

TOP-LEVEL VOICE

Patients and public now have a fast track to directors and senior managers of NHS West Sussex with the appointment of a new council to represent their views and interests at top level.

The Patient and Public Council, elected from members of *My NHS West Sussex* (see next column), will ensure that the opinions of the members and the public are represented on the Board of NHS West Sussex and other senior committees and working groups.

It will also feed back information to the *My NHS West Sussex* membership and will actively support promotion of the membership scheme.

Howard Lewis, Public Engagement Manager at NHS West Sussex, said the "talented array of individuals" on the Patient and Public Council had one goal: "To listen to the opinions and thoughts of others and to work to ensure their voice is heard to further improve NHS West Sussex services."

The 11 people elected to the Council are:

Sarah Day, Adur Practice-Based Commissioning Area; **Chris McKrill** and **Stuart Henderson**, ARCH Practice-Based Com-

missioning Area (Bognor, Chichester, Midhurst and The Witterings); **Chris Mullins** and **Geraint Thomas**, Crawley Practice-Based Commissioning Area; **Sue Onslow**, Staff Representative; **Geoff Smith** and **John Gooderham**, Horsham Practice-Based Commissioning Area; **Joyce Manning** and **Mike Vincent**, Mid Sussex Practice-Based Commissioning Area; **Ian Strand**, Cissbury Practice-Based Commissioning Area (Durrington, Goring, Findon and Worthing).

At the first meeting of the Council on 29 March, Stuart Henderson was elected Chair and Chris Mullins Vice-Chair.

◆ The *My NHS West Sussex* scheme, launched a year ago, is a forum for discussion and dialogue about the way NHS West Sussex does its work.

It ensures that the membership has a real influence over the quality and types of services purchased by NHS West Sussex. Anyone who is interested in joining the scheme should telephone **01903 707408** or email:

mynhswestsussex@westsussexpct.nhs.uk

Contact: **Howard Lewis**, Public Engagement Manager, **01903 708498**.
howard.lewis@westsussexpct.nhs.uk

Offering support to carers

Chichester and Worthing Carers Support Services are holding regular monthly information sessions for carers.

Information workers will be on hand at St Richard's and Worthing Hospitals to offer them support and information.

Any carers who want to find out what services are available to them in their local areas are encouraged to go along.

Typical of the carers who may welcome advice are those looking after a family member, friend or neighbour who is ill, frail, has a physical disability or mental health or learning difficulty. The hospital-based information sessions will be particularly timely for carers accompanying people at outpatient appointments.

Carers Support Service Worthing and District (01903 536378) will be available at **Worthing Hospital** (by the area next to the lifts by the penguin sculptures) on 17 May, 22 June and 21 July from 10am to 4pm.

Carers Support Service Regis, Chichester and Rural (01243 537011) will be available at **St Richard's Hospital** (in the main outpatients reception area) on 28 May, 17 June, and 20 July from 10am to 3pm.

Contact: **Louise Spong**, Information Worker, Carers Support Service, **01243 537011**.
louise.spong@carerssupportservice.org.uk

Legal limit on waiting times

Hospital patients now have a legal right to treatment by a consultant within 18 weeks of a GP referral or within two weeks of an urgent referral to a specialist for suspected cancer.

From 1 April, failure to meet these deadlines means the NHS is legally obliged to take all reasonable steps to offer the patients a range of alternative providers.

From April 2012, eligible people aged between 40 and 74 will have the legal right to an NHS health check every five years.

The government response to consultation on the new rights for patients can found at www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Responsestoconsultations/DH_113608

Better safeguards on the way to keep adults safe from abuse and harm

The national guidance, “No Secrets”, is under review to see what changes are needed to enable society to keep adults safe from abuse or harm.

New and more detailed guidance to local authorities is expected by the end of this year. Organisations working with vulnerable adults should be watching out for what will be expected from them in the future.

The new guidance is certain to place the multi-agency safeguarding board for adults on the same statutory footing as the children’s safeguarding boards. And by the end of 2011 there should also be national procedures for organisations to follow.

Many agencies and organisations have been calling out for new legislation. This is being drafted and incorporated

as part of the Law Commission’s review of adult social care law, which includes the National Assistance Act, carers legislation and the NHS and Community Care Act.

