

DIARY DATES

December 1 ... Local Health Forum, PCC offices, Turner Road, Colchester. 2pm to 4pm.

December 2 ... Meet the NEECCG Board, Room 14A, PCC offices, Turner Road, Colchester. 12.30pm to 1.30pm

December 3 ... Local Health Forum, Central Church, Main Road, Dovercourt. 2pm to 4pm

December 5 ... Local Health Forum, TCVS, Rosemary Road, Clacton. 2pm to 4pm

December 9 ... North Essex Partnership University Foundation Trust, Council of Governors, Chelmsford City FC, 4.30pm

December 11 ... Colchester Hospital University Foundation Trust Board Meeting, Training Rooms South, Turner Road ... (Check web site for time).

December 11 ... Health-watch Essex Board Meeting. 5pm to 7pm (Check web site for venue)

December 15 ... Joint meeting of Colchester PPGs and PRGs at PCC offices. 7pm

January 13 ... Essex Health and Wellbeing Board at Maldon Council Offices, Princes Road, Maldon. 2pm

January 15 ... Colchester Hospital University Foundation Trust Council of Governors, Training Rooms South, Turner Road, Colchester. 11am

Could you be hospital chair?

SEASONED chairs have just a few days left to put their hat in the ring for a chance to earn £45,000 for a three-day week as the new chair at Colchester Hospital University Foundation Trust.

The job advertisement says: "We believe we have an unrivalled and exhilarating opportunity for a new chair.

"You will lead the Council of Governors and Board of Directors, ensuring that the board provides effective leadership to the Trust and delivers performance and regulatory requirements.

"You will work with a complex array of people including commissioners and of course patients, local community leaders, staff, other health and social care providers and regulators to shape, influence and define future health services.

"If you share our passion for delivering high quality sustainable services, this is an opportunity you should explore.

"You will be a seasoned chair, having chaired committees within complex organisations, or, have been a board level operator with a track record of successfully leading change at an organisational level.

"You may have a background of working in the private, public service or voluntary sectors and be a skilled ambassador offering exceptional communication, leadership and strategic influencing skills that deliver meaningful results."

Only additional provision is that you live within the Trust's membership area of Essex and Suffolk. Closing date to apply is December 5.

Visit new special needs web site

ESSEX Local Offer is up and running as part of the reforms under the Children and Families Act 2014 and will be developed over time, with all partners involved in reviewing it.

The Local Offer will:

- Give information about education, health and care services
- Give information about leisure activities and support groups
- Hold all the information in one

suitable place

- Be clear, comprehensive and accessible
- Make service provision more responsive to local needs and aspirations
- Be developed and reviewed with the service providers and service users

Take a look at:

<http://www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk/>

North East Essex Health Forum



Forum Focus

Informing, Engaging and Debating

December 2014



Festive greetings to all Forum members, readers and health services staff especially those on duty over the holiday to ensure we are cared for

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Going national to strengthen surgery staffs

PLANS are being made to nationally promote Essex as the career location of choice for clinical and non-clinical primary care staff.

They come as a Tendring surgery was left without any full time doctor due to ill health. And a new report showed 62 Essex GPs have plans to leave practices next year.

A North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group spokesman said: "We are aware that a number of our experienced and long-serving doctors are due to leave or retire soon.

"We are considering how, with their agreement, we could use their significant experience and expertise to help mentor the GPs of tomorrow.

"Our plans will also consider how we could accommodate part-time or flexi-

-ble working, post-retirement to retain this group of GPs.

"At the same time as addressing these short-term solutions, we are also working together to attract more doctors, nurses and other GP surgery staff to work in Essex in the long-term.

"The seven CCGs in Essex as well as the NHS England area team (Essex), and the Local Medical Committee of GPs are working together to develop an Essex primary care workforce programme.

"As part of this work we are considering how to recruit, retain and train other primary care staff to support our GPs to meet the needs of local people including practice nurses, pharmacists and health care assistants."

Background reports: page 3

This newsletter is produced for North East Essex Health Forum by the Communications Working Group of the Health Forum Committee who would love to hear your views on it. Members are:

Ray Hardisty Group Chair/Forum Focus editor ray.hardisty@nhs.net
Dawn Bostock Forum Chair dawn.bostock@nhs.net

Focus helps to keep Health Forum members across Colchester and Tendring informed and in touch with their local health scene

Celebrating national win for hospital

STAFF at Colchester General Hospital are celebrating success in the annual Building Better Healthcare (BBH) Awards.

As well as a heat recovery system winning the "Best Product for Improving Sustainability and/or Reducing Energy" award, the hospital's £25m state-of-the-art radiotherapy centre was short-listed in three categories.

