

Seizing the Future



Medical Director Bob Aitken outlines why Seizing the Future is so important to him and so important to patients.

At County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust, we want to provide the best services for patients. That's what

got me up in the morning for twenty five years as a surgeon, and what drives me forward now as the Trust's medical director.

To do this, we need to keep up with recommended best practice, national guidance on improving care and recommendations from the experts about how to offer the best results for patients.

As a mainly rural area, our population is widespread, and accessing services can be a challenge for some people.

On the other hand, the evidence shows that specialist services in bigger hospitals save more lives.

With each of our hospitals serving small populations we know that we can't provide all services that patients might need to use from all of our sites. The solution is for our hospitals to work together interdependently, to provide services locally where possible, and bring them together where necessary, to make sure we offer safe, well staffed and high quality services into the future.

Seizing the Future is about how we achieve this – taking advantage of new skills, treatments and technologies.

By organising our doctors into teams of specialist “-ologists” patients can be sure of expert treatment 52 weeks of the year and 24 hours a day.

Patients will benefit from swifter testing if we can provide support services such as scans 24 hours a day.

And bringing together more of our planned surgery will reduce cancellations

We don't just want to change services for the sake of it, but there are some real challenges for us to address.

Over the last few years we have struggled to recruit senior doctors in key areas such as intensive care and acute medicine. Much of this is because we are operating with services split over several sites.

And, from next year, we will lose the equivalent of 31 junior doctors as a result of new European laws on working hours – and they cannot be replaced like for like.

Doctors, nurses and other health staff have been working together over the last six months to consider all the options for how hospital services might look in the future, taking these issues into account.

They have narrowed the options down to those which will offer a safe and affordable service – and which are “do-able” in a practical sense over the next five years, making the best use out of all of our hospital sites.

Your elected governors have also been involved in these discussions, challenging the clinical experts, and making sure options offer the best experience for patients.

This work will continue through the summer, and we expect to have a period of formal consultation during which people can give their views during the Autumn.

I was delighted to be asked to speak to around 60 of our members at one of the recent seizing the future workshops. It was good to see that so many people were interested in and cared enough about their local hospital to give up an evening to hear what we had to say and give us their views.

We will be having another series of workshops beginning in September, and I look forward to seeing many of you there again.

Bob Aitken

To share your views and comments on the Seizing the Future programme visit

<http://seizingthefuture.hub.uk.com> or email seizingthefuture@cddft.nhs.uk

More Member workshops

The Trust expects to be ready to begin a formal three month consultation period in October 2008. As part of this process, a second series of member workshop events is being organised to give members the chance to once again feed into the programme and have a say on the final proposals.

All workshops will take place between 5.30pm – 7.30pm.

To book your place at one of these events please contact the Foundation Trust office on (01325) 74 3625 or email foundation@cddft.nhs.uk

Tuesday 2 September

Easington
Regal Room
Wheatley Hill Community Centre
Easington

Monday 15 September

Chester-le-Street
Chester-le-Street Community Hospital - Room 2
Front Street
Chester Le Street
County Durham
DH3 3AT

Monday 22 September

Bishop Auckland
Lecture Theatre, Education Centre
Bishop Auckland General Hospital

Wednesday 1 October

Durham Dales Centre
Castle Gardens
Stanhope
Weardale
County Durham
DL13 2FJ

Wednesday 8 October

Dining Room
Shotley Bridge Community Hospital
Consett
County Durham
DH8 0NB

Monday 13 October

Ceddesfield Community Hall
Rectory Row
Sedgefield
TS21 2AE

Tuesday 21 October

Mickleton Village Hall
Mickleton
Barnard Castle
DL12 0JR

Wed 22 October

Darlington
Lecture Theatre, Education Centre
Darlington Memorial Hospital

Tuesday 28 October

Lecture Theatre, Education Centre
University Hospital of Durham
Durham

To book your place at one of these events please contact the Foundation Trust office on (01325) 74 3625 or email foundation@cddft.nhs.uk

YOUR FEEDBACK COUNTS

The Trust would like to thank all of you who attended the member workshop events during April and May. The eight events were well attended and the information gathered from two break out exercises is making a valuable contribution to the Seizing the Future process.

Members were asked to discuss their ideas and suggestions on what makes a good patient experience when visiting hospital and what is important in terms of patient access – whether this is travel and transport or the availability of services and treatment.

The feedback from members was analysed, and by tallying up the number of times issues were raised we have devised a list of the Top 5 patient experience and access considerations. To be able to do this we have grouped issues under broad headings. To view the full feedback from each of the events visit the Seizing the Future website - <http://seizingthefuture.hub.uk.com>.

Do you agree with the ranking? Tell us what you think by completing and returning this tear off slip to the Freepost address below.

Top 5 Patient Experience issues in order of importance:

1. Communication

This included ease of contacting the Trust's hospitals, information sharing, and whether information is easy to understand.

Agree Disagree Your ranking

2. Clinical Expertise

This included standards of care at all times, and numbers of available staff including therapists.

Agree Disagree Your ranking

3. Joined up care

This included Choose and Book, timely follow up, and pathways of care which an interface with Primary and Social Care.

Agree Disagree Your ranking

4. Staff attitudes

Agree Disagree Your ranking

5. Transport Including parking.

Agree Disagree Your ranking

Top 5 Patient Access issues in order of importance:

1. Transport

This included parking, public transport and the ambulance service.

Agree Disagree Your ranking

2. Local services

This included care at home.

Agree Disagree Your ranking

3. Communication

Including information to inform choices and the provision of translators.

Agree Disagree Your ranking

4. Waiting Times

Agree Disagree Your ranking

5 Integrated Pathways

Including one stop clinics and Choose and Book.

Agree Disagree Your ranking

Comments

Name:

Telephone:

Email:

Please return your completed form to:

**Foundation Trust Office , FREEPOST RLZL-XHJJ-CXLL
Darlington memorial Hospital, Darlington, DL3 6HX**