

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

15 February 2012

SCRUTINY OF HEALTH COMMITTEE – STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The Scrutiny of Health Committee is involved in a wide range of developments across the County. This involvement is steadily increasing. This is partly because recommendations in the report on Healthcare Services in North Yorkshire and York produced by the Commission led by Professor Hugo Mascie-Taylor are starting to be taken forward. There is also an increasing willingness on the part of the NHS locally to engage with the Committee to seek our views on the pressures for change and to discuss how to engage with communities before firm proposals are developed. Our Committee welcomes this approach.

As the NHS moves towards GP Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) we need to forge new links with them and with the emerging Commissioning Support Unit. I attended an event on 7 February which the Vale of York CCG held on its Public and Patient Engagement Strategy. It was significant that Dr Vicky Pleydell from the Hambleton, Richmondshire & Whitby CCG attended our meeting in Selby on 27 January 2012 to talk about Paediatric Services at the Friarage Hospital.

Specific issues and service developments in which the Committee is involved are summarised below.

North Yorkshire Review of Health Services 2011

1. The review sets the scene for many of the service developments that are now taking place in the County. Project Leader, Alan Wittrick (NHS North Yorkshire and the Humber) will attend a future Committee to give us an update on progress.

Children's Services at the Friarage Hospital, Northallerton

2. In recent months clinicians working with children at the Friarage Hospital and GP commissioners have been concerned that the current way in which paediatric services are delivered may not be sustainable. Against this background the Hambleton, Richmondshire and Whitby CCG sought advice from the National Clinical Advisory Committee (NCAT) on:
 - whether or not, within the clinical evidence base, there is a case for reconfiguring paediatric services,
 - how any changes proposed in paediatrics would affect the future provision of maternity and special care baby unit (SCBU) services;
 - options for future service delivery, informed by discussions with Trust clinicians, which would ensure the safe delivery of services, patient experience, equity and choice.
3. The NCAT report, which was made public on Monday, 23 January 2012, supported the favoured option as identified by GPs and the Trust to close the

inpatient services and establish an enhanced outpatient services (emergency as well as routine), increased specialist clinics and a “see and treat” facility.

4. Vicky Pleydell from the CCG, Jill Moulton (Director of Planning, South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust) and Amanda Brown (Hambleton & Richmondshire Locality Manager, NHS NY&Y) attended the Committee meeting in January. They provided more information on the background to the review, summarised NCAT's findings and sought the Committee's views on the proposed engagement plan.
5. In broad terms we supported the plan and called for the County Council's Hambleton and Richmondshire Area Committees to be included. We also highlighted the importance of including the Children's and Young People's Service, the Children's Trust and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. Engagement is essential, particularly with young families and hard to reach groups. Local councillors will have a role in facilitating the process in their area.
6. Clearly this matter is now attracting much interest in the media, from local politicians and from communities across Hambleton and Richmondshire. From a Scrutiny perspective, at this stage I do think we need to accept that as yet there are no firm proposals and work with NHS colleagues to identify the best way forward.

Development of a Strategy for Healthcare Services in Whitby

7. I attended an event on Friday, 20 January 2012 at Whitby Hospital. It was attended by a wide range of groups and individuals including GPs, district councillors and representatives from the Whitby Hospital Action Group.
8. I am pleased to report that there is an increasing level of understanding between the community locally and the NHS and there is now a willingness to move forward generally. Whilst no final decision on the theatres has yet been made there is a willingness locally to accept that the cost of bringing them up to an acceptable level of safety must be viewed against their envisaged utilisation.
9. Amanda Brown, Locality Director from NHS NY&Y attended the Committee in January and summarised how services will continue to be developed locally. On-going engagement with the Committee and with local communities will be a key feature of that work, particularly with regard to the future of Whitby Hospital.

Accident and Emergency at Pontefract Hospital

10. In October 2011 the Mid Yorkshire Trust Board agreed the recommendation from senior clinicians to temporarily close the Pontefract Emergency Department overnight for patient safety reasons due to a shortage of experienced emergency doctors.
11. We held our meeting on 27 January 2012 in Selby so we could find out more of the background to this matter. We heard from the Medical Director of the

Trust who explained the reasons for the temporary closure. We accepted the Trust faced a difficult problem due to the shortage of middle-grade doctors in its A&E Units. We also heard how this shortage is a national problem.

12. The Trust is now working with local GPs and the Out of Hours Service to explore the possibility of restoring a 24 hour service.
13. Developments in the A&E at Pontefract have taken place at the same time as the Trust is carrying out an engagement process on a 5 Year Clinical Strategy covering its hospitals in Dewsbury, Wakefield and Pontefract. Representatives from the Trust have undertaken to attend the Committee meeting in June to summarise the outcome of that work, including whether or not a formal consultation on service changes in the Trust will be launched.

National Review of Children's Cardiac Surgery

14. I continue to represent the Committee on the Yorkshire and Humber Region Joint Scrutiny of Health Committee, which along with other regional scrutiny committees across the country is being consulted formally on the proposals.
15. In the autumn of last year the Royal Brompton Hospital in London called for a Judicial Review of the proposals which led to a ruling that the consultation was flawed and should be quashed. The Court of Appeal has granted the Joint Committee of Primary Care Trusts leave to appeal against this ruling. The Appeal is likely to take place on 19 or 20 March 2012. Pending the outcome of that Appeal the whole consultation could have to be run again

Merger of the Scarborough and North East Yorkshire NHS Trust and the York Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

16. Along with a number of other Committee Members I attended an event in Malton on 30 January 2012 when we heard that the process is on track and the formal merger will take effect from summer 2012.

Quality Accounts

17. Quality Accounts (QAs) are annual reports to the public from providers of NHS healthcare services about the quality of services they provide.
18. Our role is to review the information contained in QAs and provide a statement on what is reported. Providers are legally obliged to publish this statement (of less than 1000 words) as part of their QA.
19. As part of the early stages of producing their QA a number of Trusts have already contacted the Committee. We will be submitting comments as we have in previous years.

County Councillor Jim Clark
Chairman: North Yorkshire County Council Scrutiny of Health Committee

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