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To: Trust Board 1st July 2004
Subject: **Children's Services Discussion Phase, June 2004**
Action: For noting

Executive Summary

The attached report summarises the current position regarding the review of Children's Services in West Hertfordshire. The main points are as follows:

- ♦ The local health organisations in West Hertfordshire are involved in a discussion phase about the future configuration of children's services, in line with decisions made in Investing in Your Health, which runs until 7th July.
- ♦ Formal consultation will take place during September to December 2004 as a joint programme with East & North Hertfordshire Trust.

Board members are invited to note and comment on this report.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES DISCUSSION PHASE MAY - JULY 2004

1.0 CONTEXT

From March to September 2003 Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Strategic Health Authority consulted on proposed changes to the health care system in the area via 'Investing in Your Health'. That consultation and scrutiny process resulted in a preferred option and an agreed strategy for the future pattern and provision of healthcare services across the area. Within that process the overall model for children's hospital services was determined along with need for urgent action on that service.

These proposals are being discussed with young people, families, other organisations, key stakeholders and the wider public from May to 7 July 2004. A formal Consultation is planned during September to December. It is anticipated that service changes would be implemented in Spring 2005.

2.0 PROPOSALS

A detailed discussion document has been produced to:

- discuss the drivers for change
- describe the reasons why urgent action must be taken now
- provide detailed proposals on how the model of children's hospital services as outlined in Investing in Your Health could be implemented in West Hertfordshire
- support the summary leaflet that has been produced for the discussion phase by giving further detail for those who wish it
- provide greater information on the ideas and details behind the proposed service developments

2.1 Proposed Model of Care

The proposed model follows the way forward for children's hospital services described in Investing in Your Health and includes:

- Developing a Children's Emergency department at Hemel Hempstead Hospital that is open 12 hours a day, 365 days a year
- Within that department providing a short-stay acute assessment, observation and treatment area with beds
- Establishing a dedicated children's day unit for planned treatments, surgery and tests at Hemel Hempstead Hospital to provide a service for children across West Hertfordshire
- Increasing the children's community nursing service to respond to the changes in the hospital service
- Establishing same-day consultant paediatrician clinics for very urgent referrals
- Concentrating all the inpatient overnight children's beds and services onto the Watford hospital site
- Increasing the number of children's inpatient beds at Watford to cope
- Over 80% of children who currently attend Hemel Hempstead Hospital will continue to get all their treatment entirely at Hemel Hempstead Hospital
- These proposals will require the small number of children who attend A&E at night and need the care of a paediatric doctor and children with complex needs that require admission overnight to travel to a hospital with an inpatient children's ward. This would usually be to Watford Hospital, unless an alternative is closer to where the patient lives.

2.2 The Need for Change

- Children's needs have changed
- How children use the services have changed
- Staffing the current service has become exceedingly difficult
- The staffing pressures will become more acute from August this year
- We must protect the quality and safety of the service

2.3 Benefits of the Proposed Changes.

- All children will be seen by specialist children's doctors and nurses
- All children will be seen in an appropriate child-friendly environment
- A service that better reflects what children need from hospital and how they use it
- A sustainable and high quality clinical service, which can be staffed
- Waiting times and delays can be reduced
- Fewer children and families will face the disruption of an admission to hospital for their care

3.0 Public Discussion Phase

Discussions with the public started during May and continue until 7th July. Hertfordshire Partnership Trust (HPT), the Primary Care Trusts, Ambulance Service and West Hertfordshire Hospitals Trust have been involved in raising awareness and disseminating information, including:

- making presentations to the Public, Patient Involvement forums
- local patient panels
- meeting with regular ward users at Hemel and Watford
- putting up displays on the two children's wards, Watford Children's Emergency Department and Hemel A&E so parents and children can see what is being proposed
- sending out a summary booklet that outlines the proposals and seeks parents views
- providing live feedback to questions on intra-net sites and creating an external web page that public can access and send comments back on.

There has been an emphasis to involve staff in the discussion phase and obtain views and input into the process at these early stages, with staff briefings and cascading of information – asking for feedback and suggestions about future service provision and design.

Once this phase is completed there will be a collated response from all the organisations and report submitted to respective boards for noting.

4.0 Broad Themes and Detailed Issues for Discussion

There are several key issues that need to be progressed, a number of them with local people during the discussion and consultation phases. These issues are outlined below:

1. Issues for Discussion

- Do people support the development of a dedicated Children's Emergency Department at Hemel Hempstead Hospital? Or should children continue to be seen in the main A&E Department at Hemel Hempstead Hospital?
- Do people support the development of short-stay acute assessment beds within the Children's Emergency Department at Hemel Hempstead Hospital?
- People's preferences for the 12-hour opening time of the CED and short-stay acute assessment area.
- The best and safest arrangements for children in and around Hemel who need emergency assessment or treatment when the Children's Emergency Department is not open? This matter will be discussed with regular users of the service and with key stakeholders including the Police and Children, Schools and Families service.
- The proposals to establish a same day urgent consultant clinic and the investment in the community nursing team.

2. Transport

- 93% of children who attend hospital are brought in by either by private transport or ambulance
- There are a range of things that have been discussed to help ensure that parents and families can get between home and hospital or between sites as needed. The needs of people and the

ideas already generated will be discussed with families who regularly need to use the service and with any public interested as part of the discussion phase.

- Access for families without transport will be a key issue for discussion during May and June.

3. Design of services and environments

These proposals include the development of at least 4 new environments. This is an ideal point for the public to give suggestions and get involved in the design of the Children's Emergency Department at Hemel Hempstead, the short stay assessment beds, the Day Unit at Hemel and the inpatient ward at Watford. Users who are interested will be given the opportunity to put forward their ideas and get involved.

4. Other issues people want to raise

Whilst we are raising a series of specific issues we also wish to listen to other issues people want to raise and to hear their views, ideas on how the changes may impact on them. There may also be more general views about the current children's services that we are happy to listen to.

5.0 Consultation & Decision Making Process

It has been agreed by the Strategic Health Authority that public consultation on Children's Hospital Services in West Hertfordshire and East and North Hertfordshire will be run as a joint project, with a dedicated project manager. The full formal public consultation will take place from mid September to mid December. Boards will be asked to agree the response paper, followed by a meeting to make the decision by mid February. Following this, there will need to be a period for the Council to formally scrutinise the process that has been conducted. It is anticipated that any changes in service can be implemented from late spring 2005.