Annual Healthcheck - 2006/07

Great Western Ambulance Trust

Members who worked on these comments:

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Comments on specific standards

- C1 Safety of patient and staff is paramount for the Trust as healthcare can be delivered in a wide variety of situations.
- C4 Members have heard that the Trust is taking steps to change how its vehicles are cleaned and maintained so that clinical staff are focussing on clinical activities and dedicated staff are cleaning and restocking the vehicles. The Committee supports this and its aims to address issues of cross infection which are potentially serious for this Trust given the nature of the services it provides.
- C6 Members have heard evidence that the Trust is working with other health providers and social services to integrate with mainstream NHS services.

General comments about the Trust

The Trust is aiming to change the way it delivers its services in order to better meet the needs of the population it serves, comply with national targets and make best use of resources and funds. The Committee understands the need to change and is keen for the Trust to engage with it on a formal basis to ensure that due processes are met.

Members have recently seen speculation in the media about the future of services, including air ambulances and ambulance stations, which cause concern among members of the public. The Committee looks forward to the Trust being able to be explicit about any proposed changes in the way it delivers its services so that consultation can be carried out and innovations put in place.

The future use of Emergency Care Practitioners as responders to call outs is very much supported. Members can see that the skills of these people will be a crucial part of the primary care urgent care system which is itself subject to change in Wiltshire.

Attendance at category A 999 calls is always a concern in the rural parts of the county and members are unsure as to how this issue can ever be entirely resolved. However, plans to locate resources at primary care centres or community hospitals across the county would seem reasonable, although members have not yet seen detailed proposals.

Members welcome recent opportunities to engage in dialogue with the Trust.

Members are pleased that new technologies, such as AVLS have recently been introduced to Wiltshire.

The Committee is concerned that ambulances are having to wait at acute hospitals at certain times to deliver patients. This problem needs to be resolved, although there will no doubt be pressure points at times.