

HERTFORDSHIRE HEALTH CONCORDAT: UPDATE

Report of the Head of Scrutiny

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1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. To provide the Committee with the revised Concordat and an update on the status of the Hertfordshire Health Concordat, the amendments made and sign up by health organisations. The Concordat is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

2. Summary

- 2.1. The Health Concordat is a document that governs the way in which health organisations and scrutiny interact. The Concordat emphasises a culture of ‘no surprises’ and what should take place in the event of a substantial variation. The Concordat was last reviewed in 2013 and was signed by key partners at that date.
- 2.2. It was considered timely to review the Concordat in light of the election of a new county council and to take into account the increased collaboration between the council and health partners and between health partners. Additionally, the revised Concordat takes in to consideration more recent health legislation.
- 2.3. The revised Concordat also reflects changes over the last four years to Hertfordshire’s health economy. The advent of the Strategic Transformation Partnership (STP), increased pressures on the NHS system and cross organisational working has meant that additions were made to the required signatories. The organisations covered by the revised Concordat are as follows:
- Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) which will act through its Health Scrutiny Committee (HSC)
 - Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (HPFT)
 - East & North Hertfordshire NHS Trust (ENHT)
 - West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust (WHHT)
 - East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EEAST)
 - Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust (HCT)
 - Herts Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group (HVCCG)
 - East & North Herts Clinical Commissioning Group (ENHCCG)
 - Cambridge & Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group (C&PCCG)
 - Princess Alexandra Hospital, Harlow (PAH)
 - Healthwatch Hertfordshire (HWH)

- 2.4. The STP is currently not an accountable body, but rather a partnership of all the organisations listed above (bar Healthwatch Hertfordshire), therefore it does not have signatory powers. However, with all above organisations signing it confirms the system's collective commitment to follow the Concordat principles for all service changes arising from the STP work plan. This also includes any future developments including the creation of an Accountable Care System or Organisation.
- 2.5. The Concordat applies to relations between the Health Scrutiny Committee (HSC) and the health bodies serving the population of Hertfordshire. It also covers consultations and engagement carried out by any of the NHS bodies, where HCC is among those formally consulted. The principles outlined apply not only to extensive formal public consultations of the kind required by legislation, but also to developments which will affect smaller numbers of patients, smaller geographical areas or particular services only. The Concordat covers changes resulting from commissioning decisions or service changes.
- 2.6. The principles that the Concordat are built on underpin the whole relationship between scrutiny and health. For instance the NHS Five Year Forward View states that 'we [the NHS] need to engage with communities and citizens in new ways, involving them directly in decisions about the future of health and care services'
- 2.7. Given the financial and service landscape it is accepted that changes will have to be made but that they are done so for the best health interests of the population of Hertfordshire and the Hertfordshire and West Essex STP health and social care system. There is also recognition of the aim to balance timely, well informed decision-making with the use of public monies.
- 2.8. When consultations take place the Concordat highlights the need to consult the relevant stakeholders in the right way using 'digital by default' as per central government consultation principles guidance (2016). While digital contact through social media and webpages should be at the forefront of any consultation, this does not preclude the use of alternative methods to reach all stakeholders. All communications need to have accessible language so that it is clear and allows for responses to be captured resulting in effective reporting, which in turn informs effective decision making.
- 2.9. Finally the Concordat identifies that ongoing engagement with the population is necessary to create transparency and awareness of the direction of travel for services.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. That the Concordat is noted by the Committee

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Background Information

Health Scrutiny Committee Minutes – 15 June 2017

<http://cmis.hertfordshire.gov.uk/hertfordshire/Calendarofcouncilmeetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/611/Committee/12/Default.aspx>