

Press Statement

21.10.16

NHS Better Health Programme Reaffirms Principles of Care in Response to Public Marches

“Local people deserve access to 24 hour specialist medical opinion in an emergency situation.”

That is the view of Dr Stewart Findlay, the Programme Clinical Lead for NHS Better Health Programme, who has been a GP in Bishop Auckland for 35 years.

The Better Health Programme is today responding to a series of protest marches being led by 999 Call for the NHS.

The Better Health Programme is about providing care of a consistently high standard, and in the right place at the right time.

Experienced clinical staff from the local NHS - including hospital consultants and GPs - have been looking at how we do this, in discussion with their colleagues, stakeholders and patient representatives.

They believe that people with serious or life threatening needs should be treated in specialist centres with the very best expertise and facilities. This will maximise their chances of survival and a good recovery – even if it means going past the nearest hospital.

Dr Findlay said he understood the concerns people might have about possible changes to services, but said it was important to make sure patients were getting the highest standards of care:

“We are looking at the role each of the three hospitals in the Tees Valley (North Tees Hospital, James Cook University Hospital and Darlington Memorial Hospital) plays in providing urgent and emergency care.

“We want to offer an enhanced level of care for patients in a life threatening emergency, with more consultants with different expertise available round the clock. This already happens for patients who are very seriously injured, for heart attacks and strokes, and has improved results.

“We also want to provide more services out of hospital, in local communities, reducing the need for unnecessary travel, delivering more patient focused care closer to home.”

Programme leaders and clinicians have stressed that no decisions have been made, and they are keen to hear the views of patients and the public.

A series of public engagement events is currently underway, prior to the consultation, and local people are encouraged to come along and get involved.

Location	Venue	Date	Time
Hartlepool	College of Further Education, TS24 7NT	Mon 24th October	6-8pm
Hawes	The Fountain Hotel, DL8 3RD	Wed 26th October	5-7pm
Darlington	Morton Park Training Centre, DL1 4PJ	Thurs 27th October	6-8pm
Thornaby	South Thornaby Community Centre, TS17 9JG	Fri 28th October	10am-12pm

To register to attend an event or to find out more please visit www.nhsbetterhealth.org.uk or call Tel: 01642 745401.

ENDS/



*The NHS in Darlington,
Durham and Tees*

Notes to Editor

For more information on the Better Health Programme please contact:

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