



## HOSC to monitor maternity progress

HOSC will receive six monthly updates to check that the agreed Maternity Strategy for East Sussex is delivering planned improvements. The focus for the local NHS is now on putting the finalised three year strategy into action.

Mike Wood, Chief Executive and Jenny Phaure, Programme Manager, from NHS East Sussex Downs and Weald/Hastings and Rother explained to HOSC that implementation of the strategy is being driven by a working group led by clinicians. A sub-group has also been established to involve GPs in the development of community midwifery services.



HOSC emphasised the need for consistently good care across both main East Sussex Hospitals Trust sites and more widely across Sussex. Progress has already been made in areas such as reducing caesarean section rates, promoting breastfeeding and increasing the number of hours consultants are present on the labour wards. HOSC will be looking for ongoing improvements in the quality of care as the strategy is implemented

Councillor Sylvia Tidy, HOSC Chairman, said, "There has been a long journey to reach a stage where a comprehensive Maternity Strategy is in place for East Sussex. It is important for clinicians and managers to focus now on putting it into practice and HOSC's role is to check regularly that this work is translating into improved outcomes for mums and babies".

## Mental health proposals out for consultation



8<sup>th</sup> March 2010 saw the start of public consultation on proposals to make changes to inpatient mental health services. The proposals are to reduce the number of inpatient beds in East Sussex from 122 to between 92-100 over the next 12-18 months, and in the longer term to around 80 beds housed in new state of the art facilities within the county. The proposed reduction in beds is linked to the development of community services which offer alternatives to going into hospital, and people staying in hospital for less time when they do need inpatient care.

HOSC agreed that the proposals represent a potential significant change to services and that the Committee should be formally consulted by the NHS and prepare a response.

HOSC Members Councillors Sylvia Tidy, David Rogers, Carolyn Heaps and Peter Pragnell will form a Task Group to look at the proposals in more detail over the next few months. The group will look at the evidence to support the proposals and consider the views of service user groups and professionals before recommending how HOSC should respond.

The consultation closes on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2010. More information is available from [www.esdw.nhs.uk](http://www.esdw.nhs.uk) or [www.hastingsandrother.nhs.uk](http://www.hastingsandrother.nhs.uk) or by contacting Joel Hufford on 01273 403550 or [joel.hufford@esdwpct.nhs.uk](mailto:joel.hufford@esdwpct.nhs.uk)

## Stroke care recommendations on track

HOSC has welcomed progress to date in taking forward the Committee's recommendations on stroke care. Following a detailed review, HOSC made a series of recommendations for improving the care for people at risk of or experiencing a stroke, all of which were accepted by the local NHS in July 2009.

Jane Strong, Programme Lead for Stroke, and Nicky Murrell, Assistant Director of Projects, from NHS East Sussex Downs and Weald/Hastings and Rother updated HOSC on progress. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010, thrombolysis (clot-busting drugs) will be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to treat strokes where this is the appropriate treatment for patients.



Access to scans which determine whether the stroke is being caused by a blood clot or by bleeding in the brain has also improved, and more data is being collected to check how quickly patients access the scans, which are important in determining the right treatment.

### Act FAST

A national awareness campaign to help people recognise the symptoms of a stroke appears to be yielding benefits. The **FAST** campaign which encourages people to look for **F**acial weakness, **A**rm weakness, **S**peech problems and to know that it is **T**ime to call 999 when seeing any of these symptoms seems to be leading people to raise the alarm more quickly.

### Challenges

Although progress is being made, there are ongoing challenges in recruiting specialist staff with training in stroke care and in developing community rehabilitation for stroke patients. There is also an ongoing drive to introduce health checks for people at risk of stroke.

Councillor Angharad Davies, who chaired the HOSC review said, "there is encouraging progress being made and HOSC is pleased to see the priority being given to stroke care by the local NHS. It is particularly important for a county like East Sussex, which has an older age profile, to be in the forefront of stroke care and HOSC will continue to check progress"

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## Radiotherapy could be coming to East Sussex

HOSC has welcomed plans to introduce a radiotherapy service within the county to treat people with cancer. Yvonne Le Brun, Interim Deputy Director for Strategy and Primary Care from NHS East Sussex Downs and Weald/Hastings and Rother explained that currently East Sussex patients have to travel to cancer centres in Brighton or Kent to access the treatment. This means lengthy journeys when people are at their sickest, which can cause some people to choose not to complete their treatment. The proposal to build a radiotherapy unit at Eastbourne Hospital will reduce journey times for many patients and will provide much needed extra capacity to cope with expected increases in demand as the population ages.

### Cancer centre on board

HOSC questioned whether there was a risk that setting up more radiotherapy units would dilute the expertise of the specialist cancer centres, which were established in order to drive up standards of care. In response, Lisa Elliot, Lead Cancer Commissioner assured the Committee that the Eastbourne service would come 'under the wing' of the Brighton cancer centre, and be run by the same team of staff. This would ensure that the quality of care would be at the same level, whilst also improving accessibility. HOSC noted that some patients with more complex or rare cancers may still need to travel to specialist centres.

The new development is subject to planning permission for the site at Eastbourne Hospital, and needs Department of Health funding, so it could take up to 3-4 years to be up and running. HOSC will be keeping a watchful eye on progress.

## Mental health development looks secure

Responses to a public consultation on the expansion of secure mental health facilities in Hellingly, near Hailsham have been positive. Andrew Dean, Service Director for Secure and Forensic Services at Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust told HOSC that of the 40 responses received, 37 had been supportive of the proposals. The main concerns raised had been around the landscaping of the site and ensuring safety and security.

