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Request for Information Reference: 09.18.15

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Email only

11 October 2018

### **Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request for Information**

Thank you for your request for information received on 14 September 2018 in relation to the County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust (Trust). We are dealing with your request under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

You requested information in connection with any Transformation plan in place within the Trust. Specifically you asked for:

***Under the Freedom of information act Please could I request the following information:***

- ***Does your Trust currently have a Transformation plan in place, if yes what time frame are you looking to implement this?***

Answer: You have confirmed, subsequent to the date of your request that the term 'transformation plan' relates to internal transformation activities. The Trust has only one largely (but not exclusively) internal plan in place which is described as a 'transformation' plan. This is our 'Transforming Emergency Care' Plan. The aim of this plan is to improve patient flow through our A&E departments, base wards and back into the community, together with the associated patient experience and A&E waiting times. There are actions within this plan which are being completed in collaboration with other parties in the local healthcare system, such as social services teams and our local clinical commissioning groups.

The actions within the plan are not allocated firm deadlines. Some are expected to be implemented within three months, others may take two to three years to come to fruition.

For completeness:

- The Trust was appointed to lead an integrated, multi-organisation, community service for County Durham and Darlington from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018. Other agencies involved in this work include our Clinical Commissioning Groups, local authorities, primary care providers and voluntary and independent sector organisations. There is a transformation plan in discussion and development between these agencies for these services.
- The Trust is part of NHS Improvement's 'Moving to Good' programme, which aims to help us improve how we organise, govern and measure our quality, and to consolidate our quality culture. Alongside this we will be rolling out a quality improvement approach across the Trust. Although not formally documented as a transformation plan, or labelled as such, the scope of this work is strategic and potentially transformative.

### ***Can I have a copy of your Transformation plan?***

Answer: The Transforming Emergency Care Plan is iterative, rather than a formally documented project plan. It also includes some draft elements not yet confirmed with third parties. The work-streams and actions are therefore summarised below:

#### **Provision of suitable alternatives to A&E:**

This includes provision of access to consultant advice for GPs and working with 111 to maintain an up to date directory of service to minimise any unnecessary conveyance to A&E.

#### **Improving 'Front of House' flow:**

Key actions comprise:

- Primary Care Streaming – improving flow within A&E by streaming appropriate patients directly to primary care, allowing A&E staff to concentrate on more complex presentations
- Optimising internal processes for escalation and senior decision-making
- Clarifying and improving protocols for referring / transferring patients between A&E and our medical and surgical assessment units and relevant specialties to ensure timely assessment and improve patient flow.
- Implementing dedicated bays for handover of patients arriving by ambulance
- Matching nursing staffing shift patterns to demand patterns, increasing cover for times of peak demand
- Implementing rapid assessment and treatment of patients who can be discharged quickly
- Improving how we clerk and triage patients on arrival and subsequent 'streaming'

## **Improving patient flow and discharge in the wider hospital and beyond**

Key actions comprise:

- Optimising discharge processes to discharge more patients earlier in the day
- Implementing multi-disciplinary review and action planning to address delays and blockages which could allow patients staying in hospital for some time to go home; for example, ensuring that diagnostic tests are completed promptly or that care packages are in place
- Implementing 'SAFER' – a best practice 'bundle' of procedures to maintain patient flow; for example, ensuring that all patients are subject to timely review / re review by a senior member of medical staff
- Development of capability in our community services to better support discharge

## **Enabling / Other activities**

- Winter Resilience Planning
- Developing a new expanded Emergency Care Centre at University Hospital North Durham (subject to business case approval and funding).

## ***Is the Trust planning a merger with a neighbouring Trust within the next 24 months?***

Answer: The Trust is not planning a merger with any neighbouring Trust within the next 24 months.

In line with the Information Commissioner's directive on the disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 your request will form part of our disclosure log. Therefore, a version of our response which will protect your anonymity will be posted on the County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust website.

If you have any queries or wish to discuss the information supplied, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above telephone number or at the above address.

If you are unhappy with the way your request for information has been handled, you can request a review by writing to:

The Chief Executive  
County Durham & Darlington NHS Foundation Trust  
Darlington Memorial Hospital  
Hollyhurst Road  
Darlington  
DL3 6HX

If, you remain dissatisfied with the handling of your request or complaint, you have a right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at:

The Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113  
Website: [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk).

There is no charge for making an appeal.

Yours sincerely

**Joanna Tyrrell**  
Freedom of Information Officer