Contact: Bev Morgan, Adult Safeguarding Manager, West Sussex County Council, 01243 777630. bev.morgan@westsussex.gov.uk

When ill-treatment is especially “abhorrent”

A Department of Health report last summer about earlier public consultation on a review of “No Secrets” said the Government considered all forms of abuse to be unacceptable.

The abuse of people in situations that made them vulnerable, and who did not have the capacity to safeguard themselves from harm, was particularly abhorrent.

The report set out key messages from older people, adults with learning or other disabilities and people with mental health needs. They included:

Safeguarding must be built on empowerment – or listening to the victim’s voice. Without this, safeguarding is experienced as safety at the expense of other qualities of life, such as self-determination and the right to family life.

Everyone must help to empower individuals but safeguarding decisions should be taken by the individual concerned. People want help with options, information and support, but they want to retain control and make their own choices.

Safeguarding adults is not like child protection. Adults do not want to be treated like children.

County Partnership Board tackles health inequalities

A Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board has been formed in West Sussex, largely to tackle issues that might otherwise slip through the nets of individual agencies.

The Board consists of NHS West Sussex, other health-related agencies, the County Council, district and borough councils, Sussex Police and voluntary organisations.

The Board is currently looking at health inequalities across the county and at the latest information on the changing needs of residents and their expectations for healthy living.

Key priorities include reducing harm from alcohol misuse, getting vulnerable adults back to work, and supporting vulnerable people in retaining their independence and their homes.

Contact: Mike Link, Head of Planning and Partnerships, West Sussex County Council, Adults’ Services, 01243 382697. mike.link@westsussex.gov.uk

New transport service for people with mobility difficulties

Crawley Community Transport has started a service for local people who have difficulty getting to East Surrey Hospital, Redhill, because of mobility problems caused through disability, age or ill-health.

The service is available for people with hospital appointments or wanting to visit someone in hospital. A friend, relative or carer can travel with them.

NHS West Sussex, West Sussex County Council and Crawley Borough Council have combined to support the scheme.

A single trip on weekdays costs £5 and a return, £8. A companion who is needed for the journey travels free. The return fare at the weekend is £10.

The telephone number for bookings and enquiries is 01293 657080, Monday to Friday between 11am and 1pm.

PERSONAL HEALTH BUDGETS IN WEST SUSSEX FOR THE FIRST TIME

Personal health budgets are to be introduced in West Sussex for the first time this Summer.

They will be part of a national pilot scheme to find out whether giving people budgets and therefore greater choice in deciding their own health care solutions leads to improvements in their health and wellbeing.

The budgets will be made available by NHS West Sussex to three groups of people:

Carers of people with early dementia living in the Crawley area to help their own health and wellbeing.

Adults with complex needs who require continuing health care.

Children with severe disabilities who need continuing health care and/or continence care.

Some people will also have a personal budget for social care and support – a scheme already well established in West Sussex.

In those cases, NHS West Sussex will cooperate closely with West Sussex Adults Social Services to integrate the two budgets and so avoid duplication or overlap.

Part of a national pilot programme

NHS West Sussex is working with the Department of Health and West Sussex County Council to run the scheme as part of a three-year national pilot programme, launched in 2009.

Social Services have already introduced personal budgets, giving

people more influence over how the money is spent to meet their social care needs. And direct payments for social care have been available for some time.

Direct payments for health are due to be made legal by The Health Bill

which will allow pilot sites to give direct payments for health care under specific conditions set out in the regulations. Even when the legislation is in force, direct payments will only be permissible within approved pilot schemes. NHS West Sussex is hoping to have one of them.

Three types of personal budgets

Patients will be able to choose how they would like their personal health budget from anyone or combination of the following options:

Notional budget No money changes hands. The person finds out how much money is available and talks to their health professional or care manager about the different ways to spend the money on meeting the outcomes they have agreed. The individual makes his/her choice and the health professional or care manager arranges the chosen services on their behalf.

Real budget held by a third party

A different organisation or trust holds the money for the individual, helps them decide what they need to achieve agreed health outcomes, and then together they buy the services they have chosen.

