

HEALTH SCRUTINY PANEL

A meeting of the Health Scrutiny Panel was held on 12 June 2013.

PRESENT: Councillor Dryden (Chair), Councillors Cole, Junier, S Khan, McPartland, Mrs H Pearson and P Purvis.

OFFICERS: J Bennington, D Donaldson and J Ord.

AN APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE was submitted on behalf of Councillor Davison.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest made at this point of the meeting.

MINUTES - HEALTH SCRUTINY PANEL 23 MAY 2013

The minutes of the meeting of the Health Scrutiny Panel held on 23 May 2013 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

HEALTH SCRUTINY PANEL - WORK PROGRAMME 2013/2014

The Scrutiny Support Officer submitted a report regarding potential topics gained from a number of sources for future scrutiny investigation by the Panel during the 2013/2014 Municipal Year.

Specific reference was made to the following suggested topics:-

- (a) Mental health services capacity specifically the policy to reduce the number of inpatients beds and if the service reconfiguration remained the best for the challenges facing the current services.
- (b) Winter pressures and how the local health and social care economy are preparing for the 2013/2014 winter period.
- (c) Patient transport to hospital with particular regard to the current and anticipated demand for services.
- (d) Quality standards in the independent sector with particular regard as to how the NHS Commissioners gain assurances around the quality and safety of services commissioned from the independent sector.
- (e) Healthcare Associated Infections updates from the South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.
- (f) NHS Finances in relation to receiving policy briefings from the healthcare finance field.

The Panel referred to a number of important areas such as the development of smoking cessation services and immunisation in schools which were the subject of recommendations within the Panel's recent Final Report in respect of Children with Complex Needs. Consideration would be given to the subsequent response/Action Plan to the Final report from the respective service areas and health organisations.

Members referred to personal experiences relating to the current Out of Hours Service and to some of the recent problems being experienced in the A & E Unit at James Cook University Hospital as a result of a number of factors. The South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust had recently announced the intention to provide additional bed capacity in order to create certain flexibility when coping with increased demands arising from winter pressures. It was acknowledged that some of the aspects highlighted would be considered as part of the suggested topics of investigation outlined above.

AGREED that the items outlined above form the basis of the scrutiny work programme for the Health Scrutiny Panel 2013/2014 subject to the inclusion of the following topics:-

- (a) public health issues in relation to asbestos;
- (b) update on Neurological Services with particular regard to the Gateway Project at Middlehaven.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD UPDATE

In a report of the Chair of the Health Scrutiny Panel, Members were advised of the key matters considered and action taken arising from the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 28 May 2013.

NOTED

ANY OTHER BUSINESS - TEESSIDE HOSPICE QUALITY ACCOUNT

The Chair agreed that the following item may be considered as a matter of urgency under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 in view of the timescales involved.

A copy of a draft response to Teesside Hospice's Quality Account Statement was circulated at the meeting as follows:-

'The Health Scrutiny Panel welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Teesside Hospice's Quality Account.

The Panel is pleased to see the Teesside Hospice providing such services as Inpatient Unit Services, Day Hospice Service, Specialist Lymphoedema Services and Medical Outpatients to the NHS.

The Panel is very much aware that the Teesside Hospice provides a service, particularly in the field of specialist palliative services, that is very valued by the local community and would not seem to be available anywhere else in Middlesbrough. The Panel would anticipate that this service area will be an expanding one, given an ageing population with increased levels of chronic illness.

The Panel is pleased to see that the Teesside Hospice's priorities for the coming year include Patient Safety, Patient Experience and Clinical Effectiveness. It is particularly pleasing that the quality of services seems to gather so many positive comments from patients and their families.

The Panel looks forward to working with the Teesside Hospice in the coming year.'

AGREED as follows:-

1. That the response to the Teesside Hospice's Quality Account as outlined be approved subject to clarification regarding whether or not there should be a reference to their position in respect of 'A Good Death' Charter.
2. That the statement in response to the Teesside Hospice's Quality Account be finalised in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair.