

Notes of Meeting held between Gwynedd Council and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board – 30 January 2013, 5.30pm at Ysbyty Gwynedd

Present:

Mary Burrows	Councillor Dyfed Edwards
Geoff Lang	Councillor R H Wyn Williams
Grace Lewis-Parry	Harry Thomas
Andrew Jones	D P Lewis
	Morwena Edwards

1.0 Background

Councillor DE opened the discussion and thanked everyone for the opportunity to meet at short notice. He referred to the Notice of Motion accepted by the Council at its meeting on 24 January which asked for “... **The Council to hold a meeting with the Health Board to discuss the financial implication and service expectations and that no change takes place until more mature discussion have taken place**”. The Council also requested the Community Health Council to refer the matter to the Health Minister, Lesley Griffiths to consider.

2.0 General Discussion

2.1 Several matters were discussed in relation to the decisions made by BCUHB:-

- a) Enhanced Care – The Council expressed concerns regarding the proposed roll-out of the enhanced care model and whilst supporting the aim of keeping individuals out of hospital was concerned as to the possible increased demand for community services by the Council.

GL presented a summary of the experiences within the pilots established in North Denbighshire and more recently in Anglesey (noting that the two models differed). It was also noted that developmental work is happening in South Meirionnydd through the locality team.

‘Enhanced care’ involves:-

- establishing a team of clinical and support workers (including generic care workers).
- the ‘team’ will support an individual in the community from the time when the need is identified to a “discharge” time.
- in approaching ‘discharge’ a Health and Social Care Assessment will take place to decide on future needs.

It was noted that Bangor University have evaluated the Denbighshire pilot and reported positively on it. In response to a question the main drivers for enhanced care were said to be:-

- more appropriate care
- better position to deal with future demographics
- more appropriate for certain groups i.e. palliative and chronic care
- not necessarily giving financial savings but can drive efficiencies.

- b) Dementia Care – reference was made to the decision to permanently close Hafan Ward, Bryn Beryl and Uned Meirion, Dolgellau. Particular concern was expressed regarding dementia care in South Gwynedd where there are only limited residential beds and a lack of nursing care.

BCUHB appreciated the situation but were not yet in a position to fully identify the solution. It was suggested that further work needs to be done in relation to actual numbers involved; how enhanced care will contribute; whether the skills of mental health nurses could be utilised, and whether there is room for the combined use of community hospitals and residential care placements.

It was stated that in-patient respite was not the answer but that increased day care had been well received locally.

The gap between home and specialist needs was recognised and the opportunity existed to work together to further develop a model of care which may include Integrated Community Teams.

- c) Transport – In raising this matter the Council expressed concerns as to how patients would access services which were now being moved. This was also in the context of significant change in public transport funding including a reduction in subsidies to bus operators.

BCUHB stated categorically that they did not have a statutory responsibility to arrange transport for patients unless there needs were such that they met the all Wales eligibility criteria for hospital transport. In saying this however they appreciated the difficulties patients faced and were prepared to provide some support to community transport schemes. Work was on-going to try to monitor the relationship between the proposed changes and existing transport arrangements and working relationships were in place with the local authority transport planning managers.

- d) Blaenau Ffestiniog Community Hospital – The decision taken in respect of the Blaenau Ffestiniog Community Hospital were:-

- moving in-patient beds to Alltwen Hospital
- use of enhanced care where appropriate to provide care in the homes
- the minor injuries unit and the x-ray unit to close
- GP's to continue to provide minor injuries services locally.

BCUHB confirmed their intention to implement the decision made and the proposed timetable for change was set out in the board papers published in January. It was noted that the Community Health Council had until 1 March to respond to the decisions announced. The Council noted the resolution passed asked for any change not to be implemented until further discussion had taken place.

The general discussion which followed considered:-

- the potential for a Health and Social Care facility which would bring together services on one site.
- the potential for additional services/treatments which could be provided.
- whether information was available regarding the £4m capital programme sum is available to develop the site – noted that it is within the capital programme but is subject to approval of a business case by Wales Government.

The Council proposed that a firm commitment needs to be given in the form of a “Statement of Intent” to confirm its intentions regarding maintaining and developing with the Council and other agencies services locally.

- (e) Health Improvement – the Council referred to the overriding aim to target the prevention agenda and saw an opportunity for greater collaboration between the Council and BCUHB regarding this. It was noted that several Council services make a significant contribution to the health improvement agenda.
- (f) Tywyn Hospital - BCUHB were awaiting a decision by Wales Government regarding the business case they had submitted in relation to the development of the hospital.

The intention to establish a Joint Planning Board with Hywel Dda HB and Powys LHB was welcomed.

- (g) Neo-natal Care – In responding to a question from the Council regarding the proposals for neo-natal care BCUHB reconfirmed that 95% of neo-natal care would continue to be provided within North Wales.

Establishing a neonatal intensive care unit to care for a small number of babies (approximately 36 each year across North Wales) with much more complex and specialist needs was prohibitive in terms of the number of consultant neonatologists, needed (x6), when there is a national shortage of consultants.

3.0 Concluding Remarks

3.1 It was agreed that the discussion had been valuable in ensuring a greater understanding of BCUHB proposals and the concerns of the Council. It was agreed that an opportunity arose to work together at different levels to develop services in the future. This related specifically to:-

- a) a health and social care facility in Blaenau Ffestiniog

- b) greater integration in terms of the enhanced care model
 - c) dementia care in a community setting as well as a possible community hospital/residential care model.
- 3.2 It was agreed that a further meeting should take place to progress the opportunities for joint working.
- 3.3 It was agreed that Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board would draw up a “Statement of Intent” in relation to the development of services at Blaenau Ffestiniog and that every effort is made to clarify the position regarding the £4m capital sum.