Nick Chatten, Projects Director at Colchester Hospital University NHS Foundation Trust, said: "The award we won gives well-deserved recognition to our backroom engineering team who are usually very much unsung heroes.

"I am thrilled for them and enormously proud of their achievement."

The hospital won the Best Product for Improving Sustainability and/or Reducing Energy award for investing in a system which enables waste heat from its boilers to be used to provide heat and hot water for the Elmstead Day Unit and Mary Barron and Haematology Day Unit, saving £200,000 a year.

Maternity unit opens doors

WOULD-BE mums and the general public enjoyed a behind-the-scenes look at Clacton Hospital's maternity unit.

A consultation is under way to decide whether the unit will be opened on a 24/7 basis or remain as an 'on-demand' service.

And for 10 hours everyone could visit the unit and see the range of services it provides with staff on hand to answer questions..

The consultation runs until December 10.



Clacton Hospital home of the new Durban Rehabilitation Centre aimed at relaxing the pressure on acute hospital beds.

Rehab service gets underway

MORE help is now available for people who need rehabilitation after illness or injury to get back to living at home thanks to a brand new service ... the Durban Rehabilitation Centre ... opening at Clacton Hospital.

Those who need the service will generally be people over 65, but any adults who may need more time and more support and who do not need nursing care will be welcome.

People will be looked after in a bed at the Durban Rehabilitation Centre so they are safe while they work with staff at their own pace to re-gain their skills and abilities to live safely in the community.

Some people will need rehabilitation after they have been in hospital at Colchester, but others may be admitted directly from home after a referral by their GP or the new Rapid Assessment Service.

NHS North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) agreed the project, and

(colleagues from Essex County Council, the local NHS community service provider Anglian Community Enterprise (ACE) and the Clacton Hospital site's owners have worked rapidly to get the new service ready in time for winter.

Their efforts mean the service has opened ahead of schedule with new handrails, doors, practical aids, a kitchen for patients' use.

It all provides a bright, homely look to help people get their physical abilities and their confidence back, after an injury or illness.

ACE's rehabilitation staff will run the centre, supported by a GP and ACE's community nurses.

It has 15 beds and will have a minimum of three staff on duty at any time.

The centre will care for people from both the Colchester and Tendring areas, and will run until at least April 2015, when it will be evaluated.

Round-up of Health Forum activity on behalf of patients and the public

Local Health Forums on major issues

DECEMBER'S Local Health Forums feature three current consultations on health care across Colchester and Tendring.

They will all tackle maternity, urgent care and seven-day services, part of the ongoing Big Care Debate.

"Urgent care and the Big Care Debate involve the services that every one of us could be involved in," says Health Forum Committee Vice Chair, Ray Hardisty.

"So it is in everyone's interest to try and attend to find out what sort of treatments and

facilities commissioners are proposing.

"Consultation details will be outlined and those attending will be free to ask questions and have anything they do not know explained."

He added that the maternity issue had been one of the major topics of 2014 and what is now being put forward for Colchester, Clacton, Harwich and Tendring community services, would be of special interests to mums-to-be, grandmothers and even great grandmothers.

All meetings start at 2pm and will last for a couple of hours.

They are:

- December 1 at the Primary Care Centre, Turner Road, Colchester.
 - December 3 at the Central Church, Main Road, Dovercourt.
 - December 5 at Tendring CVS Sam's Hall in Rosemary Road, Clacton.
- This will be the final Friday Local Health Forum at Clacton.

From February next year the bi-monthly event moves to Tuesday afternoons at the same venue. We look forward to seeing you there.

Forum aims to highlight rural concerns

PATIENTS living at Mistley and Weeley could lose their GP practice dispensing services under a review of current 'rural' areas being carried out by the Essex team from NHS England.

The survey, part of a national update on what pharmacies are serving where, is now in its latter stages.

Regulations say that for GP dispensers to serve a locality it must be rural in character and individual patients must live 1.6 kilometres or more from the surgery.

Mistley patients currently go to Riverside Health Centre, Manningtree, and Weeley patients to Thorpe Le Soken surgery.

While they await the final decision of the Essex Pharmaceutical Services Regulations Committee, the Forum has pointed out that any changes will be directly opposite to the current Government's 'locality' policies.

Can you help over equipment aids?

THE North East Essex Health Forum Committee is gathering information about the Essex Equipment Service.

It provides aids and devices in the home for patients after a stay in hospital to enable them to return home.

This equipment ranges from hoists to toilet seats according to the needs of the individual and helps to ensure that patients feel safe in their own home allowing them to be more independent.

