

**Issue date: Friday 6<sup>th</sup> October**

**Respond by midnight Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> October to ensure your voice is heard on proposals to improve local NHS services**

**NHS organisations in South Tyneside and Sunderland are reminding people that there is a week left to ensure their views are included in a major public consultation around the different ways some aspects of NHS hospital services could be arranged.**

Called 'The Path to Excellence', the 14-and-a-half week public consultation will end at midnight on Sunday 15 October.

The Path to Excellence programme is led by a partnership of local NHS organisations including NHS South Tyneside CCG, NHS Sunderland CCG, South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust and City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust – working together as the South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Partnership.

Between them, they are responsible for commissioning (planning, choosing and buying) and delivering many of the major healthcare services across the area, including the healthcare services we talk about improving in these public consultation proposals.

Dr Matthew Walmsley, GP chair for NHS South Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group, said it was very important that the NHS heard from as many people as possible in order to influence the outcome of the consultation.

“Over the consultation period there have been several different ways to allow people to give their views, through public events, surveys, focus groups and other meetings.

“We have also written directly to thousands of patients who have had recent experience of NHS services we are consulting upon, so if you have received a survey we are very grateful if you could respond and use the free post address provided.

During the consultation, around 400 people have attended 18 public events, 464 paper or on-line survey returns, 800 street interviews, with around 20 focus groups to date with more expected in the final week.

Dr Walmsley continued: “This final week gives those people who have been contemplating their response to make sure we receive it so it can be included in the final feedback analysis for the clinical commissioning groups to consider.”

Dr Ian Pattison, NHS Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group, said groups or organisations could also submit a response to the consultation.

Dr Pattison said: “During the consultation we have been in touch with a range of different stakeholders and groups and we would very much welcome a response to the proposals and issues we have set out during the consultation process. We would encourage as many organisational responses as possible; simply write to the programme using the contact details in the consultation documents and on the website.”

All the feedback gained will be analysed by an independent organisation and this will be published in early December and presented at dedicated public events so that local people can hear what was said during the consultation.

The proposals focus particularly on areas of hospital care which are delivered at South Tyneside District Hospital and Sunderland Royal Hospital including:

- **Three options to improve** stroke services, specifically hospital (acute) care and hospital-based rehabilitation services
- **Two options to improve** maternity services (obstetrics), covering hospital-based birthing facilities i.e. where you would give birth to your baby and special care baby units and women’s services (gynaecology), covering inpatient surgery where you would need an overnight hospital stay
- **Two options to improve** children and young people’s (paediatrics, urgent and emergency) services

These potential options have been developed to ensure the local NHS provide the highest quality of care to patients while getting the best out of NHS staff, facilities and resources.

The final decisions will be made by the two clinical commissioning groups early in 2018.

## **How to ensure your views are included:**

There has been a number of ways to ensure your views are included.

All information about the different ways to be involved is hosted on our website [www.pathtoexcellence.org.uk](http://www.pathtoexcellence.org.uk)

- **Complete our survey:** Access this online or request a paper copy by contacting us using the details below.
- **Provide a group or organisational response:** Please write to us with views and feedback
- **Website:** [www.pathtoexcellence.org](http://www.pathtoexcellence.org)
- **Email us:** [nhs.excellence@nhs.net](mailto:nhs.excellence@nhs.net)
- **Facebook:** Search: **nhsexcellence**
- **Twitter:** **@NHSexcellence**

**ENDS**

**For further information please contact:**

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**Notes to editors:**

**Please note that all the graphics in the consultation document are available for use – please contact us for more information**