

AGENDA ITEM: 4

HEALTH SCRUTINY PANEL

5 FEBRUARY 2009

AUDIOLOGY SERVICES – AN UPDATE

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To introduce representation from the local NHS, in attendance at today's meeting to provide an update on local audiology services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. That the Panel notes the update received today on audiology services and considers what action it would like to take.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORT

3. During the 2007-8 municipal year, the Health Scrutiny Panel conducted a review of audiology services, with a Final Report being presented to 1 July 2008.
4. The Panel found an Audiology service dealing with waiting times which were substantially longer than the 18 week Department of Health target, with the Royal National Institute for the Deaf listing the South Tees waiting time as 54 weeks.
5. In considering the matter, the Panel investigated the reasons for the waiting times, the respective roles of commissioner and providers and some service based issues that had been raised with the Panel by people at the Middlesbrough Deaf Centre.
6. During the study of the matter, the Panel heard that the service was confident of delivering a significantly improved position by the end of the calendar year 2008. As such, the Panel agreed that the receipt of a progress update in early 2009 would be a welcome step.
7. It is to this end that representatives from the commissioning organisation (Middlesbrough PCT) and the service provider (South Tees Hospitals NHS

Trust), will be in attendance at today's meeting. The Panel is asked to note that a paper will be supplied, which outlines the progress of the service in the last six months or so, since the Panel actively considered the matter. For completeness, the Executive Summary of the Audiology Final Report is also attached as an Appendix.

8. It is anticipated that at today's meeting, local NHS representatives will speak to the update report, which will be sent out under separate cover, ahead of dealing with questions from the Panel. Following the debate, the Panel is asked to consider its next steps. It could be that the Panel would like to receive further updates on the matter, or the Panel may prefer to keep the matter under review and only request further updates if progress is not maintained.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

9. Please find attached a copy of the Executive Summary of the Panel's review into Audiology Services.
10. An update paper, prepared by the local NHS, will be sent out to Members under separate cover.

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