

Next round of events for major NHS public consultation announced

Nine additional public consultation events to gather public and staff views around the different ways some aspects of hospital services could be arranged in South Tyneside and Sunderland have been announced.

Called 'The Path to Excellence', the public consultation was launched on Wednesday 5 July and runs for 14 and a half weeks until Sunday 15 October.

The Path to Excellence focuses on some areas of hospital care which are delivered at South Tyneside District Hospital and Sunderland Royal Hospital, including:

- Stroke care services
- Maternity (obstetrics) and women's healthcare (inpatient gynaecology) services
- Children and young people's healthcare (urgent and emergency paediatrics) services

The nine additional events will take the total number of public events during the consultation to 18 in addition to other ways to feedback views such as the consultation survey and focus groups being carried out by community and voluntary sector groups.

With public events starting again in September they will focus on specific areas of consultation including maternity and women's healthcare services, children and young people's healthcare services, specific events for questions and answers and also a dedicated event on travel and transport.

Public consultation events have been organised in a way to allow people to hear directly from NHS clinical leaders about the key issues under consideration and staffed so participants can give their views so they can be captured by table scribes for independent analysis and reporting, to influence the outcome of the consultation.

Dr Matthew Walmsey, a local GP and Chair of NHS South Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), said it was very important to ensure all feedback was captured in a meaningful way.

Dr Walmsey said: "We have been very clear at the public events that this is the opportunity for local people to influence these proposals and that no decision has been made. All comments will be included in the independent analysis of consultation feedback and any ideas arising from these will be assessed in line with the key tests around delivering safe care, sustainable, deliverable for the future and affordable. Following this the commissioning groups can actively consider the issues that are important to the public when making the final decisions."

He said: "We want people to understand that we have clinical issues driving these proposals and any future changes to the way services are organised would only be made in order to improve the quality and safety of those services for the future."

Dr Ian Pattison, a local GP and Chair of NHS Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group, said: "It's clear that people care passionately about our NHS and want to ensure we have the best care possible and we all have that in common. During this public consultation process, which includes NHS staff, we are discussing these often complex issues together so we can make improvements that will have a real and lasting positive impact on people's health and quality of life."

Staff working across both hospital Trusts are also being actively encouraged to attend a number of service specific clinician-led engagement events which are being held across both hospitals in September and October. Details of the staff engagement events, are being widely shared with teams to ensure that staff have an opportunity to discuss ideas, share their views and to submit any further ideas they might have as to how services could be best delivered in the future.

The options under consideration were developed by small design teams made up of representatives from the consultant, senior nurse, midwife and therapy staff groups (where appropriate) as well as managers working in the three service areas in both hospitals.

Together, these clinical teams have led the development of the proposed options which have passed key tests and are now being consulted upon with the public and the wider NHS workforce.

Nine events have been hosted across South Tyneside and Sunderland during the consultation so far, which have resulted in:

- 329 people attending the events
- Over 1000 comments received
- 5,215 visits to the consultation website since 21st June (when consultation launch started)
- 414 survey responses received to date

To ensure you don't miss out on information about these additional events sign up to My NHS via the www.pathtoexcellence.org.uk or contact the Path to Excellence programme. The public consultation is being led by the commissioners of local health services – NHS South Tyneside CCG and NHS Sunderland CCG – who are responsible for planning and buying healthcare services on behalf of patients.

Working in partnership with South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust and City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust, who formed a strategic alliance in March 2016 known as 'South Tyneside and Sunderland Healthcare Group', all four NHS organisations are committed to delivering the best possible NHS services for the future through the Path to Excellence programme.

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

How to get involved

- Attend a public event – visit www.pathtoexcellence.org.uk to register
- We ask people to register in advance in order to ensure the right number of NHS staff to support discussions and to ensure all feedback is captured so it can be recorded, reported on and to therefore influence the outcome of the consultation.
- Attend a staff session – check out trust intranet for details
- Complete a survey – available online (click here) or contact us for a paper copy
- Offer to hold a focus group or event – please contact the programme if you are interested
- Provide an individual or organisational response or submission via email or post (contact details below)

How to contact the Path to Excellence Programme

Email: nhs.excellence@nhs.net

Facebook: Search: nhsexcellence

Twitter: @NHSexcellence

Call on: 0191 217 2670

Write to: The Path to Excellence
 Freepost RTUS–LYHZ–BRLE
 North of England Commissioning Support
 Riverside House
 Goldcrest Way
 Newcastle upon Tyne
 NE15 8NY

Next steps

People have until midnight on 15th October to return a survey or to provide a submission. All feedback will be collated and analysed by an independent organisation (not the NHS) and a draft feedback report will be published in December. Further public events will be organised to share this feedback, and the next steps will be shared in detail at that point. The final decision will be made the two clinical commissioning groups at their governing bodies held in public in early 2018, dates to be advised.