

One year on since coming together to form South Tyneside and Sunderland Healthcare Group, leaders at South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust and City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust have an ambitious vision to develop nationally recognised healthcare services.



Your local NHS sets vision for excellence

A key part of this vision is the 'Path to Excellence' programme. Formal public consultation on the first phase of work is now underway, led by South Tyneside and Sunderland CCGs. More details can be found on the back page.

Investing in South Tyneside hospital



Lead Consultant for Radiology Dr Richard Cooper, foreground, and radiographers Scott Currell, Laura Langley and David Barlow, with the MRI scanner which will be replaced this winter

A new, state-of-the-art MRI scanner - the first of its kind in the UK - will revolutionise treatment, care and experience for patients from South Tyneside and Sunderland.

The scanner, which signals a major £1.5 million investment at South Tyneside District Hospital, uses some of the most sophisticated technology in the world and will enable doctors to diagnose more diseases and conditions, from cancers to sports injuries, in more parts of the body, more quickly.

The scanner will be up and running this winter, replacing equipment which has been in use since 2004. The transfer from old to new is expected to start this autumn but there will be no disruption to the service for patients as a mobile unit will be brought on site while the necessary building work is carried out.

Lead Consultant for Radiology, Dr Richard Cooper, said: "The new scanner is a very exciting development for local patients. It is much more efficient; the image quality it provides is fantastic and results are available much faster. It has amazing potential:

for example, it will allow the visualisation

"The new MRI scanner signals a £1.5million investment in South Tyneside"

of tumours in more detail, allowing an improvement in their staging, and we are already looking at how we can use it in more fields in the future, such as cardiology."

MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) involves taking very detailed images of the inside of the body. It uses a powerful magnetic field and radio waves, together with an advanced computer system to build up a series of images through the

area under examination. Patients lie within the tunnel or 'bore' of the MRI scanner. The results of the scan can be used to help diagnose conditions, plan treatments and assess how effective previous treatment has been.

The scanner can be used to examine almost any part of the body including:

- the brain and spinal cord
- muscles, bones and joints (musculoskeletal)
- heart and blood vessels
- internal organs, such as the liver, womb or prostate gland.

The tunnel of South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust's new scanner will be shorter, wider and better lit, making it more suitable for claustrophobic patients who previously have had to be referred to an off-site 'open' scanner. The wider tunnel will also be more suitable for patients larger than those which the current scanner can accommodate.

The existing scanner has different pieces of equipment for scanning

different parts of the body, sometimes requiring patients to be moved

if multiple areas of the body are to be scanned. The new scanner will incorporate more of these pieces of equipment together within the patient table. Therefore, once the patient is on the scanner table less movement will be required if more than one body area is being scanned. This is particularly important for the comfort and care of patients who are very ill.

An investment of more than £200,000 in cutting edge ultrasound technology is improving patient care and experience at South Tyneside District Hospital by enabling quicker, more reliable diagnosis.

South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust is one of the first in the country to have bought the very latest ultrasound machines, which are smaller and more manoeuvrable than the older models, making it easier for staff to operate them.

The four new machines are being used throughout the hospital, including radiology, the Intensive Therapy Unit (ITU) and the ante-natal department.

One is a mobile unit which can be taken to the patient and is, therefore, of particular benefit in ITU as it prevents the need to move more seriously ill patients.

In the radiology department, it is used by doctors to help guide certain procedures which entail only a very small incision, reducing recovery time and the risk of infection.

The two machines used in the ante-natal department monitor the unborn baby and aid in the detection of abnormalities. The fourth machine is in the radiology department where it is used for investigating undiagnosed 'lumps and bumps', which cause many patients anxiety and distress, and for musculoskeletal conditions, which affect

the joints, bones and muscles.
Lead Consultant for Radiology Dr Richard

"Our new ultrasound machines provide us with images of superb quality."

Cooper said: "It is important that we take advantage of ever-improving technology for the benefit of our patients.