The Forum would like to know if you, or anyone else that you are in contact with, has any comments about your experiences of this service.

These can be either good or bad in respect of equipment being delivered or returned, the ease of contacting the service and the ability to speak to any-



-one who could assist in achieving a resolution of the problem and/or give advice.

This appeal has already been spread around voluntary organisations and individuals subscribing to the Tendring CVS newsletter.

It is also due to go out on the Healthwatch Essex Voices network.

If you have any comments please email them to Health Forum Engagement Officer Paula martin on paula.martin4@nhs.uk or telephone her on 01206 286766.

Information can be treated anonymously.



Join the Health Forum to give your views

VOLUNTEERS interested in shaping their local health services are the lifeblood of the North Essex Health Forum.

People who want to do something meaningful and make change happen.

Members have the chance to get involved at different levels according to what interests they have and what time they can commit.

Sometimes the Clinical Commissioning Group may ask for your views on a specific matter.

At others, the Health Forum Committee, which is elected by Health Forum members, will seek opinions and comments.

You will be sent information and newsletters to keep you in touch with what is happening and your thoughts will be sought on service changes in the early stages of planning.

You can take part in the Patient Participation Group at your local surgery and attend regular public forums in Colchester, Clacton and Harwich if you want.

All members also get the chance to apply to take part in workshop sessions, focus teams and review teams aiming to ensure that patients receive the best possible service.

Who can become a member of the Health Forum?

POTENTIAL members must be one or more of the following within North East Essex:

A registered patient at a GP practice
Live or work here

Be a volunteer, or representative from a voluntary organisation, operating here.

Use any services commissioned by the North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group.

Be a carer or guardian of someone using a service commissioned by the North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group.

Even if you do not meet any of the criteria you

will be welcome to join as a non-voting member.

That means you will still receive information and newsletters and be able to give your opinions when asked.

To join simply surf to www.neeccg.org.uk and click on the button marked Join The Health Forum on almost any page.

Or ring free phone **0800 881 5115** or write to:
The Health Forum Committee, Freepost Plus RTBS-YYXS-BATR, Primary Care Centre, Turner Road, Colchester, CO4 5JR.

We look forward to working with you!

Current members of the Health Forum Committee

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Clinical Commissioning Group committee and work stream representatives: Ted Beckwith, Vicky Chamberlain, Don Manhire, Robin Rennie and Mark Tatham



Befriend the North East Essex Health Forum on Facebook at NEEssex Health Forum and receive newflashes and information relevant to public, patient and carer engagement



Round-up of the latest news and announcements about GP practices

Practice capacity research

THE Health Secretary has commissioned Health Education England to conduct an area by area examination of general practice capacity. Jeremy Hunt made the announcement at the Royal College of GPs (RCGP) annual conference.

He said the study, due to report at the middle of next year, would "provide knowledge precisely area by area" about where there was insufficient capacity.

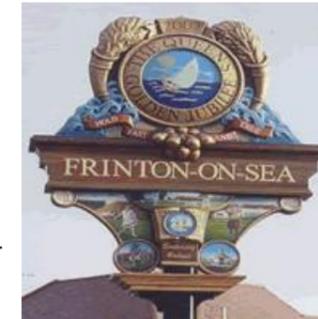
This comes as the RCGP warned that up to 543 GP practices in England could be forced to close within the next year because of a deepening crisis in GP recruitment and retention, which is leaving many practices unable to replace family doctors who are retiring from the profession.

New figures released by the RCGP show that over 90% of the GPs working in these practices are now aged over 60.

Trust report highlights three areas

LATEST report from the Nuffield Trust on general practice highlights:

- last year, spending on GP services fell by 3.8%;
- patients are experiencing longer waiting times for appointments because of the pressure GPs are under;
- there is a need for GPs and hospital doctors to work together more closely;
- politicians should move away from top-down control and targets.



CARADOC Surgery at Frinton has been saved from collapse by health providers stepping in to organise a service to patients.

Anglian Community Enterprise (ACE) and GP Primary Choice and Supporting Health (Essex) Ltd have joined forces to run the practice for a year.

For months the 8,000 patients had been served by just one permanent GP and locums.

Now five locums are sharing the workload while NHS England search for a provider to take over the practice.

At the same time Steph Kettle, a practice manager from Tollgate Clinic at Stanway, has been seconded for at least a month to establish fresh admin systems that are friendlier to patients.

And Neil Churcher, the chair of the Frinton Residents Association, has also agreed to be chair

New life for troubled surgery



of the surgery's Patient Participation Group.

He commented: There is a real cause for hope and optimism here now.

"This is a great opportunity to push forward and make things better."

