

October 2019

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healthwatch County Durham

News update - October 2019

Shotley Bridge consultation set to continue



Shotley Bridge Community Hospital (which is owned by NHS Property Services) forms a central part of the health and care services provided to patients in North West Durham. However, there are rising costs associated with the building because of its age and so earlier this year the North Durham clinical commissioning group (CCG) began consulting the public on ways to ensure services provided at Shotley Bridge, and elsewhere in the area, remain sustainable. The consultation was put on hold temporarily due to uncertainty over funding from the NHS for a solution to the building issue but now the CCG has been advised by the Department of Health and Social Care that specific funding has been allocated. The CCG says it now intends to continue to develop a business case for future service provision and will consult the public again regarding any potential changes when

appropriate. More information on the process and feedback so far is available on the [CCG website](#).

Mental health and the journey to parenthood



[A new report](#) from [Healthwatch England](#) exploring the experiences of new mothers shows that some women are not receiving the mental health support they should expect. [The report](#) also highlights that triggers like severe sickness in pregnancy, fear of speaking up, and a lack of information about where to turn for help, can all contribute to mental ill-health. Healthwatch England is therefore calling on health professionals to create more opportunities for new parents to talk about their mental health and to check on the wellbeing of women both during and after pregnancy.

More good news for our volunteer Mary



Earlier this year, we told you about one of our volunteers, Mary Mitchell, who was celebrating 27 years of volunteering AND turning 90. Mary is one of our board members and an ambassador for patient engagement. Well, Mary's year just keeps getting better: we are delighted to tell you that she has now been shortlisted in the [Teesdale Mercury Community Pride Awards](#) in the Volunteer of the Year category. The award will be presented next month. Good luck Mary!

Spotlight on signposting



Our information and signposting team is available Mondays to Fridays on 0800 304 7039 to help answer your queries about local health and social care services.

In the last three months, we have seen a 15% increase in the time spent on signposting calls compared to the previous three months. The amount of time we spend on complex calls has also risen. The range of organisations we have signposted people to demonstrates the wide range of concerns people are contacting us about and includes Wellbeing for Life, Joining the Dots, the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS), Adult Social Care and the Independent Complaints Advocacy service. So, if you have a query or concern about health or social care please give us a call - we are here to help!

Have your say



Public consultation for stroke rehabilitation services in County Durham and Darlington

The three CCGs in County Durham and Darlington are holding a nine-week public consultation around stroke rehabilitation services beginning on Monday 7 October. They want to hear what people who have recently had a stroke think of proposals for how services will be delivered in future. Full information about the consultation will be available on the websites for [Durham Dales, Easington and Sedgefield CCG](#), [North Durham CCG](#) and [Darlington CCG](#) from 7 October, including details of planned public events and how to book onto them; the pre-consultation business case, and an online questionnaire. Paper copies of all materials can also be requested by emailing DDESCCG.enquiries@nhs.net. Feedback gathered during the consultation will be used to help decide what is the best and safest option for providing stroke services across the region in future.

Deadline: 12 December 2019



Ward 6, Bishop Auckland General Hospital

The three CCGs are also running a public consultation on the future of Ward 6 at Bishop Auckland General Hospital. Anyone from County Durham and Darlington can contribute their views from 7 October and background information will be available on the CCG websites (see above), including: a document summarising the consultation; an animation about the issues involved, and details of public events linked to the consultation. An online questionnaire will also be

available via the websites for contributing feedback but if you prefer a paper copy this can be obtained by emailing myview@nhs.net.

Deadline: 12 December 2019



Consultation on support for young people who need help to stay in education

Around one in six children and young people in County Durham have a special educational need or disability and some young people need extra support to stay in education. Durham County Council is reviewing how it spends its money to help them as it faces increasing budget pressures and there are just over two weeks left to have your say on how you think the council could best provide a quality, affordable service. The review covers a range of services including pupil referral units, special schools and support services such as integrated therapies and aids and adaptations. Have your say on the [Durham County Council website](#).

Deadline: 17 October 2019.

Where should you go for help if you are unwell?

... It sounds a simple question but it can be tricky to know exactly which service is the right one to choose when you are feeling under the weather - GP, A&E, NHS 111, urgent treatment centre or pharmacy. The local clinical commissioning groups have recognised that people aren't always sure what to do when they are unwell and produced the following guide to help. Print it out and keep it handy just in case!

Need to be seen today for a non-emergency?

Think GP First

Call your GP practice between 8am - 6pm Monday - Friday



Call NHS 111

Call NHS 111 between 6pm-8am and at the weekends if you have an urgent same day health need where you will be signposted to a service close to where you live.



Need to be seen today for an emergency?

Minor injury call NHS 111

Strains, cuts, sprains and burns can all be treated at our Urgent Treatment Centres at Bishop Auckland Hospital or Peterlee Community Hospital, University Hospital North Durham and Shotley Bridge Hospital.

A&E or 999

Call 999 straightaway for chest pains, choking, severe blood loss, blacking out, unconsciousness, suspected stroke or serious injury



Alternatively you may be able to help yourself

Help Yourself

For hangovers, grazed knees, coughs and sore throats visit www.nhs.uk also download the free Child Health app



Pharmacy

For diarrhoea, runny nose, painful cough and headaches visit your local pharmacy for free advice and to buy medication



NHS 111 BSL service for Deaf patients
www.interpretemow.co.uk/nhs111 999 texting service for Deaf patients - you **MUST** register first. Text 'Register' to 999 & follow instructions. In emergency text 'Ambulance' & address. Find out more at www.emergencysms.org.uk

Could you be a "Sighted Guide"?



[My Guide](#) is a service where trained volunteers support people with sight loss to get out and about in their communities doing the things they want to do the most. It could be something as simple as going for a walk, going to a gym class or clothes shopping. The service is currently recruiting for [Sighted Guides](#) in County Durham. It doesn't matter how old you are, or what background you're from, what's important is a willingness to learn and enthusiasm for an active, social life. Those interested in volunteering can apply on the [Guide Dogs website](#). Alternatively, if you think you, or someone you know, would benefit from the service then you can contact Guide Dogs on 0345 143 0220 or newcastle@guidedogs.org.uk for more information.

Help protect yourself and others from scams



You've probably heard of the Dementia Friends initiative... well now you can become a "[Friend Against Scams](#)" too. [National Trading Standards](#) has produced a short online training package to raise awareness of scams and it is free to complete. The idea is that after taking the training you help take a stand against scams, for example by raising awareness among the people you know or writing to your local MP and asking them to share important messages to prevent their constituents being scammed. More than 280,000 people have already completed the training. Visit the [Friends Against Scams](#) website if you would like to do the same.

Get muddy and raise money for cancer support



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NEWCASTLESTAMPEDE.COM
OR CALL
0191 236 2020

Supporting
MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT



Contact us:

Healthwatch County Durham
Whitfield House
St Johns Road
Meadowfield Industrial Estate
Durham
DH7 8XL

Freephone: 0800 3047039

Text: 07756 654218

Email: healthwatchcountydurham@pcp.uk.net



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