"Our new ultrasound machines provide us with images of superb quality. They are extremely sensitive and allow us to see parts of the body in fine detail, including the brain and heart of the unborn baby. These very detailed scans can help us to arrive at a reliable diagnosis more quickly.

"Whenever possible, we try to put our patients' minds at rest by giving them the results of their scan immediately and the enhanced images can help us to do this in more cases."



Ultrasound lead Jayne Richardson, Lead Consultant for Radiology Dr Richard Cooper and radiology registrar Dr Peter Hewitt pictured with one of the new machines

Committed to high quality services



Dr Shaz Wahid
Medical Director

Despite the unprecedented financial pressures facing the NHS, South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust is putting major investment into the South Tyneside District Hospital site.

The acquisition of a new MRI scanner and ultrasound machines are just the latest examples of the trust's intention to continue to provide local services of the highest quality in South Tyneside in the future. Other recent developments include the opening of Haven Court, the £9 million centre of excellence for integrated health and social care for older people in

South Tyneside, and a £1.4 million Surgical Centre, which is improving patient experience and access to surgical services. The trust also hopes to start work early in 2018 on a new energy centre, which is expected to cost in excess of £5m.

Medical Director Dr Shaz Wahid said: "This is all part of our commitment to not only improving the quality of our existing services but continuing to provide safe, high quality, sustainable hospital services in South Tyneside in the future."

Major improvements in stroke care

Suffering a stroke can be a very frightening time for patients and their families and during 2015/16 there were around 850 people across South Tyneside and Sunderland who were admitted to hospital with a stroke.

Quick access to a stroke specialist for speedy diagnosis and treatment within the

first few hours and days is absolutely vital. Equally, having expert senior clinical decision-making which is readily available at the start of a patient journey, is clinically proven to improve patient outcomes, recovery and long-term quality of life.

In December 2016, temporary changes to stroke services across South Tyneside and Sunderland were put in place and since this time all acute stroke admissions have taken place at Sunderland Royal

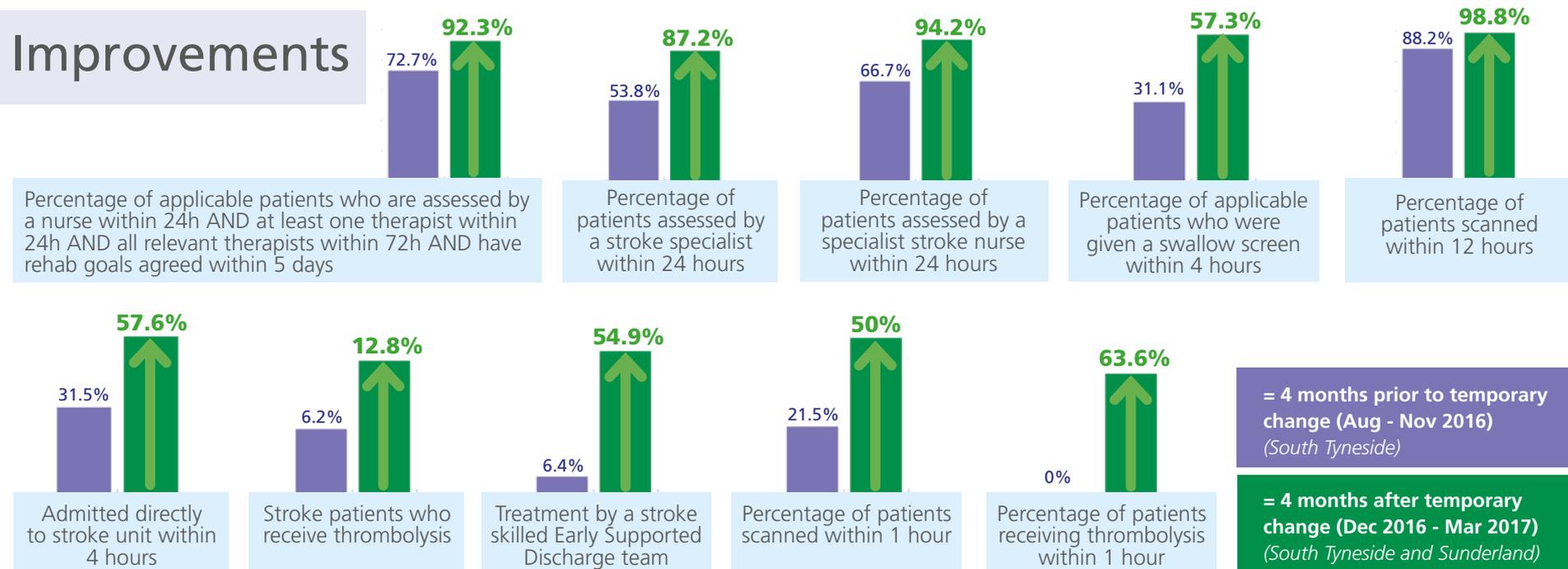
Hospital where there is now a more centralised pool of stroke expertise which is readily available seven days a week.