GPs plan to leave in 2015

PENDING departures could add to existing GP vacancies next year.

A survey by Essex CCGs, the Local Medical Committee and Health Education East of England, found 62 GPs saying they planned to leave their practices next year.

Ten are aged 30-40; five 40 to 50; 25 50 to 60 and 22 aged 60 to 70.

Of those, seven told the survey that they planned to retire.

However, figures in the GP census released earlier this

year show a higher than average number of GPs over 65 working in the county.

The local NHS England team and CCGs, including North East Essex, are working on developing, what they call, 'robust workforce succession plan to offset future GP retirements.'

NHS North East Essex CCG has the highest number of current vacancies reported by practices at 19, with 14 of these left unfilled for more than three months.

Fresh appeal to use alternatives to A&E

PEOPLE across North East Essex are being asked not to go to the Accident and Emergency department at Colchester General Hospital unless they have a serious or life threatening condition.

The number of people who visited A&E in early November led to the hospital declaring the highest level risk rating.

Several patients who visited the department have presented with minor injuries that could have been treated more appropriately and faster at an alternative NHS service.

The North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is urging the public to choose their health services wisely and to think twice before they go there.

Dr Shane Gordon, chief clinical officer at the CCG, said: "A&E should only be used for critical or life-threatening situations requiring medical atten-



Dr Shane Gordon

-tion, such as loss of consciousness, heavy blood loss, suspected broken bones, persistent chest pain, difficulty breathing, overdoses, ingestion or poisoning.

"It is vital that emergency services are free to help people with the greatest need. Patients with minor injuries which do not require a visit to A&E

(such as cuts, wounds, sprains, strains and minor burns) can also be treated at Walk in medical centres or minor injury units across north east Essex.

"This will significantly help to relieve pressure on the hospital's A&E teams and reduce waiting times for all patients." *Alternatives to A+E.*

Please consider these ways of getting treatment faster:

- Treat yourself for simple illness and minor cuts, sprains and burns.
- Keep simple painkillers and cough remedies in a safe place at home and have a first aid kit handy.
- Ask your local pharmacist for advice on minor illness. They can provide expert advice and simple treatments.
- Call 111 24 hours a day. Their specialist nurses can provide clinical assessment and advice.

Wise up for winter with the ambulance service

'BE prepared and stay safe' is the message being driven home by the region's ambulance service in its winter campaign.

The East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EEAST) has launched 'Wise Up For Winter' ... promoting various health related topics.

People can access advice at www.eastamb.nhs.uk and can help spread the health messages with friends and family who may not be online.

Points to note about using your Forum Focus



FORUM Focus is created in Microsoft Office Publisher and then turned into a PDF for easy delivery to members through e-mail.

However, readers may find that the various highlighted web address links may need to be copied and pasted into your browser instead of just clicked like many online newsletters.

To print into a magazine you will need to use A3 paper and fold the pages.

Printing onto A4 paper will give you 16 separate sheets.

Complaints system 'not fit for purpose'

THE NHS complaints system is still not fit for purpose, finds a new report from the Patients Association.

Despite numerous calls for reform, patients reveal that making a complaint can be distressing and difficult, and frequently produces little results.

A national survey of more than 1,200 patients found high levels of dissatisfaction with the complaints process; with patients frequently encountering unhelpful and defensive staff, complicated procedures to negotiate and sometimes dishonest replies.

The findings show that some patients are so daunted by the procedures or are seen as a trouble-makers by hospital staff, that they do not bring a complaint despite having



Complaining to the NHS can be a frustrating ordeal says a new report.

grounds to do so.

Complainants have told the association of the despair and high levels of anxiety, often leading to ill health, as a consequence of making a complaint.

Others pointed to a lack of dignity and respect.

The Patients Association acknowledges that some com-

plaints are well handled, but points out that too many are not.

There can be no excuses for what the Patients Association hears day in day out from patients, their families and friends, regarding their negative experiences when they make a complaint.

How patients feel about current processes

Key report findings:

- Around half of patients found the complaints process difficult to understand.
- 40% of patients found staff to be unhelpful when a complaint was raised.
- 50% of patients had concerns that the quality of care would be affected if they made a complaint.
- Nearly half of patients (47%) said the complaint was poorly handled, with 26% of these saying it was very poorly handled.
- Around two-thirds (66%)

found the complaints procedure stressful, with 36% of these saying it was very stressful.

- Under a third of people (30%) felt they were well informed about the progress of their complaint.
- Over 62% of respondents felt the process was not as quick as it should have been, with

half of those feeling it should have been a lot quicker.

- Over 55% of respondents reported they were dissatisfied with the final response they received, with the majority of these (35%) very dissatisfied.
- Over a third of patients (36%) said they did not believe they had received an honest outcome.

