

Sunderland Health Forum

Thursday 27th July, Hope Street Xchange (6.00pm – 8.00pm)

Introduction

Sunderland Health Forum is a public meeting, for all in Sunderland who have an interest in health. It is held 5 times a year (including daytime and evening meetings, using the same agenda) and aims both to inform the people of Sunderland what health initiatives are being developed and to gather public opinion, experience and preferences with respect to health service developments.

Who attended?

7 people attended the evening session. Attendees included members of the public and representatives from the voluntary sector (excluding CCG staff).

What did we look at?

The main topic on the agenda was:

Path to Excellence- Focused Discussion on all service areas

If a comment is said with a positive sentiment a + has been used and if it is said with concern or negativity a – sign was used, for a neutral comment a = sign was used.

The meeting time was divided between a run through of the presentation and then a detailed questions and comments session from the audience.

Comments and questions from Thursday 27th July

Focused discussion on Path to Excellence (All service areas)

David Gallagher, Chief Officer Sunderland CCG
DR Shaz Wahid, Medical Director South Tyneside Foundation Trust

David Gallagher introduced the session and a round of introductions took place across the room. DG went through the business case slides of the presentation, and Dr Shaz Wahid covered the clinical options on stroke, maternity and paediatrics. There was then a detailed questions and comments session for the audience to have their say.

The following comments and questions were made:

General questions

- - Are you saying there are a bunch of greedy doctors / locums?
- - Or is it that the basic salary for doctors are not worth it, locums are better?
- = Do you still have the option to visit different hospitals in the NE for services?
- - Who proof read the consultation document as well as typos? The document has caused upset and a lot of grief. E.g. 6 minute travel time.
- -Do you have a member's forum at hospitals?
- =How would you rate Healthwatch as a survey organisation?

Key Test questions

- -Is it only down to staffing or money as well?
- - Is that one of the reasons that some remote maternity services around the country close? Is extra travel safer? If you get it right?
- - This is frightening for women, when you are in labour and have to travel.
- + When my daughter was in labour she was transferred from North Tyneside to Wansbeck.
- + I went to South Tyneside hospital last year and the receptionist got a compliment from me because she was there when I fell, and provided good service.
- = Will the new medical school help with getting stroke specialists or will the CCG take all trainees to be GP's.

Stroke Services

- = So option 1 is already up and running?
- = When you say local community stroke teams, where are they based?
- = Do patients from both ST and Sunderland agree that option 1 is better? What are their opinions?
- - Recently in the news it was sad that ambulance service priority is going to downgrade stroke and cardiology. How does this work? What are they doing?
- = The media gets things wrong and needs to be challenged.

- = The people who are currently working on option 1. Do they prefer this option? What are their opinions? I would want to be guided by somebody who is already doing it.
- + It is an employee's market for opportunities.
- =How many more therapists will you be able to employ if option 1 goes ahead? There are still shortages in these skills, which leads to shortages in staff.
- + It is not the only trust with staffing issues, it is countrywide.
- =Is this because of Brexit? Or because of training issues? Or is there no staff?
- - Middlesbrough and Newcastle still attract staff? But not ST or Sunderland?
- = Is this to attract graduates?
- - What happens if we don't attract people? The government had to attract specialist teachers and it didn't work. We need to migrate the process from other specialities.

Maternity and Women's services

- - Is there any research on maternity led unit's safety? I suppose it depends on the amount of kids you have.
- =Option 1 gives the birth choice of Newcastle or Gateshead. Is this for people who live in Washington?

Children and Young people's healthcare (paediatrics) services

- - So there was disagreements made, what were these disagreements and why?
- - What was option 3? But the 2 options here do meet the key tests?
- = Will people from Sunderland have to go to ST in option 2?
- = In option 2 will there be a DR if needed?
- = In option 1 do they still get triage?
- -If option 2 is decided upon, how are you going to let the public know what is a minor injury or illness? Eg. Asthma attack.
- -What happens if a really sick child turns up at ST and they need an emergency response? So emergency nurse practitioners can spot a sick child?
- =Would nurse practitioners make the decision?
- -If your child is sick you are not thinking straight, in an emergency you will either go to the nearest hospital or ring an ambulance.
- =We need to make sure changes are well informed once decision is taken.
- -Will there be more ambulances since there are more pressures on ambulances for ST transport to Sunderland. People who don't have transport will struggle, e.g. may have to wait over 40 minutes for an ambulance.
- + In this area we don't realise how lucky we are, we have so many hospitals near us. Living 30 miles away is a different story.
- +In option 1 with the 12 hour there is less confusion, but option 2 how do you educate the public to get patients to the right place at the right time?

- +You might be able to get schools to disseminate information when a decision is made.
- =With more walk-ins are less people going to the right place?
- - Has having minor injury units not reduced A and E.
- =Even the urgent care at Pallion shuts at 8. I bet it hasn't changed when people turn up? A lot of people turn up because they can't get a GP appointment.
- +I never thought I would agree with option 2 but I do.
- =Use hospital radio to promote PTE. Is there an opportunity to use school governing bodies to get messages out?