



March 1st, 2016

South of Tyne Healthcare Group

Two of the North East England's long-standing NHS Foundation Trusts have committed to working more closely together, to ensure that the local communities they serve will continue to receive high quality and sustainable hospital and community health services.

City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust and South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust, who between them serve a population of 430,000 people across a large geographical area south of Tyne & Wear have for many years collaborated to jointly provide some clinical services, (stroke and paediatrics for example), in a way in which the local communities get the best and safest healthcare using the resources and specialist skills available. Both organisations now believe that to protect the future sustainability of healthcare across both communities requires more significant transformation leading to greater integration of services, and that this needs to be delivered at speed and scale.

Both Trusts recognise the importance and value of having a local hospital providing a range of emergency and planned services, but they equally recognise the urgent need to rebalance services across South of Tyne and Wear as it is no longer safe or sustainable for either organisation to duplicate the provision of services in each location.

As a result, both Trusts have agreed to form and implement a health alliance, working together as a "South of Tyne Healthcare Group", and embark on an ambitious programme of reconfiguring services across South of Tyne in a way that delivers the best patient outcomes.

In broad terms

City Hospitals Sunderland FT has for some time been expanding to provide a range of specialist services both locally and regionally. Increasingly its focus will be on leading and providing emergency surgical and complex planned acute services across South of Tyne.

In parallel, South Tyneside FT has increasingly been moving away from providing complex acute services and it will in the future lead on out of hospital rehabilitation, and diagnostic and screening services. South Tyneside District Hospital will continue to provide a broad range of emergency and planned hospital services. This Trust will also be the lead provider of community services working closely with respective local authorities and primary care colleagues across the geographical area.

More specifically

In the first twelve months, South of Tyne Healthcare Group will work together using the joint expertise available to them to transform stroke services, trauma services, emergency surgical services and maternity services (consistent with any national reviews).

A single Sustainable and Transformation Plan will be jointly developed by both Trusts and the two local Clinical Commissioning Groups.

Both Trusts will continue to function as statutory NHS Foundation Trusts, accountable to their local communities through their Governors. Sitting aside the two FTs will be a South of Tyne Healthcare Group Board and Executive Team comprising Non-Executives, Executives and leading clinicians from both Trusts who will govern the transformation and partnership working.

Trust Chairs, John Anderson (Sunderland) and Neil Mundy (South Tyneside), provided a joint comment;

“We are delighted to launch this Alliance which builds on the increasingly close collaborative working arrangements for clinical services across Sunderland and South Tyneside. This further joint working is essential and presents a unique opportunity to enhance healthcare for our patients and local communities”.

ends

Pictured above: Ken Bremner, Chief Executive, City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust (left) and Steve Williamson, Chief Executive, South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust.

Issued on behalf of South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust by Kay Jordan

For press enquiries on this release, contact 0191 404 1128 or email kay.jordan@stft.nhs.uk