



Health Scrutiny in East Sussex

Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Newsletter No: 27 - December 2009



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Greetings for the Season

"Best wishes to you from all the HOSC members and officers. We hope you have a wonderful Christmas and that you enjoy a healthy and prosperous New Year."

Cllr Sylvia Tidy, Chairman, Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

What to do about rural health services

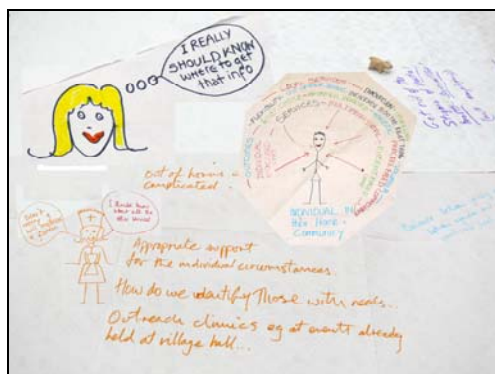
Rural health services need to be equitable and some need to be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Getting services to vulnerable people, wherever they live should be the real priority. This was one of the key messages from the recent HOSC event to investigate NHS delivery in rural East Sussex. Jeremy Leggett, Chief Executive, Action in rural Sussex set the 70 plus delegates buzzing with his opening address. He pointed out that, in East Sussex, 76% of the most disadvantaged people do not live in the nationally targeted 20% most disadvantaged places. He would like to see all public services, including health, realign their delivery strategies to target all disadvantaged people. Jeremy believes urban populations tend to gain when services are centralised while rural populations tend to lose.



*Scrutiny Café in action.
Photograph: Paul Dean*

Alice Webster, Head of Unscheduled Care, East Sussex Community Health Services delivered a graphic overview of the complexity and key challenges of providing community rural health services. There are a total of 42 different services ranging from district nursing to smoking cessation and child protection.

Mike Wood, Chief Executive, NHS ESDW and NHS H&R responded to the challenges. He outlined future commissioning plans which will focus on patient safety and health outcomes. The aim is to reduce health inequalities and improve life expectancy. The focus is on prevention and working with other providers to ensure there is a shift from hospital to community and home care. But he warned that difficult decisions will have to be made about the scale of services and access because of financial pressures.



Delegates split into discussion groups around the Scrutiny Café. Many jotted their ideas on the table cloths.

Photograph: Paul Dean

'Vox pops' from Dr Clarissa Fabre; Dr Matt Bell; Val Young, East Sussex LINK; Caroline Scotter, Action in rural Sussex; Simone Oates, Senior Occupational Therapist, Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust; and Sue Davies, Senior Social Worker, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) gave delegates stories of personal experiences of delivering or receiving health services in rural East Sussex.

Cllr Sylvia Tidy said, "The event provided a wealth of ideas and information. HOSC now has a much clearer picture of rural health services and how accessible they are. We will now decide on which areas merit further investigation."

[Click here for more information on the event.](#)



Maternity services strategy endorsed



East Sussex Maternity Services Strategy 2009-2012 has been agreed by HOSC but the committee will keep its implementation under review. The strategy ensures the continuation of consultant-led maternity services, special care baby services and in-patient gynaecology across both hospital sites (Eastbourne DGH and The Conquest, Hastings).

Mike Wood, Chief Executive, Jenny Phaure, Maternity Services (IRP) Programme Manager, and Lisa Compton, Director of Assurance and Engagement, NHS ESDW and NHS H&R briefed HOSC on the strategy. The strategy's

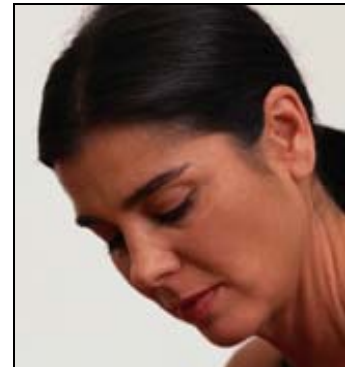
implementation plans will be published in December and HOSC will study them in detail particularly the restructuring of midwifery community services towards geographic determined teams. HOSC has learned that this move, designed to distribute caseloads more equitably and offer women the choice of direct access to midwives, is the source of much debate - especially amongst some GPs.

Cllr Sylvia Tidy said, "It's good to see the maternity services strategy set out and HOSC welcomes the priorities and pledges designed to deliver improved outcomes for women and babies. We are now keen to scrutinise the implementation plans."



Mental health services improvement programme

Mental health strategies developed over recent years have centred on improved access to mental health services and are now moving into implementation. Richard Ford, Executive Commercial Director, Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SPT) outlined the improvement programme to HOSC. It comes under the banner 'Better by Design'. SPT has won the tender to provide access to mental health services which will mean working in and with every GP surgery in East Sussex. As a result 11-12,000 people every year will have first contact with the service through their GP. The aim is for quick, simple and short duration effective treatment. SPT community teams will be revitalised while the number of in-patient beds will be reduced. Consultation about the changes for in-patient care will begin in January 2010.



Cllr Sylvia Tidy said, "HOSC believes the Better by Design proposals will benefit East Sussex patients."