Direct payment

The person gets the cash to buy the services which they and their health professional or care manager decide they need. They have to show what they have spent it on, but buy and manage their own support/services. This option will not be available until the summer.

Running the project

Three steering groups will be responsible for delivering project objectives for pilot workstreams.

An Engagement Group has been established, bringing together a variety of stakeholders to help shape and influence the pilot and raise awareness and understanding of personal health budgets within the context of the wider personalisation agenda.

Processes, a policy and financial framework are being developed. A panel will be established which will also oversee clinical governance, risk management and a fair allocation of resources.

It is anticipated that the panel will start work in June, and the first personal health budgets soon afterwards.

What the money can and cannot be spent on

The money in a personal health budget is to meet the individual's health and wellbeing needs which have been assessed by health professionals. It can be spent on care and support, therapies, equipment, products and services, but not on illegal activities, gambling, debt payment, alcohol or cigarettes.

If you would like to know more about personal health budgets...

Please contact Chris Moon-Willems,
Personal Health Budget Pilot Lead at NHS West Sussex, by telephone **01903 708054**
or email **chris.moon-willems@westsussexpct.nhs.uk**

Council “performing well” in safeguarding adults, says Quality Commission

The first major inspection of West Sussex social care services for adults since 2004 has shown that in key areas the Council is “performing well” – ie consistently delivering above the minimum requirements.

The inspection, undertaken by the Care Quality Commission at the end of last year, gave the “performing well” rating to two major aspects of the Council’s work – safeguarding adults and increased choice and control for older people.

The Commission commented that the Council

- took prompt action and responded to “safeguarding” alerts when made;

- worked well with partners to strengthen their joint approach to safeguarding people;
- had frontline staff who were treating people respectfully and professionally, providing good advice and support when needed;
- had good strategic and operational relationships with health partners.

The Commission made some recommendations to improve services.

These included ensuring that:

- the safeguarding service has the capacity to handle effectively an increased volume of work;

- all older people who use services have access to advocacy, and
- people who use services have the opportunity to influence and develop services to meet their needs and to give them greater choice and control.

The Director of Adults’ and Children’s Services, John Dixon, said: “We are very pleased with this result. It is a vote of support for our services and the direction we are taking towards increased choice and control for older people who use services, as well as helping to keep people safe.”

A copy of the report is available at West Sussex County Council’s website, www.westsussex.gov.uk

Consortium launches legal aid service for county

A community legal advice service for West Sussex was launched at the beginning of April. It is run by a consortium of Citizens Advice Bureaux, working with Shelter.

The consortium will deliver a full range of legal help, from general legal advice to court representation, for people facing problems relating to community care, debt, employment, housing and welfare benefits.

It will also help people to resolve family and relationship breakdown legal issues.

Partners in the Community Legal Advice Service project are the Legal Services Commission, West Sussex County Council and the seven district and borough councils in the county.

More than £7.25 million will be invested in the service over the next three years.

People can use the service by visiting a centre at any of the following places:

Lancing, Shoreham, Bognor Regis, Littlehampton, Chichester,

Crawley (two), Horsham, Burgess Hill, East Grinstead, Haywards Heath and Worthing.

Outreach services will be made available for people living in more remote parts of West Sussex.

The service will place strong emphasis on the role of volunteer advice workers and an important part of the work will be to help people cope with the recession.

John Sirodcar, the National Relationship Director for the Legal Services Commission, said: “When local organisations work together to provide the range of services needed, people are able to resolve a number of problems more quickly and effectively.

“Similar services elsewhere in the country are proving extremely popular and are already helping record numbers of people, especially when so many are being hit by money and related problems.”

Contact: Kim Adsett, Media Adviser, West Sussex County Council, 01243 777 117.

Partnership News bows out

This is the last issue of *Partnership News*, which began life in April 1997. Thanks go to the many contributors and readers who have helped to make the newsletter such a long-running success as a vehicle for sharing information between the NHS, social services, other local authority departments and the voluntary sector about developments and changes of common interest.

Information will continue to be shared with partners by NHS West Sussex through a range of regular communications. If you would like to continue to keep in touch by remaining on our mailing list please contact us by emailing publicengagement@westsussexpct.nhs.uk and giving us your name, organisation, and contact details.



West Sussex