

Stakeholder Assembly considers the future of healthcare

Representatives from patient groups, voluntary organisations, NHS providers and the local council met to discuss the future of health care across the county when NHS Wiltshire held its Stakeholder Assembly on Wednesday 26 June.

The Stakeholder Assembly, which is organised and held by NHS Wiltshire twice a year, considered how the NHS can continue to provide high quality care when the country is facing its toughest ever financial climate. Traditionally, the NHS has received increased funding every year, but from 2011 onwards there will be little or no additional funding. As a result, the NHS as a whole needs to save £20 billion per annum.

For the NHS in Wiltshire this means saving £40 million each year. The money won't be taken out of the NHS budget but will be needed to provide care for an ageing population, new technologies and new ways to deliver services to meet the needs of our patients.

The Stakeholder Assembly offered an important opportunity to discuss NHS plans with patients and partners and to think about how local people can be involved as we go forward. There will undoubtedly need to be changes to the way that some services are delivered and the way the works. Together we need to ensure that our residents and patients get real value out of every pound that is spent on health services in Wiltshire.

NHS Wiltshire has started working on a programme called "Delivering Value for Patients", which has already identified core areas where the NHS can work more smartly in order to make the savings needed to fund healthcare for the next three years. Examples of areas that are being looked at include how to look after people with long term conditions such as diabetes to avoid unintended hospital admissions, and working more closely with the Council to improve services for people with a mental health condition.

The Assembly attendees were a presentation by Jeff James about the overall programme, before hearing from local doctors Dr Stuart Henderson and Dr Celia Grummitt about a pilot project that is already running in south Wiltshire to improve the way in which urgent care is delivered. Dr Grummitt, a GP from Amesbury, and Dr Henderson, a consultant from Salisbury Hospital said:

"Improvements in the NHS are about ensuring high quality care but they are also about making best use of the public funding that we receive. Everybody in Wiltshire knows that they have to live within their own personal means and the NHS is no exception to this. If we are going to be able to provide care to our ageing population and fund new ways of delivering that care, then we have to make sure that we spend every pound of funding efficiently. This is the aim of the Delivering Value for Patients programme".

GPs continue above-average service in Wiltshire

Thousands of Wiltshire patients rate the service they receive at their GP surgery higher than the national average, according a survey issued today.

The county's practices bettered the national average in the GP Patient Access Survey with 93% of patients reporting overall satisfaction with the care they get from the GPs and their

teams. The survey combines the quarter results of the 2009/10 GP Patient Survey April 2009 and March 2010 and was conducted by Ipsos MORI.

This is the fourth year that the Department of Health (DH) has conducted the GP Patient Survey in England. In 2009/10, the survey was conducted on a quarterly basis in order to provide more regular feedback on performance, and to give practices and local NHS organisations a clear indication of their patients' views and pinpoint areas where they should consider improvements. Each quarter, a different sample of 1.39 million adults is asked to voluntarily complete a questionnaire.

In Wiltshire, 19,456 patients gave their views on subjects ranging from the reception team and telephone access to their ability to see a nurse quickly and their satisfaction with extended opening hours in the evenings and at weekends.

The survey questions are intended to provide a broad assessment of patients' experiences when they access their GP, and the themes are based on situations which have been confirmed as those which are important to patients and the public.

Results for Wiltshire are as follows:

Question	England Average (%)	Wiltshire Average (%)
Overall level of satisfaction	88	93
The reception team was very helpful	93	95
It is easy to get through on the telephone	68	70
I am able to see a doctor quickly when I need to	80	80
I am able to book ahead	71	75
I am able to see my preferred doctor	62	65
I am satisfied with the opening hours	82	83
I am satisfied with the amount of time I have with the doctor	89	93
My doctor listens to me	88	92
I am able to see a nurse quickly when I need to	91	94
I am satisfied with the amount of time I have with the nurse	84	87
The nurse listens to me	79	81
I am satisfied with the speed of response of the out of hours services	63	67

In Wiltshire, 38,187 patients were sent questionnaires over the year. 19,456 replied, which is a response rate of 51%.

This report is based on combined findings from the four quarterly 2009/10 surveys. The overall national response rate to the survey is 39%, based on 2,169,718 completed responses from four combined quarters.

The next Board meeting will be held on **22 July 2010, in the Conference Room at Southgate House, Devizes**

Papers are published a week before the meeting on www.wiltshire.nhs.uk or on request from Maggie Goodman, NHS Wiltshire (tel: 01380 733827, email: maggie.goodman@wiltshire.nhs.uk). For further information or copies of documents referred to above, please contact Jo Howes, Community Engagement Manager, 01380 733929 or jo.howes@wiltshire.nhs