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Cumbria's GPs prioritise plans to reduce the hundreds who die prematurely in Cumbria from cancer, heart and lung problems

Posted on Wednesday 17th October 2012

Cumbria's GPs prioritise plans to reduce the hundreds who die prematurely in Cumbria from cancer, heart and lung problems.

Currently around 745 people a year in Cumbria die prematurely from cancer under the age of 75, and Cumbria's lead GPs want to reduce this number.

Reducing premature cancer deaths and a further reduction in the number of people who die aged under 75 from circulatory disease is just one of the key priorities which Cumbria's new lead commissioning GPs have laid out.

In 2011, 401 people in Cumbria died from circulatory disease before they reached their 75th birthday. This has reduced from 687 in 2001 and is in decline, but the new Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Group, wants to ensure that more is done to save lives and reduce the number of people getting ill from preventable illness in the first place.

NHS Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) which is led by a group of seven Cumbrian based GPs will take over responsibility from NHS Cumbria, the primary care trust in April 2013 for commissioning local NHS health services.

This means Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Group will decide how and where local NHS services should be delivered. 'Commissioning' means planning and purchasing NHS services for local people from hospital trusts and other organisations.

From April 2013 as part of the government health reforms, primary care trusts will no longer exist.

As part of the transition Cumbria Clinical commissioning group is now gradually taking more responsibility from the primary care trust. This is why it has now published its key priorities.

These include:

- Improving care to respond to the challenges of an ageing population
- Improving the health of children and young people and the quality and integration of care services
- Improving mental wellbeing and reducing alcohol misuse
- Reducing health inequalities and premature mortality from cancer and cardiovascular disease

More information Cumbria CCG and how it will operate are available at www.cumbriaccg.nhs.uk

Dr Hugh Reeve is the Clinical Chair of Cumbria CCG. He said: "Improving people's health by ensuring that we help people make the right decisions about their lifestyle which can affect their health and ensuring that services help people when they do become ill are our highest priority.

"We need to make sure that services are responsive, safe of a high quality and easy for people to navigate when they do need support. This is not something which we can do overnight, but these four key areas are where we plan to start.

“Cumbria CCG is a clinically led organisation which means myself and my six GP colleagues make decisions with support from over 40 other GPs across the county who’ve decide to offer their time alongside their current surgery role to help us improve services and the health of people across Cumbria. Although there will be difficult decisions to be made in the current climate and with the challenges we face in our county, such as the ageing population, I am keen that everyone knows that the needs of patients will be at heart of everything we do.”

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