

News bulletin for community partners and NHS staff

Issue 2: April 2008

Local General Hospital – Hemel Hempstead

The two short-listed groups for the Hemel Hempstead urgent care centre were put through their paces by local people keen to find out whether they would respond to their particular health and care needs.

Via a series of workshops, people with a learning disability; people from BME communities; young people; parents; people with mental health needs and senior residents - were able to question the potential providers of the new urgent care service on how they would deal with a number of issues and concerns.

A group of people from MENCAP sought reassurance that they would have their needs listened to and would be treated with respect. The issue of transport was also raised, especially how to get home if no family member/ carer was available to help.

The young people's group were interested in the design of the UCC and what facilities would be available.

They emphasised the need for the UCC to be safe, secure and welcoming especially as most young people would be feeling anxious.

Representatives from the local Indian Society, the Pakistani Women's community, the Chinese Community Association as well as members and volunteers of Dacorum MIND were full of ideas and suggestions on how to promote the new services.

The event, run in partnership between West Hertfordshire PCT and Community Action Dacorum - the voluntary sector umbrella organisation, also provided feedback to the PCT commissioners on strengthening the final specification for the urgent care centre in advance of final tender submissions.

The successful group of organisations will be known at the end of May following which the PCT and its urgent care provider partner will begin a major publicity campaign on the services available on the Hemel Hempstead site following the transfer of acute hospital services to Watford.



Taking part in the stakeholder day

Investing in your Mental Health Update

User and carer organisations will be involved in an update of the mental health strategy agreed in 2005. Now that outcomes are clearer for acute hospital sites, the Joint Commissioning Partnership Board (JCPB) has agreed to commission a specialist agency to undertake a stocktake of the original proposals for inpatient mental health services. Access to services will be a key factor in this work.

At the same time, the Joint Commissioning Team will consider new approaches to services and incorporate planned work on housing and accommodation, employment, day opportunities and training, and psychological therapies into the update.

STOP PRESS! West Hertfordshire PCT is establishing a 20 bed intermediate care ward at Hemel Hempstead Hospital as part of the development of the local general hospital. These are in addition to the 24 intermediate care beds provided at Gossoms End.

Local General Hospital – Welwyn Hatfield

Local patient and community representatives have chosen the QEII as their preferred site for the new local general hospital in Welwyn Hatfield.

Participating in the first stage of a two stage process, more than 40 people representing patient and voluntary groups, councils and key partners of the NHS met to help the primary care trust (PCT) decide where the new local general hospital should be located. The second stage of the process is a financial appraisal. This is likely to be completed by the end of June.

A shortlist of three potential sites was considered:

- The existing QEII site at Howlands, Welwyn Garden City
- A vacant plot on Mosquito Way, Hatfield Business Park
- The current Hertfordshire County Council depot on Mount Pleasant Lane, Hatfield

The shortlisted sites were put forward by local chartered surveyors, Freeth Melhuish, working on behalf of the PCT following a thorough local search of potential sites. They were the only sites in the locality for which planning permission could be obtained within an acceptable timescale.

Working in groups, participants evaluated each site using a set of criteria, which were originally developed with support from the Welwyn Hatfield Council Health Working Group. Participants discussed the criteria, made amendments and subsequently decided what weighting each should be given. Each group then scored each site independently against the criteria.

The existing QEII site scored highest with the Hatfield Business Park a close second; one of the main deciding factors for participants was that the new hospital could be located next to other services such as the Isabel Hospice and the Vicki Adkins breast diagnostic unit.



The next stage will be for the NHS to carry out a financial appraisal of the shortlisted sites which will review the long term costs of providing services on the sites, additional highway and other works that may need to be undertaken and construction issues. Following this, the site of the local general hospital will be finalised.

Watford General Hospital Update

Delivery of the modules that will form the new Acute Admissions Unit (AAU) at Watford General Hospital is nearing completion.

The new 120-bed AAU, believed to be the largest in the country, will be linked to the existing A&E department and will radically change the way west Herts patients receive emergency care in the future by offering rapid assessment and diagnosis by a consultant from the onset of a patient's admission.

The new building has been manufactured off-site and is being delivered by road to Watford General in 150 steel-framed modular units and craned into position. Once the building is in place, there will still be a great deal of work to do before the AAU is finally handed over to the Trust in mid-August. The new unit will be open to patients in October 2008.



Changes to women's and children's services at East and North Herts Trust

One of the first projects that will deliver the outcomes of the *Delivering quality health care in Hertfordshire* programme is the bringing together of acute hospital services for women and children at the Lister, which is planned towards the end of 2010.

The Trust is looking to invest significantly in existing buildings, which will include a mix of new and refurbished accommodation. Planning of these new facilities is in its early stages, with the focus currently on developing a design brief that will support new models of care, operational policies and room requirements.