North East Essex
HEALTH FORUM



DO patients feel as frustrated as this survey shows when they complain in North East Essex? The Health Forum Committee will be asked to discuss ways of finding out.

Round-up of Health Forum activity on behalf of patients and the public



PROJECT team leaders and the Health Forum are still looking for volunteers to come forward to represent patients on four clinical commissioning group sub committees. To give you an idea of what is involved the role description for End of Life Care, maternity and children, is printed on this page. If you would like to apply for one of the roles ... or have queries ... please contact the Health Forum's Engagement Officer Paula Martin on paula.martin4@nhs.net

Be the voice of patient experience

PATIENT representatives are now being sought for four sub committees of the North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group board.

As well as attending relevant committee meetings and workshops, individuals would also be expected to join the Health Forum Committee and take part in training to assist their roles.

At the moment all four positions are being filled temporarily by forum committee members.

The roles involve Finance and Performance, End of Life and Children's Programmes, Transformation and Delivery Committee and Quality.

They are all key links in the working of the clinical commissioning group.

Please contact the forum ... details on page 14 ... for full role descriptions and application forms.

Get elected!

IF you do not feel that the role of a regular sub committee representative is for you but you would like to assist the forum further why not stand for election to the Health Forum Committee?

Talks are underway for elections in the spring and it would be good to see contests in all our main areas Colchester, Tendring and Harwich.

Sample role for a 'representative'

Background:

As part of the North East Essex Integrated Plan, the North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Essex County Council (ECC) are working together to look at how health and social care services can be commissioned (bought) in a different way in order to improve quality, patient experience and value for money.

As part of that work, we are looking for representation on the End of Life, Children and Maternity Services Project Group.

Purpose:

Each project group will:-

- Review commissioning strategy development
- Recommend commissioning strategies for end of life, children and maternity care to the Programme Board and CCG Board for approval
- Evaluate current services
- Consider how health and social care can be joined up
- Design high level outcomes and performance indicators
- Develop service specifications, which describe the scope of the service and desired outcomes
- Report on progress to the CCG Programme Board

Role of Public Member:

- Ensuring patients and the local community are properly involved in commissioning integrated care

- Ensuring that different communities have their say on commissioning plans and business cases
- Ensuring that the project group are aware of patient and carer views

Person specification:

- Strong communication and interpersonal skills
- Experience of working with a wide group of people/ audiences
- Experience of how health and/or social care services work
- Ability to think strategically
- Able to represent the views of different groups in a balanced and impartial way
- Willing to be open-minded and innovative

Length of Project:

Ongoing

Frequency of Meetings:

Monthly, supported by ad-hoc reviews, as deemed necessary, to address urgent issues that threaten progress and/or quality and patient safety.

Remuneration:

Mileage allowance.



CHUFT medical director steps down



Dr Sean MacDonnell

DR Sean MacDonnell is to stand down as the Trust's Medical Director and return to full-time practice as a consultant anaesthetist at Colchester General Hospital.

He will stay on to oversee the retrospective review of cancer services which is due to be completed next month.

Dr MacDonnell has clinical sessions planned from January but will continue as Medical Director until his successor has been appointed and for a handover period.

When he took up the Medical Director post 31 October 2011, he divided his time equally between that role and as a consult-

-ant anaesthetist.

However, for the past 12 months or so, following the CQC cancer report, he has worked full-time in the Medical Director role.

Chief Executive Dr Lucy Moore said: "I would like to take this early opportunity to put on the record my gratitude for the huge amount of support Sean has given me personally since I came into post six months ago.

"I also know from talking to colleagues both in and outside the Trust that he is quite rightly held in the highest esteem for his professionalism, commitment and, his resilience."

Dementia Friendly Cabinet

ALL Cabinet ministers are going to join the Prime Minister David Cameron in becoming Dementia Friends.

Alzheimer's Society's Dementia Friends programme is the biggest ever initiative to change people's perceptions of dementia.

It aims to transform the way the nation thinks, talks and acts when it comes to dementia.

Jeremy Hughes, Chief Executive of Alzheimer's Society, said:

"It is excellent leadership that all the Cabinet will be joining David Cameron, Nick Clegg and Jeremy Hunt in becoming Dementia Friends.

"They join Ed Milliband and many other Parliamentarians, as well as hundreds of thousands of people nationwide, who are already Dementia Friends.

"Alzheimer's Society's Dementia Friends programme is the biggest ever initiative to change people's perceptions of the condition."

£800,000 loss speeds up care company review

CARE firm jobs are at risk as a loss-making Essex County Council-owned firm struggles to get into profit.

