



Nottinghamshire County Council Overview and Scrutiny

**Findings and Recommendations on the proposals
For Community Hospitals (Ashfield Health
Village and Mansfield Community Hospital)**

19th January 2009

Community Hospitals Select Committee

Background and Introduction

The Community Hospitals Select Committee is pleased to provide comments on the proposals from NHS Nottinghamshire County to changes in the local NHS in Ashfield Health Village and Mansfield Community Hospital.

The Community Hospitals Select Committee is the responsible Overview and Scrutiny Committee designated by Nottinghamshire County Council for considering this proposal. The Chair of the Select Committee is Councillor Chris Winterton and the Vice-Chair is Councillor Brian Wombwell. The Select Committee has co-opted two elected members one from Ashfield District Council and one from Mansfield District Council.

The Select Committee met three times to consider the proposals and held meetings in the locality at Mansfield Community Hospital and Ashfield Health Village as well as at County Hall on the following dates:

- 20th October 2008
- 1st December 2008
- 19th January 2009

The agenda, reports and minutes of these meetings are public record.

The primary aims of health overview and scrutiny are to ensure that:

- health services reflect the views and aspirations of local communities
- all sections of local communities have equal access to services
- all sections of local communities have an equal chance of a successful outcome from services.¹

The aim of formally consulting an Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to consider:

1. whether, as a statutory body, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been properly consulted within the consultation process;
2. whether, in developing the proposals for service changes, the health body concerned has taken into account the public interest through appropriate patient and public involvement and consultation;
3. whether, a proposal for change is in the interests of the local health service.

The content of this final response was agreed at a meeting of the Select Committee on 19th January 2009 and was compiled by the Chair, Councillor Chris Winterton and Vice-Chair, Councillor Brian Wombwell.

This is the response of the Select Committee as agreed on 19th January 2009.

¹ substantial variations and developments of health services – a guide – CfPS 2005

Community Hospitals Select Committee

Response

The Select Committee welcomes NHS Nottinghamshire County's intention to provide significant benefit to patients through changes to wards in Ashfield Health Village and Mansfield Community Hospital.

Addressing the specific aims of consulting the Select Committee:

whether, in developing the proposals for service changes, the health body concerned has taken into account the public interest through appropriate patient and public involvement and consultation;

NHS Nottinghamshire County provided the Select Committee with evidence that it has undertaken local consultation via public meetings. The Select Committee welcomes the establishment of a transport sub-group within the framework of the consultation. The Select Committee recommends that NHS Nottinghamshire County develop a comprehensive and fully realised transport plan which takes into account the full range of patient need, the adaptation of public transport vehicles, volunteer drivers, the viability of regular bus services and the increased provision of parking.

[NB the Select Committee will receive more detail on the outcomes of the consultation at their meeting on 19th January 2009.]

The Select Committee registers a concern regarding the ramp at Ashfield Health Village which patients must negotiate in order to access physiotherapy services. The consultation highlighted the concern of patients that the ramp would reduce their level of independence. The Select Committee recommends that NHS Nottinghamshire County address this legitimate concern and investigate ways in which the problems likely to be associated with the ramp can be effectively mitigated (mitigation measures to be considered might include: installation of a stair-lift type equipment and/or porter service).

[NB the Select Committee will receive information on the perspective of the High Point Practice Based Commissioning Cluster at their meeting on 19th January 2009.]

Community Hospitals Select Committee

whether, a proposal for change is in the interests of the local health service

The Select Committee acknowledges that the proposals are in the interests of some patients, are likely to deliver significant benefits and that to embrace a 'do nothing' option would in itself incur significant cost while failing to drive forward quality in primary care. The Select Committee's expectation, as a general principle of such change as this, is that facilities at new locations will be at least as good as they are at current locations.

Community Hospitals Select Committee

Summary of Recommendations

The Select Committee recommends that:

- NHS Nottinghamshire County develops a fully realised and comprehensive transport plan
- NHS Nottinghamshire County mitigates patients' loss of independence caused by the ramp access to physiotherapy services at Ashfield Health Village.