methods as possible including targeting hard to reach groups; Patient Reference Groups; Healthwatch; and also ensuring that individual GP practices advertise the consultation and have the

consultation material available to patients and that GPs themselves actively promote the consultation via the appointments process.

- 10) The CCG should consider utilising the County Council's AAPs and Careline service to promote the consultation and engagement process.
- 11) Regarding the proposed locations for the Public Consultation and engagement meetings, members suggested that these be:-

**Easington Locality**

Seaham, Peterlee and Easington

**Sedgefield Locality**

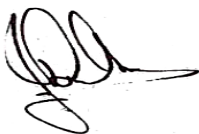
Sedgefield, Spennymoor and Newton Aycliffe

**Durham Dales Locality**

Barnard Castle, Bishop Auckland and Stanhope (with possibly Middleton-in-Teesdale and Crook also given the rurality of the area)

To conclude, the Adults, Wellbeing and Health OSC welcomed the proposed consultation and engagement process for the DDES CCG Review of Urgent Care Service, subject to the comments above and also agreed that a special meeting of the Committee will be held within the consultation period to allow the members an opportunity to receive evidence that allows them to formulate a response as part of the consultation process.

Yours sincerely,



Cllr John Robinson  
Chair of the Adults, Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
Durham County Council