The aim of the work is to ensure that the Trust's doctors, nurses and midwives continue to provide women and children with high quality, flexible care that focuses on the needs of the individual and promotes choice. This includes the development of a new midwifery-led unit for women with uncomplicated pregnancies, where midwives are the lead professionals.

This unit will be located alongside a consultant-led delivery unit, inpatient antenatal and postnatal beds, outpatient and day assessment services, and neonatal intensive care facilities. In that way, should complications arise for the mother or baby that requires the help of medical staff, this can be accessed immediately.

Through the national *Procure 21* process, the Trust has appointed Medicinq Osborne to design and build the new facilities. The next stage is to develop and agree the building solution, overall price and business case.

In the meantime, investment continues in children's services to develop facilities on the Lister site to implement the final changes agreed from the 2004/05 consultation, *Better care for sick children*.

A new children's assessment unit at the Lister will open at the end of September 2008, providing up to 23-hour stay for children in a non-inpatient environment. It will help the smooth and prompt discharge of children who need short-stay observation or treatment, but who do not require to be admitted to the children's ward at the hospital.

The new unit will mean the children's A&E service at the Lister will open 24 hours-a-day and the planned changes to the children's centre at the QEII, including children's A&E, will be implemented. Following the new services at the Lister taking place from September, the children's assessment unit and children's A&E service at the QEII will then be closed at night time.

The centre's opening hours will then be between 7.30am to 9.00pm daily. The QEII service will also be developed to become a GP referral rapid access and assessment unit, with a dedicated consultant.

The Trust's children's team is working closely with their A&E colleagues across the Lister and QEII to ensure that clinical protocols and a communications strategy are in place to support this change.

Finally a new safeguarding children unit will open at the Lister in summer 2008, which is being developed in association with the county council's children, schools and family service. The unit, which will be known as the Bramble Suite, will provide a multidisciplinary team with dedicated facilities to support at risk children who need safeguarding.

This new facility will provide child-friendly facilities and enable staff from the relevant agencies to work closely to improve services and care for children who are most at risk. Its development will also enable the Trust to provide a small, dedicated outpatient facility for children to complement other outpatient facilities for children.



Review to explore options for maternity care outside hospital

Next month, Hertfordshire PCTs will launch a review of maternity and midwifery services to explore how services for mums-to-be can best be provided outside of major hospitals.

Working closely with clinicians and service users, the review aims to ensure that the NHS develops the right models of care for pregnant women in Hemel Hempstead when acute services transfer to Watford later in the year and when women's inpatient services transfer from the QEII Hospital to the Lister Hospital in 2010.

The review will be led by independent experts Prof. Allan Templeton and Angela Canning.

Prof. Templeton is Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at the University of Aberdeen. He brings with him extensive experience of both delivering and designing women-centred care. He is also a member of the National Clinical Advisory Team whose role is to support the NHS in implementing best practice.

He will be supported by Angela Canning, currently Head of Midwifery Services at Princess Royal Hospital in Bromley and a member of the Royal College of Midwives.



Their brief is to examine how maternity services will be provided as the changes from *Delivering quality health care for Hertfordshire* are implemented.

They will meet local clinicians, stakeholders and users of the services to find out their views and to advise on:

- Whether the stand alone midwife-led birth centre at Hemel Hempstead could be re-opened and if so, in what format. The birth centre has been temporarily closed since January 2006 due to staffing difficulties and reduced number of deliveries
- What would be the implications of this for the local general hospital in Welwyn Hatfield
- What ante and post natal services should be provided in local general hospitals and in other community settings.
- What gynaecological services could also be provided at the local general hospitals
- What the NHS should do to ensure mums-to-be are able to have a home birth if they wish to

The review will begin in May with a final report being produced by September 2008.

New health centres for Hertfordshire – have your say!

Two new health centres are coming to Hertfordshire and the PCTs want public views on proposals to locate one in Hemel Hempstead and one in Welwyn Hatfield on the local general hospital sites. These centres will provide GP services from 8am to 8pm, 7 days a week and will offer both pre-bookable and walk-in appointments. The new centres will open their doors to patients by the end of March 2009.

To make sure that the centres work closely with other community-based services such as social care and diagnostics, the proposal is to put them on the new local general hospital sites in Hemel Hempstead and Welwyn Hatfield. The centres might also provide services such as district nursing, minor surgery, vaccinations, pharmacy and dentistry.

Improving access to primary care services is one of the key pledges identified by the NHS East of England and is also a national priority. Each PCT area across the country has been asked to develop a new health centre. The new health centres will open for longer and will give patients a greater choice how they access GP services.

From now until 26 May 2008, you can give your views

- by email: getinvolved@herts-pcts.nhs.uk
- by freepost: GP-led Health Centres, Hertfordshire PCTs, Freepost 145, Parkway, Welwyn Garden City, Herts AL8 6BR
- by leaving a message on: 01707 361269

For more information please visit:

www.enherts-pcts.nhs.uk or www.wherts-pct.nhs.uk