

PRESS RELEASE

Wednesday 18 December, 2013

Health review panel to report in New Year

An independent panel of health experts from across the country have confirmed that they will issue their report into future hospital services in Worcestershire in the New Year.

Good progress has been made and the Independent Clinical Review Panel - which is made up of GPs, hospital doctors, nurses and specialist consultants - have met several times over the last month to collectively scrutinise evidence for the two options presented by Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust and the three Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Groups (NHS Redditch and Bromsgrove CCG, NHS South Worcestershire CCG and NHS Wyre Forest CCG). Evidence was also heard from the West Midlands Strategic Clinical Networks, West Midlands Ambulance Service and Public Health. This work is now complete and conclusions are in the process of being documented.

The work is part of the '*Future of Acute Hospital Services in Worcestershire*' (FoAHSW) programme which was launched in September this year to take forward the proposals outlined in the Joint Service Review (JSR).

A report outlining the recommendations of the Clinical Review will be handed over to the FoAHSW Programme Board in January. It will then be up to the three Clinical Commissioning Groups to consult with the public on the report and make decisions on how acute hospital services will be provided in the future.

Martin Lee, Clinical Director for NHS England, Arden Herefordshire and Worcestershire, said, "The Independent Clinical Review process has been of great value in assessing the clinical quality and safety of the proposed options and also how hospital care for patients can be sustained in the future. It has been really helpful to have the views of external experts on the best way of delivering excellent health services to people in Worcestershire."

Mark Wake, Clinical Director at Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, said, "This is a very important moment for health care in Worcestershire. The proposals for change have now been thoroughly examined by an external panel of experts and we look forward to seeing their recommendations. We all need to work together to achieve high quality and sustainable clinical services."

The FoAHSW programme is being led jointly by the three CCGs, Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, NHS England and the NHS Trust Development Authority.

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Notes for Editors

The Joint Services Review was initiated in January 2012 to look at how high quality, safe and affordable acute hospital services by Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust could be sustained into the future.

The JSR project was completed in March 2013 with a set of recommendations proposed by the Worcestershire Clinical Senate. These recommendations were proposed on the grounds that they would be best for ensuring safe and clinically sustainable services for the people of Worcestershire. The recommendations focused on centralising the current consultant-led maternity services, overnight children's services and full A&E services provided by WAHT on the Worcestershire Royal Hospital (WRH) site.

The two different models for how the services could potentially be provided and these were recommended by the Clinical Senate:

- Option One: Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust continues to run an amended range of services across its three hospital sites.
- Option Two: An alternative provider manages services from the Alexandra Hospital in Redditch, with Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust continuing to run services in Worcester and Kidderminster.

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