

TO: 2gether NHS Foundation Trust Board

FROM: Hazel Watson – Director of Nursing, Social Care, and Allied Health Professionals

DATE: 18th August 2008

SUBJECT: 2gether NHSFT response to the document “Improving Health: Ambitions for the South West

PURPOSE

In June, the Board received the draft report on the South West review of services in response to the national Darzi review. This paper is the draft response from the Trust to the review. Final comments on the consultation are to be returned to the Strategic Health Authority by 31st August.

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

- The response is constructed in the prescribed format.
- The response reflects comments from consultation across the Trust.
- The Trust broadly endorses the aspirations described in the document.
- The Trust supports the plans to develop mental health and learning disability services and recommends further work to take forward the Social Inclusion agenda.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- That the Board comment on the response and provides any additions it would wish to see before final submission.
- That the Board endorse the submission – subject to changes as described above – for submission to the SHA.

WHICH TRUST KEY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES DOES THIS PAPER PROGRESS OR CHALLENGE?

Supporting clinical care	P	Skilled workforce	
Getting the basics right	P	Using better information	
Social inclusion	P	Financial efficiency	
Seeking involvement	P	Legislation	

WHICH TRUST VALUES DOES THIS PAPER PROGRESS OR CHALLENGE?			
Seeing from a service user perspective			P
Excelling and improving		Inclusive open and honest	
Responsive	P	Can do	
Valuing and respectful	P	Efficient	

REVIEWED BY:	
Nursing Professional Advisory Group	
Social Care Development Group	
Heads of Professions group	
Forums / Community groups whose views have been sought	

Response

1. What change do you think is most needed?

2gether NHS Foundation Trust provides mental health, learning disability, and substance misuse services in Gloucestershire. The promotion of mental health and wellbeing needs to be a key focus for the NHS and Local Authorities. With an incidence of 1:4 of the population, mental health is the single greatest health determinant. All parts of the health and social care system need to have an understanding of mental health, and a core set of competencies to deal with common mental health problems. Mental Health and Learning Disability services in their turn need to take greater responsibility for basic physical health care.

Do you agree with the views of NHS staff, patients and members of the public?

As a service provider we are obliged to take account of people's views. Our service can only be as good as someone's perception of their experience. Waiting times for services is clearly important to people, as is getting the right treatment and drugs. We need to ensure these priorities are reflected in customer feedback

What would be the most effective change to improve people's health?

More access to Psychological Therapies.
A shift in perception from illness to health and wellbeing.
A Case Management service for long-term conditions

What do you think about our focus on encouraging people to stay healthy?

The focus is the right one although the document is not specific about how to achieve the cultural shift needed. We also note that it does not feature as important to patients or the public so we need strategies to assist people to take personal responsibility.

What do you think about our intention to provide mothers with a wider choice of places to give birth?

The intention does not align with the statement that 'delivery of the vision will not lead to the closure of any Maternity Units...'

The intention is the correct one although needs to be considered along-side the need for support for more complex births.

What do you think about our focus on reducing obesity among young people?

Reduction in Obesity is an important health issue. The Trust welcomed the attention given to the mental health implications of reducing obesity as well as the physical strategies. Primary Care Trusts now need to take this a step further and consider expansion of services that meet the psychological therapeutic needs of young people.

What do you think about our plans to help people manage their long-term conditions?

MH and LD services have implemented Case Management processes to support people in the Community. Done well, it is an extremely effective way of supporting people through the myriad of services needed to prevent deterioration, maintain health, and promote recovery. The same principles could be well applied to Long-term conditions. We did note that the 2 biggest causes of sickness absence from work – Musculoskeletal issues, and common mental health problems such as stress and depression – do not feature as priorities in this section.

What do you think of our plans to improve services for those affected by mental illness?

The ambitions for MH services reflect national policy guidance although some of the timescales have been brought forward. Whilst this is to be welcomed, it poorly reflects the Social Inclusion agenda. The biggest challenge, and therefore the thing that needs the greatest sense of ambition, is moving mental health out of the position of stigma and discrimination and into a societal acceptance of the issues facing people. To do this requires MH and LD service providers to work and think in a different way, and for the rest of the health and local authority community to respond to their responsibilities. Some of this aspiration is alluded to in other parts of the document, but not in the MH section.

How can we best improve services for those with a learning disability?

The best way to improve services for people with a learning disability is to make mainstream services accessible to them. People with LD need few specialist services, but they need all other services to be accessible. That does not mean a reduction in specialist support, or in skills and expertise needed. It means other services have to avail themselves of those skills and expertise to meet the needs of their LD population.

What do you think of our ambitious plans to drive down waiting times ahead of national targets?

The aspiration is the correct one, and we need to better understand the capacity in the system to be able to make accurate assumptions about delivery.

What do you think of our plans to improve acute care?

This part of the document is more detailed about how the ambition will be achieved. The plans appear to be robust. PCTs will have to negotiate the balance between locally delivered services and more specialised centres of services.

How can we best improve care for people at the end of their lives? What matters most to their families and carers?

It is clear that the response to end of life care needs to change radically. Nearly 60% of people expressed a preference for dying at home, and currently only 20% do. This requires a radical service redesign. The plans to make this shift appear robust.

What do you think of our ambitions to reduce health inequalities?

The ambition is the correct one. This needs to be supported to be a requirement for each PCT to identify a reduction target.

Which do you see as priority areas for action?

- Increasing access to Psychological Therapy Services
- Redesigning End-of life care
- Implementing Case Management systems for Long term conditions management.

How best can we harness new technology and develop NHS buildings to improve patient care?

See below

What could we do better to improve safety, quality and the patient experience?

The questions that relate to the improvement of quality of service into the future requires the NHS to think and work in a very different way. There is much the NHS could learn from private industry in terms of customer care, and when considering the future design of buildings and services.

We are aware that there is a separate stream of work currently being developed across NHS Southwest to consider these issues.

Conclusion

2gether NHS Foundation Trust welcomes the report 'Ambitions for the South West'. The document has been subject to consultation across the Trust, and this response represents the views expressed. The challenge will be to now develop the intentions into plans that can be measured and that will make a demonstrable difference.

A further challenge will be to consider planning for the next generation of services for the next generation of service users.