

# *Seizing the future*

*Developing a strategic direction for the next five years*

## **YOUR VIEWS MATTER**

Please take this opportunity to give us your views and comments about proposals for the future of hospital services delivered from Bishop Auckland General Hospital, Darlington Memorial Hospital and University Hospital of North Durham.



## **Public consultation document Executive summary**

*published by*  
NHS County Durham

*in partnership with*  
County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust



NHS County Durham  
County Durham and Darlington  
NHS Foundation Trust

*This public consultation will run for 14 weeks from  
6 October 2008 to 12 January 2009*

## FOREWORD

Our role at NHS County Durham, formerly County Durham Primary Care Trust (PCT), is to:

- improve health
- reduce health inequalities
- ensure that services we commission or buy on your behalf are safe, sound and sustainable.

In this role as commissioner of health and healthcare services for County Durham and Darlington we work closely with Darlington Primary Care Trust commissioning services on their behalf.

County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust (referred to in this document as 'the Trust') has made a case to us for them to change the way they provide services from their hospitals. Having listened to their reasons and proposals for change, we believe that we now need to listen to your views on these and that is why we are leading this consultation.

Your views on the proposals are extremely important because if they go ahead they would change the way that hospital services are provided across the county. The proposals would affect all three of the main

hospitals run by the Trust; Bishop Auckland General Hospital, Darlington Memorial Hospital and University Hospital of North Durham.

This consultation document gives a strong case for change and offers proposed solutions.

As the organisation responsible for planning and paying for health services on your behalf, we need to ensure that all services are safe and sustainable. We now need to listen to your views on the proposals and respond to the issues you raise.

No decisions regarding changes have been made at this time, other than the decision to proceed to consultation. Any final decision will only be made after public consultation which will take into account the issues you raise as part of it.

This executive summary of our main consultation document sets out the background and proposals in brief, and also outlines the way you can respond.

We hope that you will take the opportunity to respond.

**Lady Ann Calman**  
*Chair, NHS County Durham*

**Yasmin Chaudhry**  
*Chief Executive, NHS County Durham*



**BISHOP AUCKLAND GENERAL HOSPITAL**



**DARLINGTON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL**



**UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL OF NORTH DURHAM**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*“Our vision is that while our existing acute hospitals will continue with their vital role of caring for their local populations...to save lives some specialised care may need to be provided in designated hospitals.”*

**NHS North East ‘Our Vision, Our Future, Our North East NHS’ – May 2008**

### High quality care

The NHS in County Durham and Darlington is committed to providing the best healthcare for local people – at hospital, at home, at their GP practice, and in the community.

This consultation on *Seizing the Future* aims to deliver high quality, safe services and ensure a vibrant future for all of our hospitals, balancing the demands of providing specialist care and treatment with the need to deliver services as near to the patient’s home as possible.

### A vision for the future

*Seizing the Future* is a major review of County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust’s hospitals to create and deliver a ‘compelling clinical vision’ for safe, sustainable, high quality services for the 21st century.

The Trust provides hospital services from three main sites:

- Bishop Auckland General Hospital
- Darlington Memorial Hospital
- University Hospital of North Durham.

In addition, the Trust runs two community hospitals at Chester-le-Street and Shotley Bridge.

Over the next few years, more services will be provided closer to home, avoiding unnecessary travel and reducing the need for hospital visits. At the same time, new technology, treatments and guidance on best practice are driving up standards and improving outcomes for patients.

*Seizing the Future* is about the way in which the Trust responds to these changes, continues to meet patients’ needs for high quality patient care into the future, and makes the best use of all its sites.

The review has been led by a team of senior clinicians – doctors, nurses, therapists and other healthcare professionals, supported by the Trust governors and senior managers. Their proposals have been developed taking into account Lord Darzi’s report on the future of the NHS ‘Our NHS, Our Future’ (July 2008), and the NHS North East strategic vision for transforming health and healthcare services within North East England, ‘Our Vision, Our Future, Our North East NHS’ (May 2008).

### Why is change needed?

Hospitals in County Durham and Darlington need to change if they are to provide services which meet the expectations of a 21st century health service, which means offering patients high quality services to nationally recognised standards.

The Trust is committed to providing services as close to patients’ homes as possible. As well as its three main sites, it operates two community hospitals and provides services from others, as well as community based services and ‘hospital at home’. There are some services which need to be provided more centrally in order to be safe, sustainable and of high quality. In the future, more health services will move out of hospital and into the community and nearer home.

These proposals would help us to reorganise our services to support that shift.

Health services are becoming more specialised. For example, 20 years ago, one surgeon would have operated on many different parts of the body, performing breast, colorectal and urological surgery. Today, doctors specialise and a surgeon who performs the same operation many times a year becomes more skilled at it than the surgeon who does so less frequently.

Specialisation gives direct benefits to patients by improving outcomes of care. However, to provide specialist care, doctors, nurses, therapists and the wider healthcare team need to work together in bigger teams covering larger populations.