Redevelopment of Secure and Forensic Services at Hellingly, Nr Hailsham

Proposals for new and converted secure and forensic facilities at Hellingly were endorsed and supported by HOSC. Consultation on the proposals will begin in December 2009. Currently there are 26 medium secure beds (20 male, 6 female) and 20 low secure male beds. SPT plans to increase the number of medium secure beds to 60 (45 male, 15 females) and have 15 low secure male beds. Capital investment will be £15.3 million. The proposals are driven by the growth in need for secure placements (particularly as a result of referral of patients out of the prison setting). Also, Department of Health guidelines are that there should be no more than 15 beds per ward.

Closure of Woodlands Unit, Hastings

Following two separate tragic incidents of patient suicide at Woodlands Unit, SPT's serious untoward procedures are being followed. Lorraine Reid, Chief Operating Officer, SPT briefed HOSC on the situation. A summary of the key findings of the reports into the two suicides will be submitted to HOSC in the New Year.



New treatment strategy for heart attacks

Primary angioplasty offers more heart attack victims a better outcome than relying solely on thrombolysis (clot-busting drugs) if the operation can be carried out within 120 minutes from the time the ambulance is called. This performance standard is known as the 'Call to Balloon' (CTB) time. Tina Wilmer, Programme Director, Unscheduled Care, NHS West Sussex briefed HOSC on proposals for the provision of primary angioplasty in East Sussex, within the context of the wider strategy across Sussex. The Primary Angioplasty Options Appraisal Group, set up by the Sussex Commissioning Group, has agreed there should be a 24 hour, 7 days a week primary angioplasty service in East Sussex, Brighton and Portsmouth delivered within 120 minutes CTB. However, there will be negotiation between East Sussex NHS Trust, South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Trust and the PCTs to agree a service model. ESHT propose a model of alternating care between the Conquest, Hastings and Eastbourne DGH whereas a mapping exercise has shown that a single site, the Conquest, is the optimal from the logistical perspective.



Cllr Sylvia Tidy said, "HOSC welcomes the proposals for a 24/7 primary angioplasty service as it will provide better treatment for people of East Sussex who suffer a serious heart attack."



Foundation Trust plans for Brighton Hospitals

Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust (BSUH) is proposing to become a Foundation Trust and the aim is to achieve FT status in the Autumn of 2010. Duncan Selbie, Chief Executive and Alex Sienkiewicz, Company Secretary, BSUH gave HOSC an overview of the FT proposals. HOSC will respond to BSUHs' public consultation on the proposals during the formal consultation period running from 25 January to 23 April 2010.

News in brief

NHS Dentistry in East Sussex

HOSC continues to monitor NHS dental services and has learned that services are now available at 88 practices across East Sussex and the number of practices accepting new NHS patients has increased to 58. The number of practices with wheelchair access has increased to 53. The PCTs have undertaken a successful media campaign to increase awareness of how to find a dentist.

HPV Vaccination Programme for Cervical Cancer

The national school-based programme for the vaccination of girls aged 12-13 years against Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) was initiated in September 2008. For the vaccine to be fully effective, all three doses need to be given. Figures to August 2009 show 68% uptake in East Sussex Downs and Weald and 75% for Hastings and Rother for all 3 doses. HOSC is maintaining a watchful eye on progress.

Support for Patients and Care Applying for Power of Attorney

Responses and actions being taken to improve the support and advice available on applying for Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) as a result of a HOSC Task Group recommendations have been encouraging. Information on LPA has been widely distributed including a piece in Adult Social Care's 'Forward from 50' booklet. Trading Standards are promoting "Buy with Confidence" to local solicitors. The Office of the Public Guardian has introduced shorter and simpler forms for LPA applications and reduced the cost of registering from £150 to £120.



West Sussex health plans abandoned

Plans by NHS West Sussex to centralise three major services: inpatient paediatrics, consultant-led inpatient maternity services and emergency surgery – have been abandoned. The Joint HOSC, formed to scrutinise these plans has been wound up as there are no longer any proposals constituting a substantial change or variation to service for the committee's consideration. The Joint HOSC referred the original proposals to the Secretary of State for Health and, as the bases for this referral no longer apply, the referral is withdrawn.

Next HOSC meeting

10am Thursday 11th March 2010 at County Hall, Lewes

Webcast recordings and further details of meetings are available on the HOSC website:
www.eastsussexhealth.org

HOSC July 2009

East Sussex County Council:

Cllr Sylvia Tidy - Chairman
Cllr David Rogers OBE - Vice Chairman
Cllr Carolyn Heaps
Cllr Philip Howson
Cllr Ruth O'Keeffe
Cllr Peter Pragnell
Cllr Barry Taylor

Eastbourne Borough Council
Cllr Alex Hough

Hastings Borough Council
Cllr Eve Martin

Lewes District Council
Cllr Carolyn Lambert

Rother District Council
Cllr Angharad Davies

Wealden District Council
Cllr Diane Phillips

Voluntary services' representatives:

Mr Dave Rogers,
Chair, Hastings and Rother Social Care Forum
1 vacancy

East Sussex Local Involvement Network (LINK) representative:

Ms Janet Colvert
Chair LINK Core Group

Contact:

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East Sussex Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) is managed by East Sussex County Council and works in partnership with Eastbourne Borough Council, Hastings Borough Council, Lewes District Council, Rother District Council and Wealden District Council

