

Key messages from meeting of the North Cumbria Programme Board on 2 October 2014

Detailed work has been continuing on the development of hospital and out of hospital models. This is involving ongoing discussions with clinicians across the health economy.

Also, in line with national guidance on potential service change, preparations are being made for two reviews by independent experts which will:

- give clinical advice and support on the development of options
- give a clinical opinion on how the challenges in delivering maternity care for women across Cumbria can be best met.

The first involves a review by the Northern Clinical Senate, which is hosted by NHS England and will take place early in November. The Clinical Senate comprises independent senior clinicians who are experts in their own fields and have experience or understanding of the clinical issues under consideration. Their focus will be on some of the high risk patient pathways where change may be proposed.

The second has been commissioned by NHS Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and NHS North Lancashire CCG in discussion with NHS England and the Royal Colleges, the professional bodies for clinicians working in maternity and related service areas. A highly experienced team of experts will be visiting Cumbria as part of their review during November 2014 which will help to identify the best way to arrange future services given the challenges faced.

In addition to meeting clinicians and senior managers both teams will also meet some of the key stakeholders including Healthwatch Cumbria and members of the West Cumberland Hospital Facebook campaign group.

Preparations were also being made for a Health Gateway Review which provide NHS organisations with independent advice about how projects and programmes are progressing to ensure and deliver the desired outcomes. These now routinely take place during major change programmes involving the NHS.

At the programme board meeting there was also a lengthy discussion about the need to strengthen communications and engagement during the autumn. This was in light of the progress being made on the development of hospital and out of hospital models but also in view of the sustained concerns being raised by the public particularly in West Cumbria.

It was agreed that discussions should take place with Healthwatch over the establishment of a community forum to bring together all key partners to ensure stronger two-way communications and that all opportunities for engagement are optimised.

There was agreement over more events to engage the public, more attendances at existing local community groups, ongoing discussions with parish, district and county councils and increased publicity in the coming months.

North Cumbria University Hospitals NHS Trust also talked about plans for increased staff communications and engagement.

Finally, a summary leaflet of the interim five year plan has been shared across North Cumbria and is available at <http://www.cumbriaccg.nhs.uk/get-involved/engagement/together-for-a-healthier-future/together-for-a-healthier-future-summary.pdf>

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