The long-term future arrangements for stroke services are currently being consulted on as part of the Path to Excellence programme, however, since the temporary change was made, there has already been major improvements in the quality of care for stroke patients. More patients from South Tyneside now have

access to the right stroke specialists and are receiving the right treatment much sooner in their journey.

Data recorded for the 'Sentinel Stroke National Audit Programme' (SSNAP), which measures clinical quality indicators across ten areas, are showing major improvements for South Tyneside and Sunderland patients (see graphs below).

Improvements



Dr Jon Scott, consultant stroke physician at South Tyneside District Hospital commented: "The early indications show very positive signs of improvement, not only for South

Tyneside patients but for patients in Sunderland too. By bringing the teams together we've been able to deliver care to meet much higher standards.

"However, we do recognise concerns of people visiting loved ones and want to hear about these experiences as part of the formal public consultation process."



Dr Nik Majmudar is a consultant stroke physician at Sunderland Royal Hospital. He said: "All of the clinical evidence shows that having expert opinion from the onset of a stroke and being

admitted to an acute stroke unit with expertise available seven days a week, greatly improves patient outcomes. We are extremely encouraged by the results so far following the temporary change and keen for people to share their views."

Staff working in stroke services across Sunderland and South Tyneside

have been working together to overcome some of the teething challenges.



Su Lindsay is matron for stroke services at Sunderland Royal Hospital and said there has been positive learning for everyone. She said: "Our focus has been on making sure patients and their carers have

all the support they need. When someone has a stroke it affects the whole family and people have had some concerns about travelling further to visit their loved ones. We've been working closely with our partners to regularly discuss such issues and work through them together in a positive way.

"At first, we also had some anxiety from staff as to how things would work. Our therapy teams have adopted new ways of working and risen to this challenge admirably.

"We've also had some important discussions around rehabilitation and making sure patients get back home swiftly and safely with the right support in place. Our systems are different in South Tyneside and Sunderland and communication between health and social care teams has been critical. We want to hear everyone's views as part of the consultation now underway."

Overcoming the challenges

Bringing all partners and stakeholders together has helped staff to meet many of the teething challenges head on. Since December the following improvements have been made:

- Therapy input has increased from five to seven days improving the flow of patient care and stopping backlogs in assessments
- The team now has a dedicated stroke facilitator who looks at every aspect of patient care and makes sure that it is at the high standard it should be
- A social worker is now based on site to help patients and families to access the right support when they leave hospital
- The number of stroke specialist nurse practitioners has increased, providing more support when patients arrive at the emergency department and during evenings on the stroke unit
- Technology allows consultants to review patients from home via a camera in the emergency department. They can also speak to the patient and their family

and review scans saving vital time and improving chances of recovery

- The team has arranged dedicated slots throughout the day for CT scans and Carotid Doppler scans. They can also access more specialist scans every afternoon, which are then shared with vascular surgeons. This faster access to surgery helps with prevention of further strokes and complications
- Every morning a multi-disciplinary team meets to discuss all stroke patients and agree the management plan for the day and any discharge. This includes occupational therapy, physiotherapy, medical, nursing and pharmacy staff
- Feedback from patients said that communication and information needed to be improved. The team are working on a condensed information sheet, drop in clinic with partners such as the Stoke Association and have changed visiting times to help families travelling from South Tyneside.



