

Press Release - South Tyneside Hospital Campaign - 18-04-2017

The South Tyneside and Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) have told us they are preparing to start consultation most likely in late May on the first phase of the consultation on the Clinical Reviews at South Tyneside Hospital.

These reviews are part of the STP plans of the government to impose by 2021 £900 million (£641 million in health) in annual cuts to the social care and health care budgets of our hospitals and NHS in Northumbria, Tyne & Wear and North Durham.

Although the STPs have not been, either signed off by NHS England, or consulted on, the South Tyneside CCG is determined to go ahead with consultations on the local STP plan which is most likely to announce the reshaping of our clinical acute services by making them no longer available at South Tyneside Hospital (STH). They have already claimed in previous statements and in the STP that these services are “duplicated” and are no longer “sustainable” or “safe”. They also claim that this is a “path to excellence”, yet at the recent governors meeting we attended health leaders admitted that the proposed changes are more driven by the ongoing budget cuts of both our hospitals in South Tyneside and Sunderland.

This deliberate deficit financing through another “cost improvement” in the year 2017-18 will be another unachievable cut of some £11 million at STH and £13 million at CHS following similar cuts in previous years. This is the whip that the government is using to close down our acute services and force people to travel to Sunderland and elsewhere for even more overstretched services. This flies in the face of the excellent performance of our STH A&E which was at the top in the country in meeting the 4 hour waits in March yet this positive news about our hospital has not been publicised. It is also important to highlight that these plans indicate deliberate policy of reducing the availability of acute care beds at our hospitals in the name of more community care and public health. Yet NHS funding was withdrawn on April 1st for the funding for GP prescribed exercise classes in South Tyneside a cut to public health of some £240,000 a year. This also goes hand in hand with other massive local authority cuts by government which is wrecking other local authority public health and social care budgets.

Roger Nettleship Chair of the SSTHC said; “Now is the time to defend our hospitals and our NHS. Although we don't know exactly when, once the consultation starts we want everyone in South Tyneside and Sunderland to get involved in giving their views, We include clinical staff at the hospitals who have a statutory right to speak out in such consultations to safeguard the future of our NHS. We also encourage everyone to attend our SSTHC public meetings during the consultation which we will be holding in South Tyneside and Sunderland once consultation starts.”

Save South Tyneside Hospital Campaign

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