

Stakeholder Briefing: October 2016

Talk health Kirklees

The NHS has improved significantly over the past fifteen years. Many more advanced high-cost treatments are available which are supporting patients to live longer and dramatically improving their quality of life. While this is good news, set alongside a growing and aging population and an increasing number of people living with long-term health conditions, it is putting the NHS budget under considerable pressure.

Nationally, NHS England has identified a gap between the money needed to provide services and the funds available. It is expected that £22 billion of this gap will be closed by making efficiency savings across the NHS.

Within Kirklees, the health economy is particularly challenged. While both NHS North Kirklees and NHS Greater Huddersfield CCGs have received an increase in their budgets for 2016/17 of 2.5% and 3% respectively, cost pressures mean that they will not be able to deliver the 1% financial surplus required by NHS England this year. As a result, both organisations are required to put in place financial recovery plans describing how they will deliver short-term financial balance and return to a position of sustainable recurrent surplus in the medium term, thereby enabling future investment in local priorities.

As well as experiencing increasing demand for service as result of demographic growth and changing health needs, our two local hospital trusts also continue to face significant operational, clinical and financial pressures.

The scale of the financial recovery challenge from 2016/17 onwards is significant and requires transformational change and potentially controversial efficiencies. We have to do more with the money we have and take very tough decisions about what we can afford and what we cannot afford. This could include prioritising the services we provide and decommissioning or changing access to services that provide limited value for individuals or the population as a whole.

The CCGs recognise that to deliver the best care for local people we need to spend our money on the things that will give the greatest benefit. When making difficult decisions we are committed to keeping services safe and to those decisions being fully informed by any impact they may have on quality of services, both for the overall population and for specific groups of patients. To that end,

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any such decisions will of course be clinically-led, evidence-based, informed by quality and equality impact, and follow appropriate engagement with the public and other key stakeholders.

To help us develop the detail of our recovery plans, we will be launching a public campaign on 12 October called 'Talk health Kirklees, through which we want to have an open and honest discussion with local people about the things we could do to get better value from NHS spending.

The first phase of the campaign will take the form of a six-week public consultation focusing on the following proposals:

- Stopping the routine prescribing of products that are available in shops and pharmacies eg sun cream and multivitamins
- Stopping the routine prescribing of gluten-free foods
- Changing the criteria for individual funding requests
- Prescribing generic (un-branded) medicines rather than the more expensive branded products.

We are also planning to change the way some people order repeat prescriptions and will be inviting people to let us have any thoughts or suggestions they have about this.

In the future, as we bring forward further proposals for change we will do this through the 'Talk health Kirklees' platform.

We are working closely with Healthwatch Kirklees and other partners to ensure that we reach and talk to as many communities and individuals within Kirklees as possible, particularly those who may be affected by the proposed changes, as well as those who are seldom heard.

If you would like more information or have any questions, in the first instance please contact: Siobhan Jones on Siobhan.jones@northkirkleescg.nhs.uk or call 0750 6306768