Essex Cares, which was set up by the council in 2009, made a pre-tax loss of more than £800,000 last year.

Essex County Council is the sole shareholder of Essex Cares, a local authority trading company, which is allowed to make a profit out of providing services to its clients.

When it was established it was the first such firm to be set up in the UK, and provides support for elderly and disabled people at home and in activity centres.

Although it made a pre-tax profit in each of the financial years up to 2012-13, the firm made a loss 2013-14 financial year.



Managers are proposing reducing the management and administration workforce by the equivalent of 24 full time posts.

Essex Cares said in a statement: "The increasing demand for our services now and in the future means we need to be an organisation that is responsive to customers changing needs.

"The economy too is in a different place from when we set up business five years ago and we need to be a more profitable and sustainable business.

"In recent months we have spoken and listened to our employees about how they see the future."



PUDSEY Bear took part in a North Essex Partnership University Foundation Trust work stream on Children In Need Day smuggled in a pocket. But his host had to pay a ransom to get him out again!

Crisis care is under spotlight

ESSEX is currently being assessed on how it deals with people going through a mental health crisis.

Our county is one of 15 areas of the country selected by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to take part in its four-month review.

The inspection is focusing on people's experiences of mental health crisis care provided within an area covered by a single local authority.

The commission is interested in how organisations within the local health economy work together to provide quality, safe and responsive services to people in crisis.

Essex and the other 14 areas have been selected on the basis of a national data review but have also taken demographic and regional variation into account.

The findings will be used to inform a national report into crisis care.

£120m boost to improve services

NHS England is to invest a further £120million over the next two years to improve mental health services.

New standards to be introduced from 2015/16 will be: 75% of people referred for talking therapies for treatment of common mental health problems, will start their treatment within six weeks and 95% will start within 18 weeks.

At least 50% of people going through their first episode of psychosis will get NICE-approved help within two weeks of being referred.

Currently, most people who are referred for treatment for a physical health problem can

expect to start their care within six weeks, with an absolute maximum wait of 18 weeks.

The new plans mean mental health patients referred for talking therapies will be able to expect the same standards.

Targeted investment will also help people in crisis to get effective support in more acute hospitals.

• Meanwhile mental health charity Mind is calling on the next Government to introduce a national strategy for prevention to ensure local authorities and public health teams use their budgets to prevent mental health problems developing and people becoming unwell.

Trust gains special quality award

NORTH Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation NHS Trust (NEP) has become one of the first Trusts in England to be awarded the prestigious Practice Development Unit (PDU) accreditation for the whole organisation from Bournemouth University.

The award follows an 18 month programme which culminated in a two day assessment by a panel of experts from the university last month, during which time they visited teams

from across the Trust speaking to staff and service users and auditing policies and procedures.

Andrew Geldard, Chief Executive of the Trust said: "This is a fantastic achievement by all of our staff.

"To achieve PDU accreditation we had to be assessed against nine challenging criteria, demonstrate a clear patient focus, show good evidence based practice and have support from an academic centre."



We'll ensure you can access documents

READERS who are not on the internet, or are unable to get access to a computer, can still receive the documents mentioned in Forum Focus.

Simply, ring the Health Forum on FREEPHONE 0800 811 5115, say which document you want and give your address.

We will obtain a copy and mail it to you.

£2m pilots for new home share scheme

LLOYDS BANK FOUNDATION

England & Wales



SharedLivesPlus
THE UK NETWORK FOR SMALL COMMUNITY SERVICES



A NATIONAL bank and charities are joining forces in a £1 million trial of a new scheme aimed at easing housing costs to our ageing population

Homeshare is an initiative which brings together older people who need support to stay in their homes with younger people who are provided with an affordable place to live in return for companionship and low level practical support.

Lloyds Bank Foundation is developing this initiative with the Big Lottery Fund which has also allocated £1m to support the pilot phase of the programme.

It will involve a unique range of partners including Age UK, working with householders, the Foyer Federation, working with homesharers, and Shared Lives Plus who has produced a free best practice guide to es-

-tablishing and running a good homeshare scheme.

In the scheme, 'householders', such as older people who have homes but need support to live independently, are matched with 'homesharers', who have a housing need but can also provide practical support, such as help with basic tasks around the house and garden, cooking, shopping and other errands.

Homeshare does not include the provision of personal care but can allow people to stay in their own homes for longer whilst reducing loneliness and isolation through conversation and companionship.

Both parties participating in the scheme are given guidance

and support throughout the arrangement to help deal with any concerns that may arise.

In return, each pays a fee to cover the costs of the scheme operation and to allow for more people to be recruited and matches established.

