

Shaping a Healthier Future for North West London – main issues for Harrow

The NW London JHOSC has asked for each borough to provide a summary of their main issues relating to the Shaping a Healthier Future (SaHF) proposals and consultation so that they can feed into the JHOSC's response report.

It should be noted that Harrow will be holding a special meeting of its Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee on 19 September to discuss the impact of the SaHF proposals in Harrow and the consultation to date. Therefore the key points given below are indicative thoughts pending the outcomes of this special meeting – these may change in Harrow's final response to the SaHF consultation.

The large majority of Harrow residents use acute services at Northwick Park Hospital and to a lesser extent Central Middlesex Hospital (as part of the same trust - NW London Hospitals Trust). As part of all the options put forward for consultation, Northwick Park Hospital retains its services as a major hospital and Central Middlesex Hospital becomes a local hospital and elective care centre. We note the current plans to merge NWLHT and Ealing Hospital Trust and therefore the option to downgrade Ealing Hospital to a local hospital will also have ramifications for Harrow's local hospital trust.

Main issues for Harrow:

- **Implementation of the out of hospital strategy** as a foundation to ensuring changes in acute services succeed – the need to transform primary, community and social care because of current variations in quality and access will include needing to ensure that the capacity and capability exists within the services to operate 24/7 at a high level and this includes implications for social care services. The delivery of the out of hospital transformation underlies the implementation of each option as it delivers a reduction in acute activity and delivers efficiencies and productivity improvements and thereby creates additional capacity in receiving major hospital sites.
- **Poor patient satisfaction with primary care in Harrow** - especially access to GP appointments and out of hours services. Harrow patients, in the 2010/11 patients' survey, score these with 56.3% and 57.8% satisfaction respectively – both ranking in the bottom 10% nationally.
- **Capacity and infrastructure at Northwick Park Hospital** to take on the growth in demand in its services and the additional patient flow. Under each of the options there are significant increases in inpatient and outpatient activity and A&E attendances at Northwick Park Hospital forecast. There is a need to invest in Northwick Park Hospital's services, workforce and estate to make it best positioned to be able to accommodate a growing number of patients.

- **Travel, transport and access issues for Northwick Park Hospital** – ensuring that the ambulance, private car and public transport journeys are not adversely impacted by the increased patient flow to Northwick Park Hospital. Northwick Park underground station (Metropolitan line) is not a step-free station as it does not have lifts, ramps or escalators at the station. Nearby stations at Harrow on the Hill (Metropolitan line) and Kenton (Bakerloo and Overground lines) also lack step-free access. There may also be travel issues for the staff transferring from other hospital sites to Northwick Park Hospital in terms of getting to/from work each day if travelling to Northwick Park Hospital takes longer or is more difficult than their original place of work.
- **Workforce issues in the short and medium term** – many staff will be impacted by the proposed changes for example in staff transferring to different sites, the need to recruit more consultants (paediatrics), changes to maternity services. This will also impact on those staff at major hospitals who will see their hospitals grow in demand. The proposals have the best chance of succeeding in implementation stage if all staff have been fully involved and engaged in the plans for change.
- **NW London Hospitals Trust** – even following its proposed merger with Ealing Hospital, regardless of which option is implemented, the trust is forecast to remain in deficit in 2014/15 following the changes because of the financial forecasts for Central Middlesex Hospital. Central Middlesex Hospital will not achieve financial viability and this will impact on the trust's overall position. The trust holds the ambition to become a foundation trust in the near future.
- **Long term feasibility** of proposed changes – the closure of hospital A&Es raises questions about the future of hospitals in the longer term e.g. Central Middlesex Hospital and possibly Ealing Hospital. There is real concern that services will diminish incrementally at hospitals downgraded to local hospital status, as fewer and fewer services stay clinically viable.
- **Communications** to residents regarding the rationale for changes in acute services and out of hospital transformation – the appropriate use of primary care and Urgent Care Centres is highlighted as one area which could benefit from concentrated effort in communicating key messages to the general public.

Councillor Krishna James

Chair of Harrow Health and Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Harrow's member on the NW London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee