

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

19 MAY 2010

SCRUTINY OF HEALTH COMMITTEE

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The NHS is covered by tight pardah rules which in the run up to the General Election prevented representatives from any of the Trusts serving North Yorkshire being able to brief the Committee publicly on local developments. Consequently our meeting scheduled for 9 April 2010 was cancelled.

But there has been a good deal of work taking place behind the scenes most notably:

Scarborough Hospital

This has mainly involved following up matters that arose from the Committee meeting on 16 February in Scarborough with regard to a definitive list of services that will be provided at the Hospital in the long term. The Chief Executive has undertaken to provide this information to the Committee and I am liaising with him to agree how and when it is best to do this. I must say, however, that there seems to be reluctance from the NHS to be clear and transparent on this. It seems to me to be a simple request that is proving difficult to “bottom”.

Whitby Hospital

In March NHS NY&Y announced that the overnight Minor Injuries Provision at the Hospital and the use of theatres for endoscopy and other surgical procedures, provided under general and local anaesthetic would be temporarily suspended and that they “need to be seen in the context of current and planned investments in the Hospital”. The problems in the MIU were due to a shortage of suitably skilled nurse practitioners. Ventilation standards in the theatres do not comply with requirements of the Care Quality Commission's new Registration process it has been alleged.

I chaired an engagement event which NHS NY&Y held on 25 March 2010 at Sneaton Castle in Whitby at which local GPs and Consultants expressed concern over the changes and wanted assurances that services would be restored as soon as possible. There was also some difference of opinion between NHS NY&Y and GPs as to when the ventilation problems in the theatres were first realised.

The NHS has now deemed that Whitby Hospital shall be part of the Strategic Review and the Chief Executive of NHSNY&Y, Jane Brown, shall be attending our meeting on the 18th June.

Quality Accounts

Quality Accounts (QAs), a new initiative introduced by the Department of Health (DH), are annual reports to the public from NHS providers of healthcare,

reporting on the quality of healthcare services they provide. QAs aim to improve public accountability and to encourage the boards of NHS Trusts to drive improvements in the quality of care their organisations provide.

All NHS Trusts are required to publish their first QA on 1 June 2010 and prior to doing so they must consult their local scrutiny of health committee. As per guidance from the DH committees are able to comment on whether a Trust's QA is representative and comprehensive in terms of the services provided, whether there are no significant omissions and whether the committee support the priorities for improvement.

We have focussed our efforts on North Yorkshire and York Community and Mental Health Service, South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Scarborough and North East Yorkshire NHS Trust, Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust, Bradford District Care Trust and Yorkshire Ambulance Service.

Stroke Awareness and Recognition

The task group chaired by County Councillor Tony Hall and comprising Members from both the Scrutiny of Health Committee and the Care and Independence OSC is continuing its work. Over the next month or so Members will be accompanying staff from the Stroke Association when they visit stroke survivors and their carers in their own homes to listen to their experiences. In particular Members will be exploring with stroke survivors if there are any things that they know now about suffering a stroke and how to respond to an emergency situation that they wish had known at the time their stroke occurred.

County Councillor Gareth Dadd
Chairman: North Yorkshire County Council Scrutiny of Health Committee

County Hall
Northallerton

6 May 2010