

Update on 'The Path to Excellence'

The Path to Excellence is a five-year transformation of healthcare service across South Tyneside and Sunderland.

It has been set up to secure the future of local NHS services and to identify new and innovative ways of delivering high quality, joined up, sustainable care that will benefit our population both now and in the future.

The Path to Excellence listening exercise started in October 2016. The NHS partnership in South Tyneside and Sunderland has engaged with hundreds of patients, families and stakeholders to understand public views, needs and experiences relating to NHS stroke, obstetrics, gynaecology and paediatric services in the area. Also included is the travel and transport impact assessment.

We are asking local people to share their views on clinical services in South Tyneside and Sunderland to help us identify how they can be improved and how things might be done differently in the future.

You may be aware that we recently shared details of the proposed consultation dates for the first phase of the path to excellence programme. The plan to launch the public consultation on stroke, obstetrics, gynaecology and paediatrics in early spring has now been delayed until late spring 2016.

This change to the strategic timeline has been done in order to ensure that the scenarios for change are as robust as possible, based on best clinical evidence, will make the best use of resources and offer patient choice.

The next step is for the partnership to use the public views gathered during the listening exercise to inform the case for change and develop proposed new models of acute care/ scenarios that are as robust as possible, based on best clinical evidence, will make the best use of resources and offer patient choice.

The formal consultation phase of the Path to Excellence proposals is scheduled to begin during May 2017, subject to assurance from NHS England and NHS Improvement, around:

- Stroke
- Obstetrics (maternity) and gynaecology
- Paediatrics

The enclosed papers will inform you about the work conducted to date as well as the proposed draft communications plan for the consultation process.

The papers enclosed include:

- Draft communications plan
- Travel and transport impact assessment update

Appendix 1: draft communications plan

NHS South Tyneside and Sunderland Partnership has a requirement to develop a communications plan to support public consultation around any possible future, proposed changes to the following clinical services delivered by South Tyneside General Hospital and Sunderland Royal Hospital:

- Stroke
- Maternity (Obstetrics)
- Gynecology
- Paediatrics

The challenge is to make what are very complex issues as simple as possible for the public to understand, while ensuring underpinning good communications and engagement processes providing the right information for people to make an informed opinion. This in turn allows decision makers to understand public feedback in a systematic way, therefore fulfilling legal duties around major service changes and consultation.

The communications programme team were asked to advise on a suitable communications approach that would provide a range of engagement activity that allows different stakeholders and groups to get involved in the way that is most suitable to them. All methods ensure that feedback and dialogue is captured, which will be then be analysed and included in a final feedback report. All methods will include data monitoring of the key characteristics of participants to ensure the NHS organisations are hearing from key groups and that equality monitoring can take place.

Appendix 2: travel and transport impact assessment update

Integrated Transport Planning Ltd has been appointed by South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Partnership to provide a Travel and Transport Impact Assessment. This will be used to inform a 'case for change' around local NHS services potentially being relocated across two hospitals in South Tyneside and Sunderland, namely South Tyneside District Hospital (STDH) and Sunderland Royal Hospital (SRH).

A draft baseline report has been produced for the first stage of this commission and the primary findings from each of the six reviews listed are included in the document that can be found on our website: www.pathtoexcellence.org.uk

This paper sets out the work undertaken and progress made since the draft baseline report was presented to last Joint Overview and Scrutiny meeting held on 30th January 2017.