The investment from Lloyds Bank Foundation and the Big Lottery Fund will establish a national partnership programme and support a number of pilot Homeshare schemes throughout the next two years.

For more information on the Homeshare programme, including how you can get involved please contact:

home-share@lloydsbankfoundation.org.uk

Police want to hear community concerns

THE Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex will be holding a district meeting in Tendring on Thursday December 18 at the Frinton Community Association, Soken House, Triangle Shopping Centre, Frinton,

There will be surgeries between 4pm and 5:30pm with the meeting beginning at 6pm.

The meeting is aimed at specifically addressing issues that the community are facing.

The Police and Crime Commissioner will attend along with

the local district commander and the local community safety partnership manager.

Together, they will hear the concerns of the community, and discuss what is, and possibly could, be done to meet them

Health and Wellbeing activity with community and voluntary groups

Volunteers invited to free event on better caring

A joint CVS/ECROYS/In Control learning event in Cambridge on December 10 will explore how volunteers and volunteer involving organisations can contribute to and help deliver integrated, person centred care.

The event, which will focus on the ambitions of the Integrated Personalised Commissioning programme announced by NHS England in August 2014, will be of interest to voluntary sector organisations as well as commissioners and providers in health and social care.

It will feature input from clinical commissioning groups, NHS England, and people who have experience of using personal health budgets.

Run in partnership between CVS, ECORYS and In Control and with the support of NHS England, Public Health England and Regional Voices, the learning event will also provide participants with the opportunity to contribute to the development of guidance on how the volunteer involving sector can help ensure that people with health and care needs are able to access and make most effective use of the resources and support, including personal health budgets, to shape the care that is meaningful to their lives.

The event is free to attend and places can be booked at www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/realising-person-centred-care-through-volunteering-cambridge-tickets-13698353143 before the deadline of December 3.



US giving day now in the UK

AN international movement asking people to give their time, money or voice to charity on one day is gathering support from health charities around the UK.

More than 30 health organisations have now pledged to support the campaign in some way to help bolster donations and awareness for the health sector including Cancer Research UK, B-EAT, Alcohol Concern and Marie Curie Cancer Care.

#GivingTuesday falls on December 2 this year, directly after the big shopping days Black Friday and Cyber Monday and asks people and organisations to do one simple charitable act on the day in the run up to Christmas.

While Black Friday and Cyber Monday are good for the economy and good for getting deals, #GivingTuesday is a chance to give something back.

Partner organisations – whether charities or businesses – are encouraged to take the campaign and do something of



their own with it.

The campaign was launched in the United States in 2012.

The movement in the UK is being led by the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), working closely with software provider Blackbaud.

There are now over 500 partners committed to the campaign including RBS, Breast Cancer Care, BT and the NSPCC with more still to be announced.

It has its own web site in this country listing all the supporting charities. There are also lists of planned events and ideas on how to get involved. Surf to: <http://www.givingtuesday.org.uk/>

Catching up on what is happening with mental health in North Essex

Mental health Conference advice for employers

MORE than 100 local employers, service users, carers and commissioners attended the 'Mental Health Works' conference on mental health and employment organised by the North Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust.

The keynote speaker was Dame Carol Black, the Government's Adviser on work and health who outlined the 'business case' for employers to look after the mental health of their workforce and what they can do to help.

She highlighted the importance of communicating and listening to and valuing staff and said employers should have systems in place where employees who are experiencing mental illness can be helped quickly.

There were workshops covering topics such as keeping mentally healthy at work, challenging stigma and discrimination, helping people stay in employment and good practice in gaining employment after illness.

Can you help?

YOUR support is needed if you live with a personality disorder or care for someone who does.

For commissioners are currently developing a North Essex Personality Disorder Strategy.

They would like you to attend a special session, in Witham, on the afternoon of December 11, to look at issues.

Please contact Joanne Reay on 01376 531017 for more details and to offer your help.



TV Soaps recently portraying mental health issues.

TV soap plots more accurate

MENTAL health depictions in TV soaps and drama are becoming more authentic and prompt people to seek support according to the new report 'Making a drama out of a crisis'.

The report comes as TV's longest running soap takes on a mental health storyline, with Coronation Street's Steve McDonald being diagnosed with depression.

Charity Time To Change found that mental health is being covered more frequently compared to a previous study in 2010 with storylines in soaps such as EastEnders, Hollyoaks and Home and Away.

In addition, the report found that more storylines have attempted to depict mental health problems more accurately and fewer characters with a mental illness are portrayed as violent.

The researchers observed the growth of a relatively new type of narrative, focusing on the damaging stigma a character with a mental health problem faces and the harmful effects of exclusion.

