

MEDIA RELEASE

13 September 2019

Consultation launches on the future of services at the Friarage Hospital in Northallerton

NHS Hambleton, Richmondshire and Whitby Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), in partnership with South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, has today launched a 12-week public consultation to help shape the future of key services at the Friarage Hospital in Northallerton.

The Friarage Hospital is a much-loved and valued part of the NHS – the Trust, which runs the hospital, and CCG which funds local health services, want it to remain so for many years to come.

However, in recent times the local NHS has faced a number of challenges, not least a shortage of key emergency staff that has affected the Trust's ability to provide safe 24 hour, high quality A&E, anaesthetic overnight cover and critical care services from the hospital.

Now, a new vision has been developed for the Friarage Hospital that would safeguard services and ensure local people continue to have access to high quality and safe urgent and emergency care.

NHS Hambleton, Richmondshire and Whitby CCG is consulting on this vision, which contains two preferred options for urgent and emergency care provision.

Those options are:-

1. Replacing the emergency department with a 24/7 Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC) supported by a responsive front-of-house emergency medical model, dealing with approximately 90 per cent of urgent and emergency presentations (the same model that's currently in operation as part of the temporary arrangements introduced at the Friarage Hospital in March 2019)
2. Replacing the emergency department with an Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC) of the same configuration as above, but closed between midnight and 8am

Simon Cox, Director of Acute Commissioning at NHS Hambleton, Richmondshire and Whitby CCG said: "The consultation means the CCG can develop an innovative and sustainable model for our hospital – one that is fit for the future. We need to strike the right balance between providing care closer to home wherever possible, and ensuring patients receive the right specialist care when they need it.

“We would like to know the public’s views on our vision. We would also like people’s views on options for urgent and emergency care which will ensure services can be safely and sustainably provided in the future.”

The Friarage Hospital has experienced issues with services for some time, mainly as a result of workforce pressures and the ability to recruit key personnel.

The situation became more serious in February this year resulting in urgent temporary changes to A&E, critical care and emergency admissions overnight from March 2019.

NHS Hambleton, Richmondshire and Whitby CCG had already committed to a review of the Friarage Hospital to ensure its sustainability for the future, prior to the introduction of the temporary changes.

Adrian Clements, Medical Director for the Friarage Hospital said: “We welcome the announcement of the start of the public consultation.

“The doctors, nurses and allied health professionals at the Friarage Hospital have developed a model of care which will give the hospital a safe, long term and sustainable future.

“We have always stated that the model of care requires full and transparent consultation and I would encourage as many people as possible to share their views with us before 6 December.”

The consultation launched today (Friday 13 September) will feature online and face-to-face surveys, public events across Hambleton and Richmondshire which will be well publicised in advance, and focus groups. Everyone who would like to participate is encouraged to have their say.

The options for consideration have been developed in partnership with staff, patients, carers, and local organisations. They take into account national policy, advice and guidance on the provision of clinically safe, high quality services.

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Notes to editors:

The public can have their say on the proposals by:

- Completing the online survey (before 6 December):
<https://www.snapsurveys.com/wh/s.asp?k=156752408527>
- Or by registering to attend one of our public events:
www.friarageconsultation.eventbrite.com
- Further information is available at
<https://www.hambletonrichmondshireandwhitbyccg.nhs.uk> or call 01609 531397.

NHS Hambleton, Richmondshire and Whitby Clinical Commissioning Group (the CGG) is responsible for the planning and purchasing of the vast majority of health services across the area - this includes hospital care, mental health and community services.

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For further information contact Tim Readman in CCG Communications and Engagement on 01723 384332 / 07967 465331 (during normal office hours) or Tim.Readman@nhs.net