

## **Friarage Hospital, Northallerton public consultation stakeholder briefing**

NHS Hambleton, Richmondshire and Whitby Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is launching a formal public consultation on proposals for building a sustainable future for the Friarage Hospital in Northallerton. The 12 week consultation will take place from Friday 13<sup>th</sup> September until Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

The CCG wants to consult on its vision for the future of the Friarage Hospital that will ensure its sustainability for the next 10 to 15 years as well as options for urgent and emergency care to ensure services can be safely and sustainably provided in the future.

The CCG is consulting on two options for the future of urgent and emergency care:-

Option 1 - Replace the emergency department with a 24/7 Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC) model, dealing with approximately 90 per cent of urgent and emergency presentations

Option 2 - Replace the emergency department with a UTC as above, but closed overnight (opening 8am to midnight)

### **Challenges**

Healthcare is constantly changing and evolving with the development of new treatments, equipment and medication, as well as changes to national guidance on how services should operate and how clinical staff should be trained. Over recent years the Friarage Hospital has had to adapt to those changes. A national drive to ensure people get rapid and life saving treatment has seen the creation of large specialist centres for a range of conditions.

This means that anyone in Hambleton and Richmondshire who needs life saving trauma or stroke care, for example, will be taken straight to specialist centres for treatment rather than first going to the Friarage Hospital for assessment and then being transferred for specialist care.

There is also a national shortage of highly skilled healthcare staff, and those that are working in the NHS are generally more attracted to the larger specialist centres where they can work as part of bigger teams and see more patients to rapidly develop their skills and experience. But that poses a challenge to the future of district general hospitals, such as the Friarage Hospital.

### **Need to change**

To be classified as an accident and emergency department (A&E) a service must be led by consultants and have 24 hour access to resuscitation facilities, with associated support from anaesthetists. However, since 2017 South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust has been raising



concerns about how workforce shortages, particularly amongst anaesthetists, is impacting on its ability to provide 24 hour safe, high quality accident and emergency, anaesthetics and critical care services, which are all interlinked.

In Autumn 2017 work began to develop a more sustainable model for the future of these services at the Friarage Hospital, and the Royal College of Anaesthetists (RCoA) and the Royal College of Emergency Medicine (RCEM) were invited to review services at the Friarage Hospital.

The RCoA and RCEM recommended either closing the A&E department at night, or re-designing the services as an Urgent Treatment Centre.

Plans were in place to begin public consultation on the proposals. However, in March 2019, due to patient safety concerns, the Trust made the difficult decision to suspend A&E services at the hospital and instead open a 24 hour Urgent Treatment Centre on a temporary basis. The decision was prompted by increasing workforce pressures, which made it impossible to provide safe anaesthetic cover at both James Cook and the Friarage hospitals.

Since then the Friarage Hospital has been operating an Urgent Care Treatment centre, including treatment for children with minor illnesses; triaged 999 and GP emergency calls prior to their arrival at hospital, carried out all surgery needing critical care at James Cook; provided transport for repatriation of patients from James Cook, and been supported by additional emergency ambulance resources.

## **Get Involved**

The CCG is providing a range of opportunities to help people get involved in the consultation to ensure people affected by any proposed changes have the opportunity to have their say including wider public meetings, street surveys, online surveys, focus groups and engagement with seldom heard groups.

Further information (Consultation narrative, easy read versions and FAQs) as well as details of the public meetings are available on the CCG website:

[www.hambletonrichmondshireandwhitbyccg.nhs.uk](http://www.hambletonrichmondshireandwhitbyccg.nhs.uk)

You can have your say on our proposals by completing the online survey at:

[www.friarageconsultation.eventbrite.com](http://www.friarageconsultation.eventbrite.com) or by attending one of our public events. Paper copies of the survey are also available by e-mailing [hrwccg.hrwcggenquiries@nhs.net](mailto:hrwccg.hrwcggenquiries@nhs.net) or by calling 01609 531397.

All comments received during the consultation period will be carefully considered by the CCG Council of Members before a final decision is made by the CCG Governing Body. We expect decisions on the future of the hospital and options for how urgent care will be provided in the future to be made early 2020.