Bishop Auckland, Darlington Memorial and University Hospital are small hospitals serving small populations. There is a very real risk that the Trust will be unable to sustain safe services in acute medicine, accident and emergency, critical care and children's services, in particular at Bishop Auckland and Darlington Memorial.

Accident and emergency (A&E) departments do not stand alone. They need the back-up of a full range of medical and surgical services to make sure that all of the expertise a patient might need in an emergency is available. This support does not exist at Bishop Auckland, where on site emergency surgery has not been available for several years. National guidance now suggests this puts patients at risk.

A&E also needs the support of an intensive care service. The service at Bishop Auckland is struggling to recruit the doctors it needs to provide cover for ill patients 24 hours a day and this problem is expected to worsen.

The Healthcare Commission rated the Trust as 'weak' in a review of children's services in February 2007. Although an action plan has addressed some of the concerns raised, problems remain. For acute paediatric

services, national recommendations suggest that where small units are located in close proximity to larger units, consideration should be given to amalgamating services in order to provide the level of specialist care that is now expected.

From 2009, junior doctors' working hours will reduce from 56 to a maximum of 48 hours a week under the European Working Time Directive. This represents a loss to the Trust equivalent to 31 full-time doctors. With fewer doctors' hours available, this is another challenge to providing services across three sites.

The work the Trust has done on *Seizing the Future* has been reviewed by the National Clinical Assessment Team (NCAT). Their report concluded that, while tribute must be paid to staff for their commitment to high quality care, resources and senior clinical staff are stretched too thinly to meet national guidance on specialisation and best practice to be sustainable beyond the short term.

*"The whole atmosphere has changed. As a profession we have become more honest about what patients deserve. They do not deserve to see a very general doctor when they are ill without an experienced doctor being present."*

**Professor Sir George Alberti, NCAT  
August 2008**

## **Options on which we are seeking your views**

Trust clinicians including doctors, nurses, therapists and other healthcare staff have worked with patients and stakeholders to develop proposals that can be consulted upon as to how local hospitals can achieve the best results for patients. Their focus has been on providing centralised services where necessary, localised where possible.

## Overview

This consultation proposes options to address the challenges the Trust faces, and to provide a better quality of service to patients, and an exciting future for all of our sites, working closely with general practice and community based services to provide more seamless and integrated care.

**Option A** proposes:

### Bishop Auckland General Hospital

Redeveloping Bishop Auckland as a planned care centre serving the whole Trust including:

- daycase and inpatient surgery
- cataract centre
- hip and knee surgery
- midwifery-led unit
- colorectal screening centre.

Hospital services for the local community including:

- a full range of outpatient clinics in medicine, surgery and women and children's services
- diagnostic tests, including X-ray, CT scanning and MRI
- an urgent care centre operating 24 hours a day
- intermediate care inpatient beds for the local population.

### Darlington Memorial Hospital and University Hospital of North Durham

Concentrating main acute services for the whole of County Durham and Darlington at Darlington Memorial Hospital and University Hospital of North Durham including:

- accident and emergency
- acute medicine
- emergency surgery
- planned surgery
- obstetrics
- gynaecology
- paediatrics
- outpatients
- diagnostics (eg X-ray, CT scanning and MRI).

**Option B** proposes the service changes outlined in **Option A**, plus:

### Bishop Auckland General Hospital

Additional services at Bishop Auckland would include:

- a Trust-wide rehabilitation centre of excellence – a completely new service for the area
- intermediate care inpatient beds serving the whole of the Trust
- rapid medical assessment centre for GPs to refer patients for an urgent consultant opinion
- paediatric rapid access clinic – where GPs may refer children for an urgent consultant opinion.

Under the principle of 'centralised where necessary, localised where possible', all outpatient clinics and diagnostic tests (eg X-ray and other scans) would still be provided at all three sites.

Under both options, community hospital services would continue at Chester-le-Street and Shotley Bridge and the Trust is working with NHS County Durham on the future development of these services.

To maintain local access, both options also propose an increase in day surgery at Shotley Bridge, securing the future of the daycase unit.

## Preferred option

The Trust's preferred option is **Option B**. This option enhances access at Bishop Auckland for medical patients and strengthens its role as a planned care centre, providing a new and important service which would significantly improve the care of patients needing rehabilitation following acute illness.

## Benefits for patients

The proposed changes are all about improving care and outcomes for patients and making sure services are safe and sustainable. Benefits would include:

- **better access to a specialist** – because specialist consultants are spread thinly across three sites, patients do not always see an expert in their condition. Bringing specialists together on two sites would cut the number of ‘single handed’ specialists and improve access and outcomes for patients. The changes the Trust is proposing would also make it easier to recruit and retain staff
- **reduced risk of cancelled operations** – by separating planned care and emergency admissions on different sites, patients coming into Bishop Auckland for planned surgery are much less likely to have their admissions cancelled because of emergencies
- **reduced risk of hospital acquired infections** such as MRSA – separating planned and emergency care would also reduce the possibility of cross infection – and by increased screening at the Bishop Auckland planned care centre, this would be reduced even further
- **better rehabilitation after being ill** – the planned rehabilitation centre of excellence would be a brand new development for the area
- **quicker tests and diagnosis** – the proposed changes would help the Trust to provide more tests 24 hours a day seven days a week
- **being on the right ward** – ensuring best quality care from experienced staff.

