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From: Leatherhead Community Assn. Letherhead Institute, 67 High Street, Leatherhead, KT22 8AH

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To: Freepost IMPROVING HEALTHCARE TOGETHER 2020-2030

Cc: Daniel Elkeles, CEO, Epsom & St. Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust

Cc: Lisa Thomson, Director of Communications and Patient Experience

Cc: Lynda Feeney, PPG

IMPROVING HEALTHCARE TOGETHER NHS SURREY DOWNS, SUTTON and MERTON CCGS ISSUES

Introduction

Caroline Brown, Chairman of Leatherhead Residents' Assn (LRA), Gill Hanson, Member of Leatherhead Community Assn. (LCA), Pam Wilson, member LRA & LCA, Chris Pelley, member of the LRA & SCC Cllr. Tim Hall met together to discuss the Issues document - Improving Healthcare Together in conjunction with an earlier meeting at Epsom Hospital which some of them attended - The Long Term Future of Epsom Hospital.

These are their comments and proposals as follows and are not necessarily the comments and proposals of all the members of the LRA or LCA.

Comments

The merger of the three CCGs and their latest publication about improving clinical quality, providing healthcare from modern buildings and also achieving financial sustainability are all essential aims.

Sutton CCG has integration of care by joining up health and care services giving patients a much better quality of care. Fortunately, this has now been adopted by all three CCGs and should be commended. We would emphasise that all staff caring for those at home should be properly trained and monitored.

However, while district services are becoming more established there is still concern about major acute services and routine care being offered at the moment in hospitals which may not be fit for purpose.

St Helier and Transport

Yes, staff at St Helier are doing their best as they take many acute A&E patients which include paediatrics, births as well as critical care and emergency surgery. Therefore, St Helier has become the dominant hospital. Patients have praised the care they receive at St Helier but when needing to return for follow up appointments or are visiting a patient, getting to the hospital by public transport from the Leatherhead area and much further out can be very arduous. There is NO direct route by bus/train to St Helier. It can take a long time (perhaps up to 2 hours). Driving there is not easy and at the end of the drive the car park is quite likely to be full and expensive. In fact, as regards geographical position for these three hospitals, Epsom is clearly in the centre of the catchment area and has the benefit of a good bus service, but this would not help those in the St. Helier area.

If it were decided that Sutton was the best location for the proposed Major Acute A&E unit, then serious thought would need to be given to establishing a regular and reliable bus service to Sutton and back. A free travel facility for those without bus passes would also help for both those in the Epsom and St. Helier areas.

Again, if the new Acute Hospital was sited at Sutton, then we would hope that Leatherhead Hospital could be used for follow up appointments.

Proposals for Epsom and St Helier Hospitals

Both Epsom and St Helier hospitals are in need of modern accommodation with up to date equipment. The proposal of selling off land behind Epsom Hospital for housing for both staff and for those trying to get on the housing ladder is a good idea as it would enable some much needed internal improvements to be properly carried out. Among the list of proposed projects is a new deck car park, but the list of projects far exceeds the land sale and this will obviously have to take its turn.

At the August meeting there was no mention of some of the money raised (in Epsom) going to help St. Helier hospital with their necessary internal improvements, but we understand repairs are already taking place with money raised for this purpose from their own site.

Major Acute Hospital

A Major Acute hospital does need to be built especially as there has been a recent report stating that patients treated in one of these hospitals fare much better, but where should the Acute Hospital be built? Ideally, we would like the acute new hospital to be at Epsom where it would be in a new building at the front of the existing hospital and with a multi storey car park built along side, but generally, some of us favoured the Sutton site next to the Marsden Hospital rather than being attached to St Helier or Epsom Hospitals. The new hospital would be independent. Getting there would not take long by "blue light" ambulance and also hearing in mind that most ambulance employees are paramedics and would start intervention treatment immediately.

Caroline Brown assumed that LRA members would prefer Epsom for the new acute unit. Chris Pelley favoured it being built on the Epsom Hospital site as he felt it would help those people who live miles away within the Southern most part of the Surrey Downs CCG.

For all of the proposals to work these facts are needed:

- 1) The land behind Epsom Hospital should be sold and the money used to refurbish Epsom Hospital
- 2) The money from the Government for the building of the Acute Hospital must be an actual promise not 'perhaps'.
- 3) There must be highly qualified staff wanting to work at the Acute Hospital

In Conclusion

Consulting the public further will just delay the refurbishment of the Hospitals and building the Acute Hospital. We all want something different.

We suggest there should be meetings between Consultants, Heads of Nursing, Heads of other staff as well as representatives belonging to the PPG of surgeries and residents. It is important that all residents are kept informed of progress and with dates of meetings where progress can be discussed if appropriate.

Lastly, all these proposals cannot be realised unless there is enough staff. The workplace has got to be up to date with enthusiastic, knowledgeable, well paid, and caring staff in a hospital which is clean, streamlined and where everything works. These are all important to patients. (We might be one of those someday). We also assume that the services of both hospitals will not be diminished, confirmation of this would be appreciated.

Caroline Brown

Gill Hanson

SCC Councillor Tim Hall

Pam Wilson

Chris Pelley