

Report of the Dacorum Representative on the Herts. County Council Health Scrutiny Committee for the Health in Dacorum Meeting of 14th September 2016

A meeting of the county Health Scrutiny Committee was held on 12th July 2016.

At this meeting there was an item on feedback for future years about the scrutiny of Herts. NHS organisations budgets and quality of care (Francis Review).

In future years, information requests from budgets and quality of care are to be collated and sent out together. All figures will be presented with comparisons to the previous year and projected figures for future years, so that trends can be identified.

There was an update on Your Care, Your Future by Cameron Ward, the interim Accountable Officer of Herts. Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group (HVCCG). He explained that there are 44 Strategic Transformation Plans (STPs) across the country and that the one including Herts covers Herts and west Essex. Your Care, Your Future enables a plan to be in place. A key part of the plan is finance and there are significant financial pressures. A lot of work is under way, particularly on the development of health and social care hubs.

The next key aspect is focused work over the next few months on acute options. The option chosen needs to be clinically sustainable, practical (there is a lack of capital money) and able to recruit and retain a workforce, and there needs to be engagement. No decisions are to be made yet, or at a stakeholder meeting on 18th July 2016. Two draft papers will come back in December 2016.

The Dacorum representative welcomed the fact that a new hospital on a new site is being considered, and that its consideration shows that NHS officials are listening to local people, as the problems with Watford hospital – its location, condition of estates and limited room to expand are well-known. A new hospital with modern buildings on a site with room to expand would meet the needs of the people of West Herts in the 21st Century.

The Vice Chairman (a County Councillor representing a St. Albans county seat) mentioned the Northumbria Healthcare Foundation Trust, stating that it is supported nationally as good practice and is being considered.

The St. Albans City and District Council representative appealed for speedy decision making. Decisions are to be made by HVCCG and West Herts Hospitals Trust (WHHT) in October and November 2016.

Savings of £120 million over the next five years need to be made. HVCCG has a gap of over £20-40 million and is looking at good practice from other parts of the country as to how to close the gap.

After Investing in Your Health, when a new hospital was proposed at Hatfield, but didn't happen, there was an appeal by the Chairman (who represents a Hertsmere county seat) to make it happen.

Clinicians' views are to be considered in future developments.

There was an item on the final report by the scrutiny topic group on the Care Quality Commission (CQC) monitoring report of WHHT. The topic group will reconvene after the outcome is known of the next CQC inspection in September 2016.

At WHHT the number of agency staff is decreasing as they are converting to permanent staff and being given flexibility.

The Welwyn Hatfield District representative commented that something needs to be done to make nurses feel more supported.

Fiona Guest
Dacorum Representative
Hertfordshire County Council Health Scrutiny Committee