However, they also found that



Coronation Street's Steve McDonald set for storyline on depression.

there are still some overly simplistic portrayals and misinformation about medication.

The report also includes findings about the impact that mental health storylines have on wider public debate revealing encouraging results, including:

- 54% of people say that seeing a well-known character on screen has improved their understanding of mental health problems.
- 48% said it helped to change their opinion about the kind of people who can develop these problems.
- 31% said it actively inspired them to start a conversation about the storyline.

HEALTHWATCH Essex is meeting the challenge establishing its credibility in the local health leader article in the national Health Services its weight. This is his published response.

Watchdog bites back at national criticism that fledgling Healthwatch not punching its weight

Our first goal was to establish the credibility of Healthwatch Essex with health and social care partners

We set our task to be an independent voice for the people of the county, helping to shape and improve social care.

But this organisational vision reflects a much loftier long term aim – no less than to help change the culture and practice of engagement and involvement in the NHS and social care.

This is no mean feat and will take time. For too long, patient experience has been the Cinderella of the trio that makes up quality; her sisters – clinical efficacy and patient safety – have always received more attention.

But listening to patient and service user experiences, and involving this in key decisions, is a path all our services need to follow if the quality of health and care is to improve in these challenging times.

Establishing credibility

So how are we going about this in Essex? Our first goal was to establish the credibility of Healthwatch Essex with health and social care partners. 'Our aim is that our reports are robust enough not to be easily ignored or dismissed'

A negative legacy from our immediate predecessor organisation meant that we were ini-



Healthwatch Essex Chief Executive Tom Nutt

-tially met with scepticism. But since then, we have worked hard to demonstrate that we are doing things differently.

Our key message has been that voice and lived experience matter. But more than that, we argue that this has to be seen as part of the solution to the many challenges facing the health and care system, and not part of the problem.

This means engaging the right people, at the right time, using the right method.

And for our part? It means, for example, that Healthwatch Essex volunteers go through a rigorous appointment process, as well as a bespoke training programme.

Their role is to gather and represent the voice and lived experience of the people of Essex, and as our 'eyes and ears',

must be suitable for this role.

Alongside this, we run a programme of rigorous social research, carrying out studies into specific topics that have been brought to our attention by the public or our statutory partners.

Our aim is that our reports and recommendations are firmly rooted in good quality evidence – and that they're robust enough not to be easily ignored or dismissed.

Supporting statutory partners

Spending time at the outset to make sure that our role and purpose is well understood has already meant we are making a difference.

'We've supported local CCGs and acute trusts to adapt their patient engagement arrangements to provide meaningful strategic insight'

for the organisation to make a difference by economy, says chief executive Tom Nutt. A recent Journal (HSJ) challenged Healthwatch to punch

When, in autumn 2013, cancer services at Colchester University Foundation Trust came under scrutiny over the quality of care, we were invited to work with the NHS to make sure that patient experience was at the heart of their response.

We joined their incident management team, and have worked alongside the CCG, NHS England and the trust to conduct our own (independent) study of people's experiences of cancer services in Colchester.

The results of our study will feed into the trust's action plan. Dr Shane Gordon, chief officer for North East Essex CCG, has recognised our support:

Throughout our review of cancer services, Healthwatch Essex has been with us every step of the way, ensuring patient experience is at the heart of our decision making."

Transforming patient engagement

We believe an important part of our role is to support our partners within the NHS and social care to engage and involve patients, service users and carers effectively in their decision making.

Early investment of time is the reason why we have begun to be accepted as a credible partner in Essex'

We've supported several of our local CCGs and acute



Young people featured on a Healthwatch Essex opinions video.

trusts to adapt their patient engagement arrangements to make sure they provide meaningful strategic insight and timely, relevant feedback that accurately reflects the voice and lived experience of their local community.

Our input has seen results in West Essex.

As Irene McLean, assistant director of West Essex CCG, says: "Healthwatch Essex has provided strategic, tactical and practical insight that has been invaluable in transforming our citizen engagement arrangements.

"As a result, local people now have more opportunities to be part of our decision making."

More widely, Healthwatch Essex jointly convenes a regular forum of all NHS patient experience teams, alongside the local

area team of NHS England.

Through this, patient experience representatives from both commissioners and providers regularly come together and share examples of best practice.

The aim is to raise the quality of patient and service-user engagement across the county.

Credible partner

We believe that this early investment of time and resource is the reason why we have begun to be accepted as an equal and credible partner in Essex, in what is a very complicated health and social care landscape.

It's this credibility that allows us to have the impact and influence that is essential for us to be an independent and effective voice for the people of Essex.