



Health Scrutiny in East Sussex Newsletter

No. 003

This newsletter provides an update on the progress made with health scrutiny arrangements in East Sussex.

All Saints Hospital closure

In February, the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) met with Annette Sergeant, Chief Executive, East Sussex NHS Hospitals Trust and Gina Brocklehurst, Chief Executive, Eastbourne Downs PCT to discuss why the HOSC had not been consulted about the closure of All Saints and the current situation with regard to the provision of alternative services.

As a result of this meeting, the HOSC established a Monitoring Board to look at the topic in more detail. Its conclusions were published in a report which is available on the HOSC website: www.eastsussexhealth.org
(If you would like a paper copy, please contact Sam White on (01273) 481581)

It has been agreed that the HOSC Monitoring Board will meet monthly with representatives of the PCT, Hospitals Trust, Social Services and Age Concern to check on progress with the plans and ensure that timetables for delivering services are met.

The HOSC will then produce a public report on the re-provisioning services at a later date when the monitoring process is completed and the actions being taken by the PCT have been achieved.

It is pleasing to report that the Hospitals Trust, the PCT and Social Services have given all the necessary information they have been requested by the HOSC.

To-date there has been speedy action by everybody involved to put in place the necessary alternative services which will support older people in other appropriate settings and in different ways.

The HOSC is confident that, thanks to its intervention and involvement, it has improved the planning processes. It believes the replacement services to All Saints will now be more robust.



Changing face of HOSC

It has become clear that since the work of the HOSC began in October 2003 the reactive work is increasing. The All Saints Hospital closure is an example of this. Both member and officer time is being taken to respond to matters that are sent to the HOSC from PCTs and NHS Trusts.

The recent consultation on what should be reviewed in the HOSC proactive programme proved inconclusive (see page 3). It is also becoming clear that there is sufficient activity taking place within the NHS bodies covering East Sussex which warrant some attention from the HOSC.

It is likely that when the Patient and Public Involvement Forums are fully up and running some of the issues which the HOSC has identified will be of interest to them. Currently a protocol for working together is being created and will undoubtedly feed into any changes to the way in which the HOSC will work.

Patient choice: reality or pipedream?

The scope of HOSC's first review included:

- ❖ identifying the extent to which patients' choices are taken into account in their health care provision;
- ❖ whether the first place a person goes to with a health problem is easily accessible;
- ❖ integration of services with the private and voluntary sector provision.

The preliminary report of initial findings of this complex area of primary care was presented to the HOSC in March.

The second phase of this project has now started. This includes taking stock of a number of relevant consultation activities underway by other organisations and further investigation in order that a final report would lead to robust recommendations for improvements.

The preliminary report is available on the HOSC website:
www.eastsussexhealth.org
(If you would like a paper copy, please contact Sam White on (01273) 481581)



Alcohol, tobacco, drugs and substance misuse

The second HOSC review is examining the effectiveness of strategies and policies in place to combat alcohol, tobacco, drugs and substance misuses. The Project Board has been reviewing information from a variety of national sources and receiving presentations from local lead specialists from across the county. A survey has been undertaken to collect information from voluntary organisations who work in the 'misuse' arena. The report is expected to be published in October 2004.

Patient and Public Involvement Forums

With the establishment of the Patient and Public Involvement Forums in the county, the HOSC is working with them to establish how the different bodies will work together.

Each NHS Trust and PCT covering East Sussex has its own PPI Forum made up of 10-15 lay people. These volunteers have been appointed by the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement, initially for a period of two years. Each PPI Forum will hold 6 meetings a year.

PPI Forums independently monitor local health services within their PCT or Trust. The protocol with HOSC will ensure PPI Forum activities complement its programme.

Working with neighbouring HOSCs

Councillor Dr Robinson and Paul Wickenden from Kent County Council gave a presentation to the HOSC on the finance and health economy project carried out by the Kent CC HOSC. As a result of this, the Chairmen of the HOSCs in Kent, West Sussex, Brighton & Hove City, Surrey and Hampshire are meeting in May to discuss health scrutiny. In particular the chairmen will explore the idea of joint reviews. Kent HOSC would also like to encourage other HOSCs to undertake their own financial reviews of the health economy.



Reference group

The induction meetings of the HOSC reference group have taken place. This is a 14-strong 'interactive' group of people with a wide range of skills and experience in health or a related arena. Many are involved in voluntary organisations, local council activities or Patient & Public Involvement Forums. The HOSC will employ group members on a case by case basis over a range of activities such as:

- ❖ analysing documents and publications from health;
- ❖ responding to telephone calls from HOSC members and officers;
- ❖ supporting project managers;
- ❖ producing commentaries on reports;
- ❖ attending selected meetings to provide an expert view.

We would like to continue to build the group and if you have any suggestions for membership please contact Roger Howarth on (01273) 481327 or e-mail: roger.howarth@eastsussexcc.gov.uk

Future reviews

The HOSC has carried out consultation in order to prioritise the topics already identified as areas for review and investigation in the pro-active programme.

These topics were:

- ❖ Services for older people
- ❖ Community hospitals
- ❖ Mental health
- ❖ Carers
- ❖ NHS Dentistry
- ❖ Hospital hygiene
- ❖ Ambulance Service

The results of the consultation were inconclusive with regard to giving the HOSC a definitive priority list. Carers, hospital hygiene and older people were the three most popular topics and suggest a review could be carried out in each of these three areas. However, the remaining topics – community hospitals, mental health, NHS dentistry and the ambulance service – all polled a significant number of votes.

Because of the lack of conclusiveness on the priorities for the reviews, the HSOC will undertake a more in-depth analysis of the situation before establishing the future review programme.

Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Cllr Bill Bentley, Chairman,
East Sussex CC
Cllr Ron Dyason, East Sussex CC
Cllr Mrs Joanne Gadd, Rother DC
Cllr Beryl Healy, East Sussex CC
Cllr Bert Leggett, Eastbourne BC
Cllr Mrs Ann Leigh, East Sussex CC
Cllr John Webber, Lewes DC
Cllr Mrs Diane Phillips, Wealden DC
Cllr David Rogers, East Sussex CC
Cllr Ronald Rushbrook, Hastings BC
Cllr Phil Scott, East Sussex CC
Cllr Mrs Joy Waite, Vice Chairman,
East Sussex CC

Voluntary Organisations' representatives:
Ralph Chapman, Chairman Age Concern
East Sussex
Rosemary Iddenden, Branch Manager,
Alzheimer's Society

Legal advisor: Richard Partridge
Committee Secretary: Michaela Frost
Lead Officer: Roger Howarth

For further information on health scrutiny, please contact Roger Howarth on telephone (01273) 481327 or e-mail: roger.howarth@eastsussexcc.gov.uk

The next meeting of the HOSC is at 10am on Tuesday 15 June 2004 in the Council Chamber at County Hall, St Anne's Crescent, Lewes.

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