

CLINICAL SERVICES REVIEW

Postponement of public consultation until May 2011

NHS Doncaster and NHS Bassetlaw today (Wed 22 Dec.) announced that the planned public consultation on the clinical services review across Doncaster and Bassetlaw will be postponed until May 2011. This is to allow for a major programme of engagement with key stakeholders and the wider public in the meantime.

The consultation was due to start in January 2011 but the two primary care trusts now want to:

- Allow more time to ensure local people and patients groups can be directly involved in developing options for consultation.
- Enable finalisation of the independent reports into maternity and children's services, which are not yet completed.
- Ensure a full and meaningful consultation take place, free from election 'purdah' (local council elections will be held in early May 2011).

The review has already identified some exciting and significant opportunities for service improvement, including:

- More day surgery, which patients prefer and allows more people to be treated quickly.
- A new Assessment and Treatment Centre at Bassetlaw Hospital, involving both consultants and GPs to fast-track the assessment and management of patients.
- Enhanced community services to avoid hospital admissions and support early discharge.
- Development of a rehabilitation service for Doncaster.

It is hoped that work to introduce some of these improvements can progress in areas of small scale or compliance with good practice. However, there are also issues around the long-term sustainability of some services. These in particular must be addressed in collaboration with patients and public.

The two primary care trusts will issue more information about the engagement process early next year.