## Better transport

A key consideration for some patients, particularly older people, or people without their own transport, is how to get to hospital.

NHS County Durham and the Trust are working with Durham County Council’s integrated transport unit to develop a service similar to that currently being provided in East Durham.

The East Durham Hospital Link provides information and access to transport through a single contact number. People who need to visit hospital – for an appointment, or to visit a friend or relative, can ring up and, depending on their needs, are booked onto the non-emergency ambulance service, directed to an existing public transport service (PTS) or booked onto a special transport service provided to areas with poor public transport provision.

## Your views

Between 6 October 2008 and 12 January 2009, NHS County Durham is leading a public consultation on these proposals.

We hope you will take this opportunity to be involved in this important debate about the future shape of your local hospital services.



*Shotley Bridge Community Hospital*



*Chester-le-Street Community Hospital*

## How YOU can get involved

This is a 14 week period of public consultation, running from **6 October 2008 to 12 January 2009** which is also the final date for receipt of responses. Make sure your opinions and comments are taken into account by:

- filling in the public consultation response form on page 43 of our main public consultation document, or in its public summary version, and sending it to our FREEPOST address (no stamp is needed) at:

**Seizing the Future Consultation**  
FREEPOST RRXK-CZGR-TJJA  
Unit G Lumley Close  
Thirsk Industrial Park  
Thirsk  
YO7 3TD

- **logging on** to NHS County Durham website at: [www.countydurhampct.nhs.uk](http://www.countydurhampct.nhs.uk)
- **visiting** our website at: [www.seizingthefuture.org.uk](http://www.seizingthefuture.org.uk)
- **emailing:** [comments@seizingthefuture.org.uk](mailto:comments@seizingthefuture.org.uk)
- **writing** to our FREEPOST address (see left)
- **attending** one of our public meetings and/or...
- **visiting** one of our consultation roadshows.

Please see the back cover for dates, times and places.

### Obtain more copies

If you would like more copies of this document or you would like to receive the full or public summary version please call 0800 121 4874. This document, and its public summary, are also available, on request, in alternative languages and formats including large print, Braille and 'easy read'.

### Request a presentation

If your group or organisation would like a presentation on *Seizing the Future* at one of its meetings we will do our best to attend. Please contact Jayne Davies on 01325 380100 ext 4131 or email: [jayne.davies@cddft.nhs.uk](mailto:jayne.davies@cddft.nhs.uk)

*"The current situation in the Trust cannot continue. Acute services are unsustainable and can no longer continue to meet modern needs in terms of safety and quality. No change is not an option."*

**Professor Sir George Alberti, NCAT report  
August 2008**

## Seizing the Future public meetings and shopping centre promotional days

Date	Time	Venue	Address	Postcode
Monday 3 Nov	2pm–4pm	Sedgefield Parish Hall	Front Street, Sedgefield	TS21 3AT
Tuesday 4 Nov	6pm–8pm	Teesdale District Council	Teesdale House, Galgate, Barnard Castle	DL12 8EL
Thursday 6 Nov	2pm–4pm	Chester-le-Street District Council	Civic Centre, Newcastle Road, Chester-le-Street	DH3 3UT
Monday 10 Nov	2pm–4pm	District of Easington	Building 10, Council Offices, Seaside Lane, Easington	SR8 3TN
Tuesday 11 Nov	2pm–4pm	Derwentside District Council	Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Medomsley Road, Consett	DH8 5JA
Thursday 13 Nov	6pm–8pm	Darlington Arts Centre	Vane Terrace, Darlington	DL3 7AX
Tuesday 18 Nov	6pm–8pm	Durham County Council	County Hall, Durham	DH1 5UL
Wednesday 19 Nov	6pm–8pm	Shildon Town Council	Shildon Civic Hall, Main Street, Shildon	DL4 1AH
Thursday 4 Dec	6pm–8pm	Auckland Castle	Bishop Auckland	DL14 7NR
<b>Shopping centre promotion</b>				
31 Oct/1 Nov		Bishop Auckland, Newgate Shopping Centre		DL14 7JQ
31 Oct/1 Nov		Barnard Castle, Morrisons		DL12 8BH
31 Oct/1 Nov		Durham, The Gates Shopping Centre		DH1 4SL
7 Nov/8 Nov		Darlington, Cornmill Shopping Centre		DL1 1NH

Please note that places are limited at the public meetings so please apply for a place beforehand, email: [comments@seizingthefuture.org.uk](mailto:comments@seizingthefuture.org.uk), call 0800 121 4874, or write to us at:

Seizing the Future Consultation  
 FREEPOST RRXK-CZGR-TJJA  
 Unit G Lumley Close  
 Thirsk Industrial Park  
 Thirsk  
 YO7 3TD

(no stamp required)

In the event of over subscription additional meetings will be arranged and advertised.