

**HEALTH SCRUTINY PANEL**

**21 SEPTEMBER 2011**

**NEUROLOGICAL CONDITIONS  
EVIDENCE FROM THE SOUTH TEES HOSPITALS NHS  
FOUNDATION TRUST**

**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1. To introduce representatives of the South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust to the Panel, in attendance to provide their perspective on Neurological conditions.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

2. That the Panel notes the evidence provided by the South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, in the context of its overall review into neurological conditions.

**CONSIDERATION OF REPORT**

3. The Panel will recall that at its last meeting, it received and considered detailed evidence from the North East Neurosciences Network (NENN). NENN provided the Panel with a considerable amount of evidence on the topic of Neurological conditions, which the Panel commented had been very helpful in considering how to progress the investigation.
4. Following the Panel hearing from the NENN, the Panel expressed a strong interest in hearing from colleagues from the South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation trust, as a provider of many neurological services.
5. To that end, senior clinical and managerial representatives of South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (STHFT) will be in attendance at the Panel meeting, to answer the Panel's questions and provide their perspective on neurological services in Middlesbrough. On the basis of the evidence supplied by NENN and the Panel's discussions, the following questions have been put

to STHFT representatives, to act as a basis for the discussion at the meeting today.

- 5.1 *The Panel has heard that the technological and knowledge developments in neurosurgery have far outstripped the ability of rehabilitation services to respond in a similar fashion. Is this a picture that the Trust recognises?*
- 5.2 *How can post neurosurgery rehabilitation services in Tees be improved? What managerial and clinical steps would be required to ensure these improvements were implemented effectively and sustainably?*
- 5.3 *The Panel is conscious of the distinction between neurological conditions that can develop 'organically' (such as MND) and those which are 'event based' such as ABI and how different the patient pathways can be. Bearing this in mind, does the Trust feel that there are clear, identifiable and well known patient pathways for such different groups?*
- 5.4 *The Panel has heard that maintaining a successful and viable neurosurgery service is inextricably linked to being able to operate as a fully functional major trauma centre. Is that a position that the Trust would agree with?*
- 5.5 *The Panel has noted that that an apparent national concern around Neurological conditions centres on the swiftness (or not) of an appropriate diagnosis of a neuro condition and therefore the very limited access to appropriate, condition specific support. Does the Trust recognise this picture?*
- 5.6 *Connected to the above question, does the Trust have any sort of estimate or view on how many people live in Middlesbrough with an undiagnosed neurological condition?*
- 5.7 *Is the Trust confident that sufficient expertise exists in General Practice's ability to make appropriate referrals to the Neuro Unit?*
- 5.8 *The Panel has heard that the development of a Specialist Social Worker post for neuro patients (similar to those operating across other specialities) could improve the level of support, advice and advocacy for patients and their families/carers. Does the Trust have a position on this point?*
- 5.9 *In the view of the Trust, what are the priorities for the providers and commissioners of neurological services in Middlesbrough, in the next three to five years?*
6. It is anticipated that following introductions, the STHFT representatives will outline their views on the questions outlined above, ahead of dealing with questions from the Panel. The STHFT representatives have also been informed that should there be any specific issues they would like to raise, that do not neatly fall under the above questions, they would be welcome to do so. The Panel is asked to note the evidence that is presented by the STHFT representatives, ahead of exploring any pertinent lines of inquiry with them.

7. Following the meeting today, the Panel will also be hearing from the local and regional commissioning teams for Neurological Services, as well as Whickham Villa, who are independent providers of neuro-rehab services.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

8. No background papers were used in the production of this paper.

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