Have your say on the future of stroke services:

- Attend a public event (see backpage)
- Complete an online survey – visit www.pathtoexcellence.org.uk
- Email us nhs.excellence@nhs.net

The Path to Excellence

Public consultation

Wednesday 5th July - Sunday 15th October

How we create the best possible improvements for healthcare in South Tyneside and Sunderland

Share your views on potential changes and help improve local hospital services

A public consultation to ask for your views on proposed changes to services currently provided at South Tyneside District Hospital and Sunderland Royal Hospital.

These are:

Stroke services specifically hospital (acute) care and hospital-based rehabilitation services

Maternity services (obstetrics) covering hospital-based birthing facilities i.e. where you would give birth to your baby and special care baby units

Women's healthcare services (gynaecology) covering inpatient surgery where you would need an overnight hospital stay

Children and young people's healthcare services (urgent and emergency paediatrics) specifically urgent and emergency care



How to get involved



Attend an event:

Our dedicated website hosts links to the registration for events. Please register in advance via the online booking system or telephone us. We ask people to register in advance in order to ensure we have the right number of NHS staff to support discussions so all feedback is captured, recorded, reported on and to therefore influence the outcome of the consultation.



Hold a focus group:

We are keen to hear from groups or organisations who work with people who may face barriers to taking part in this consultation.



Complete our survey:

Access this online or request a paper copy by contacting us using the details below.



Website: www.pathtoexcellence.org.uk



Email us: nhs.excellence@nhs.net



Facebook: Search: nhsexcellence



Twitter: @NHSexcellence



Call us on: 0191 217 2670



Write to us at:

The Path to Excellence
Freeport RTUS-LYHZ-BRLE
North of England Commissioning Support
Riverside House
Goldcrest Way
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE15 8NY

Public event timetable

We have actively listened to public feedback and in response have added new events (in bold) to the consultation calendar.

Date	Time	Event Type	Location	Venue
Wednesday 13th September	1-3.30pm	Consultation discussion event	South Tyneside	Customs House, Mill Dam, South Shields, NE33 1ES
Wednesday 13th September	6-8pm	Focused event on maternity and women's services	South Tyneside	The Clervaux Exchange, Clervaux Place, Jarrow, NE32 5UP
Saturday 16th September	10am-12.30pm	Consultation discussion event	Sunderland	The Hetton Centre, Welfare Road, Hetton-le-Hole, Houghton-le-Spring, DH5 9NE
Tuesday 19th September	6-8pm	Focused event on maternity and women's services	Sunderland	Sunderland Software Centre, Tavistock Place, Sunderland, SR1 1PB
Wednesday 20th September	6-8pm	Question and answer session	Sunderland	Bunny Hill Centre, Hylton Lane, Sunderland, SR5 4BW
Thursday 21st September	6-8pm	Question and answer session	South Tyneside	Customs House, Mill Dam, South Shields, NE33 1ES
Saturday 23rd September	10am-12noon	Focused event on children's services	South Tyneside	The Clervaux Exchange, Clervaux Place, Jarrow, NE32 5UP
Thursday 28th September	6-8pm	Focused event on children's services	Sunderland	Arts Centre Washington, Biddick Lane, Washington, NE38 8AB
Wednesday 4th October	6-9pm	Travel and transport event	South Tyneside	The Sea Hotel, Sea Road, South Shields, NE33 2LD