

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM 4

HEALTH SCRUTINY PANEL

17 OCTOBER 2013

EMERGENCY ACCESS TO JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To introduce a number of senior representatives in attendance at the meeting to discuss the emergency access to James Cook University Hospital.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. That the Health Scrutiny Panel notes the information submitted at the meeting today and considers if any further consideration is needed on this topic.

BACKGROUND

3. The panel reviewed the Winter Pressures topic at a meeting on 25 July, where the panel heard evidence from the Assistant Chief Constable of Cleveland Police. As the panel's date coincided with the North East Ambulance Service's (NEAS) AGM, representatives from NEAS were unable to attend. It was therefore agreed that the Panel should hold a meeting to discuss the topic in further detail, at a time where both representatives from the Police and NEAS were able to be there.
4. The Panel would like the organisations to provide information from their perspective on the current pressures regarding emergency access to JCUH and seek reassurances and clarification with regard to the number and operation of ambulances for the Teesside area.

Evidence/Discussions Received to Date

5. At the meeting on 25 July, the panel heard from the Assistant Chief Constable about the experiences of his officers, where they had been asked to take injured or ill people to A&E at James Cook University Hospital (JCUH). The significant problems experienced during the winter of 2012/13 were acknowledged, however, more recent examples were given, including an incident that happened in June 2013.

6. The Assistant Chief Constable had confirmed that meetings had been held with NEAS and health colleagues to discuss the winter pressures, and also the current summer pressures. Generally the situation had improved, however, between April and 22 July 2013 there had been approximately 25/30 interactions with NEAS where police support was needed.
7. Police officers had been issued with guidance to help them in situations where people may need medical support, the information outlined various options to pursue in different situations, which included the use of walk in or drop in health centres where appropriate. However there is always the concern that the police may be unable to offer the correct level of support in a medical emergency.

In Attendance

8. For this meeting, the following representatives will be in attendance for a round table discussion on the topic.
 - Sean White, Assistant Chief Constable, Cleveland Police
 - Mark Cotton, Assistant Director of Communications and Engagement
 - Alan Gallagher, Head of Risk & Claims, North East Ambulance Service
 - Paul Liversidge, Chief Operating Officer, North East Ambulance Service

Possible Lines of Enquiry

9. As a starting point for the discussion the panel may wish to explore the following areas in more detail:-
 - i) Emergency services do work together and support each other at times of high demand, however, does NEAS feel that there are a safe number of ambulances to meet demand, especially over the winter period, for the level of population in Teesside?
 - ii) The Police and NEAS have met to discuss this situation, what solutions were reached and what else needs to be done?
 - iii) What are both organisations doing to prepare for this year's possible winter pressures?
 - iv) What are the current performance targets for NEAS and are they being met?

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- a) Minutes of the Health Scrutiny Panel – 25 July 2013

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