

**NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**8 November 2017**

**SCRUTINY OF HEALTH COMMITTEE – STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN**

The Scrutiny of Health Committee continues to have a strong focus upon developments that are taking place in mental health services that are provided for the people of North Yorkshire.

**Mental health services**

Over the past 12 months, the committee has scrutinised plans for changes to the delivery of mental health services across the county. This has included the development of a new mental health in-patient facility at Haxby Road in York, to replace the Bootham Park Hospital, the now paused development of a new mental health in-patient facility at Cardale Park in Harrogate, and the proposed closure of the existing mental health in-patient wards at the Friarage in Northallerton.

At the last meeting of the committee, we considered the early findings of the engagement and consultation on the proposal to close the mental health in-patient wards at the Friarage in Northallerton. It soon became apparent that there is real tension between keeping valued services local and maintaining the highest levels of clinical intervention at larger, centralised sites.

It is clear to me that, in a modern society, mixed sex wards should not be tolerated and that people with severe mental health conditions should be treated with dignity and respect and be able to access the psychiatric intensive care that they need.

I am hopeful that there is an opportunity to have a frank and open discussion about mental health services and how the needs of people in North Yorkshire can best be met. It is apparent that the county has suffered from years of under-funding in mental health services and particularly those in the community. Whilst in-patient facilities are an important resource for people who are seriously ill, community hubs, outreach, crisis support and intervention are all essential for the vast majority of people who do not need a hospital admission (98% of people being seen by mental health services).

The commissioning and provision of mental health services is complicated by having three Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships, five Clinical Commissioning Groups and two providers. All of which makes it difficult to agree a shared vision for mental health services in the county.

**Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships**

Whilst work on the three Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STP) that cover North Yorkshire continues, we have yet to see any concrete proposals for changes to hospital and community services. The concern, that I have previously expressed, is that the focus on hospital services is at the expense of community services and the development of integrated health and social care teams and interventions that support people in their homes for longer.

**Friarage Hospital in Northallerton**

The impact of shortages in skilled clinical staff is being felt throughout the NHS nationally, regionally and locally. At the Friarage in Northallerton, a shortage in

Consultant Anaesthetists and A&E doctors has prompted a review of the types of physical health services that can safely and efficiently be delivered at that site. Public engagement is underway, the outcome of which will be brought to a specially convened meeting of the committee on 23 February 2017.

### **Integrated prevention, community care and support in Scarborough and Ryedale**

A recurring theme over the past 10 years has been that of the integration of health and social care services. The procurement of an integrated community health and care service by Scarborough and Ryedale Clinical Commissioning Group offers a real opportunity to progress integrated services and develop a model that could be applied elsewhere in the county.

### **Capped expenditure regimes**

The general impact of the capped expenditure regime upon the health services commissioned and provided by the Scarborough and Ryedale CCG, the Vale of York CCG and the York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust is clear. Services will be trimmed, eligibility criteria raised and treatments deferred. The specifics, however, remain unclear.

It has become apparent that NHS England the NHS Improvement believed that large scale in-year savings could be made relatively quickly and easily without necessitating any service closures. The reality, however, is very different. As Members are well aware, NHS finances in North Yorkshire are stretched and there are no quick and easy economies to make. As such, I believe that the capped expenditure programme will have to take a longer term view, with a programme of financial recovery being put in place for the next 5 years.

I am in regular contact with Chief Officers at Scarborough and Ryedale CCG, the Vale of York CCG and the York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and will keep Members informed of how things progress.

### **Joint scrutiny of health and social care workforce planning**

A recurrent theme over the past 12 months has been one of workforce shortages and pressures in health and social care. Members of both the Scrutiny of Health Committee and the Care and Independence Overview and Scrutiny Committee have raised concerns about the impact of staff shortages on the sustainability of key services.

In response, Cllr John Ennis and I have setup a joint scrutiny task and finish group to look in-depth at health and social care workforce planning. It will report its finding to both committees at their December 2017 meetings.

### **Community Hospitals**

In my last Statement to Council, I raised my concerns about the future of some of the services currently provided by the smaller, community hospitals in the county, such as Ripon Community Hospital, Malton Community Hospital and Selby War Memorial Hospital. My concerns have not diminished but I am in regular contact with both the commissioners and providers.

### **GP practice mergers**

I understand that there will be more mergers of smaller GP practices over the next few years. NHS England considers there to be a minimum size, around 20,000 registered patients, for a GP practice to be financially secure. The exception to this is where a practice has additional income from a pharmacy business. In Scarborough, four practices have already started to look at merging. Whilst this can have benefits in terms of long term sustainability and extended opening hours, there are often local concerns about accessibility and travel times. Any such proposed mergers will be brought to the committee for scrutiny.

Cllr Jim Clark  
20 October 2017