



AGM 2016 - PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Trust Board were able to answer a number of questions within the allocated time at the end of the meeting. Two questions were handed in to us on the question cards provided, for a response after the meeting. Both were in relation to the future of A&E at Darlington Memorial Hospital and the Trust has responded as follows:

Thank you for your question about the emergency department at Darlington Memorial Hospital raised at the Trust's AGM. There have been no decisions made to downgrade the A&E services at the hospital.

We believe your queries may have arisen because of discussions and engagement work which has been taking place as part of a programme of work called the Better Health Programme. The Better Health Programme is looking at how hospitals achieve the standards which local people have a right to expect from their services, including emergency care. As well as how the NHS meets its aspirations to provide more care for patients at home and in the community.

Over the course of this year a number of stakeholder and public engagement events have taken place to discuss the challenges being faced by the NHS and to gain valuable feedback and suggestions from our local communities about what is important to them as we think about how services and care could be delivered in the future.

There is currently a further series of public engagement events underway to continue this dialogue. The engagement work is being used to inform options and proposals for a formal consultation on the future configuration of services. We would like to assure you that no decisions have been made about the future of accident and emergency services and that no decision would be made without public consultation.

There is more information about the Better Health Programme, including work to date and the next series of engagement events, on the Programme's website: <https://nhsbetterhealth.org.uk/>