

A SPECIALIST HEART CENTRE FOR ESSEX - CONSULTATION

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 To agree a response to a consultation by Essex Health Authority on proposals to establish a specialist heart centre in Essex.
- 1.2 A copy of the consultation document has been placed in the Members' Lounge, Rayleigh.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Coronary Heart Disease (CHD) is one of the most common causes of death, and it has been made a top priority for health improvements in the NHS Plan.
- 2.2 A National Service Framework has been published for CHD that sets specific targets for improvements. It recommends that there are local networks for cardiac care linking GPs, local hospitals and specialist centres. Specialist heart centres are known as tertiary cardiac centres, as they are at the third stage of care, following on from the first stage with the GP and the second stage with the local hospital.
- 2.3 National and local specialists have recommended that Essex should be the location for a second specialist heart centre in the East of England. Currently, there is one specialist centre at Papworth Hospital in Cambridge. At present most heart patients in Essex who need surgery go to St Bartholomew's Hospital (Barts) in the City of London or the London Chest Hospital in Bethnal Green. Some patients from the Uttlesford area use Papworth.
- 2.4 The creation of a tertiary cardiac centre would develop and lead the network of cardiac care in Essex.
- 2.5 Under the current arrangements, Essex cannot meet the National Service Framework targets and people in Essex wait longer for treatment to relieve blocked arteries in the heart than in other parts of the East of England. An Essex centre would reduce journey times for many patients and an effective care network would reduce the number of journeys for each patient.

3 PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The proposal is to build a tertiary cardiac centre in Essex which would operate on around 1200 cases a year. About 75% of Essex NHS

patients who need heart surgery would use the new centre; others would still use London or Papworth Hospitals if that is their preference.

- 3.2 An expert evaluation panel has considered the best location for a centre in Essex, having considered the number of cases it would need to treat in the next 20 years, how techniques and practice could change and what the optimum location would be to treat as many people as possible.
- 3.3 The expert panel concluded that hospital sites at Colchester, Harlow and Southend would not provide good access for the residents of Essex, nor a suitable central link to the other Essex hospitals.
- 3.4 The panel considered 'bids' from Broomfield Hospital in Chelmsford and Basildon Hospital, these being considered to be the best geographical locations to serve the majority of the population and to support an effective Essex network.
- 3.5 On balance the panel recommended that Basildon Hospital should provide the tertiary cardiac centre based on:
 - the clarity and innovation shown in the Basildon proposal for developing and staffing the cardiac centre;
 - the experience of developing a local cardiac network between hospitals in South Essex and good progress in Integrated Care Pathways;
 - the Trust's capacity to manage a major capital scheme. The tertiary centre would be the only scheme on the site for the next four years.

4 CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Essex Health Authority is now consulting on the proposals. Responses are requested by 18 July and a decision will be made on 31 July, following which outline then full business case submissions will be made to the Secretary of State.
- 4.2 The new centre could be up and running in 2005/6.

5 DISCUSSION

- 5.1 This proposal represents a major opportunity to improve health services for Rochford residents. It will offer a new 'state of the art', specialist centre for treating disease, reduce journey times and, importantly, act as the nucleus of a cardiac clinical network in Essex.
- 5.2 The investment in the centre will be very large, with a staffing of over 600, including 300 Nurses and 60 Doctors and major new buildings.

- 5.3 It is important that the Council, along with other consultees, support the expert panel's view that Basildon Hospital is the best location for residents of Rochford District.

6 RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

That Essex Health Authority be advised that this Council strongly supports the development of a tertiary cardiac centre for Essex, based at the Basildon Hospital site. (HHHCC)

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Background Papers:

Building a better health service - consultation on the proposal to establish a tertiary cardiac centre in Essex.

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