

## Health and Well Being Select Cttee – Wed Jan 27<sup>th</sup> 2016

My name is Pam Richards and I co-ordinate Protect Our NHS BANES. This is a local non party political campaign network working to raise awareness of the implications of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and its effects on healthcare services. We aim to work with the public, patient groups, Health Watch, NHS staff and local decision makers to protect local services from privatisation, fragmentation and closure while supporting improved quality and access to healthcare services.

Hopefully you have all had the opportunity to read 'The Doctors Diagnosis – current issues in the provision of GP services in Bath and North East Somerset'. The survey that we conducted of local GPs clearly demonstrated that they have grave concerns about

1. the rising demand for GP services from patients and also as a result of the transfer of care services from secondary to primary care. The workload of GPs has increased with resulting pressures and stress.
2. problems with the recruitment of GPs particularly partners. We know from other sources that this is a national problem. GPs commented that junior doctors are less willing to go into general practice. There are also problems recruiting other personnel. All this leads to greater stress and higher costs for hiring agency and locum staff.
3. the squeeze on funding year on year given the higher demand and expectations of patients and additional government requirements. GPs said that they cannot go on doing more for less.
4. the proposals for a 7 day a week GP service and how this would be funded and staffed. Concern was voiced that this could take resources away from weekday working unless there was significant investment. Considerable doubt was expressed whether Sunday working, for example, was wanted or needed.
5. delayed discharges from hospital were a regular and increasing occurrence. GPs stated that this had an adverse impact on their patients and on hospital budgets. It was also pointed out that preventable admissions to hospital were often the result of a lack of care services in the community. Many GPs commented that the market is not always able to deliver timely or flexible care packages and that community health services are very stretched at a time when needs of older people are becoming increasingly complex.

We are particularly concerned about these comments on delayed discharges. There appears to be a lack of capacity in the care market .We would like to urge the Health and Well Being Select Cttee to investigate this situation further and to seek ways to improve the local response. In view of this situation, it also seems to us especially important to ensure that local authority budgets for adult social care are protected .

We have met with the Chair of the CCG and the Chief Exec to discuss how some of the other concerns could be addressed. Whilst we were reassured that the CCG was doing all it could locally, there are clearly areas which will continue to present challenges and where solutions lie with national bodies and government.

As a campaign organisation we feel that there is a role for the local health and care community working together to bring influence to bear on NHS England and the government to tackle

- The human resources issues, in particular, the training and recruitment of doctors, nurses and other key clinical staff
- Clarification of the proposals for 7 day a week GP working and a relaxation of this requirement based on local evidence of need and local resources.

Pam Richards

On behalf of Protect Our NHS BANES