The Trust believes there is some misunderstanding about what a 'medium secure' facility, such as that in Hellingly, looks like and plans to organise open days so that local people can see for themselves the security measures in place. HOSC Members will be invited to attend.

Given the positive response to the consultation, HOSC reiterated its support for the plans. A planning application will now be submitted by the Trust and, if approved, it is expected that the new building could be opened in late 2011, followed by refurbishment of current buildings by April 2012.

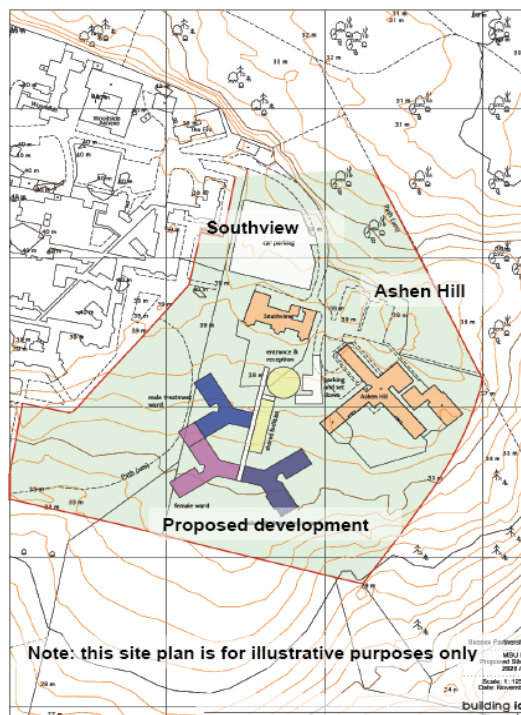


Image from Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust's consultation document

## Rural health report now available

A summary report is now available following HOSC's event to investigate rural health issues. The event, held in November 2009, attracted over 70 delegates who discussed the challenges and opportunities of commissioning and providing healthcare in rural parts of the county. The event demonstrated that there are inequalities in health in rural, as well as urban areas and will help HOSC ensure that the needs of the whole varied population of East Sussex are considered when planning healthcare and tackling poor health. HOSC will use the findings from the event to ensure the rural perspective is built into the Committee's work.

For a copy of the report visit the HOSC website [www.eastsussexhealth.org](http://www.eastsussexhealth.org) or contact Claire Lee on 01273 481327 or [claire.lee@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:claire.lee@eastsussex.gov.uk)

## News in brief

### Sussex Partnership Board goes public

The Board of Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust has agreed to hold its Board meetings in public from April 2010. There will be 10 Board meetings in public each year, plus four meetings of the Council of Governors. HOSC had asked the Trust to consider the move in order to enhance transparency and the Committee welcomes the Board's decision.

### New Interim Chief Executive for East Sussex Hospitals

Darren Grayson, Chief Executive of NHS Brighton and Hove, has been appointed as Interim Chief Executive at East Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust following the announcement that Kim Hodgson would step down at the end of March.

### Website revamp

HOSC is planning to revamp its website [www.eastsussexhealth.org](http://www.eastsussexhealth.org) with a view to updating it and improving accessibility. If you have views on how it could be improved, or what should be retained, please contact Claire Lee on 01273 481327 or [claire.lee@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:claire.lee@eastsussex.gov.uk).

# Next HOSC meeting

10am Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2010 at County Hall, Lewes

Webcast recordings and further details of meetings are available on the HOSC website:  
[www.eastsussexhealth.org](http://www.eastsussexhealth.org)

## HOSC

East Sussex County Council:

**Cllr Sylvia Tidy - Chairman**  
**Cllr David Rogers OBE - Vice Chairman**  
**Cllr Carolyn Heaps**  
**Cllr Philip Howson**  
**Cllr Ruth O'Keeffe**  
**Cllr Peter Pragnell**  
**Cllr Barry Taylor**

Eastbourne Borough Council  
**Cllr Alex Hough**

Hastings Borough Council  
**Cllr Eve Martin**

Lewes District Council  
**Cllr Carolyn Lambert**

Rother District Council  
**Cllr Angharad Davies**

Wealden District Council  
**Cllr Diane Phillips**

Voluntary services' representatives:

**Mr Dave Rogers,**  
Vice-Chair, Hastings and Rother Health  
and Social Care Forum  
1 vacancy

East Sussex Local Involvement Network  
(LINK) representative:  
**Ms Janet Colvert**  
Chair East Sussex LINK

## HOSC support changes

Sam White, Scrutiny Support Officer for HOSC, left the County Council in February 2010 after supporting the Committee since its inception in 2003. Claire Lee, Scrutiny Lead Officer for HOSC, returned from her secondment at the Centre for Public Scrutiny in February 2010 and is now the main contact for the Committee (details below). Lisa Schrevel, Acting Scrutiny Lead Officer from August 2009 - January 2010 has now returned to her role as Partnership Development Manager for the County Council.

Councillor Sylvia Tidy said, "Sam had been with HOSC since the very start and will be much missed by the Committee. Much of his work was 'behind the scenes' but was invaluable in helping the Committee function effectively. I'd also like to welcome Claire back from her secondment and to thank Lisa for supporting HOSC so well over the last six months".

### Contact:

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East Sussex Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) is managed by East Sussex County Council and works in partnership with Eastbourne Borough Council, Hastings Borough Council, Lewes District Council, Rother District Council and Wealden District Council

