

15 April 2010

Councillor Keith Chapman
Chairman
Policy & Resources Select Committee
Hampshire County Council
c/o Scrutiny Team
Elizabeth II Court South
The Castle
Winchester
SO23 8UJ

Dear Councillor Chapman

REVIEW OF WINTER RESILIENCE

Thank you for your letter dated 22 February 2010 regarding the severe weather and the issues that NHS Hampshire faced. In answer to your questions;

1. What impact did the recent weather have on services provided by NHS Hampshire?

The key impacts were:

- Hampshire Community Health Care (HCHC) and their ability to reach patients in the affected communities and to report for duty at their usual base
- Physical access to GP Surgeries
- Community hospitals not on the gritting run making hospital access and discharge more difficult

2. What information was provided to the public about how to access your service during the winter weather and in what format?

- Press releases were issued on a daily basis with messages about staying safe and which service to use if treatment/advice was needed.
- These added to our website as they were issued and each one appeared as a main news story on the home page in turn during the adverse weather (<http://www.hampshire.nhs.uk/news/health-issues/0/0/3>).
- These press releases were shared with our provider Trusts who used the key messages in their media work.

3. Looking at the period 1 December 2009 – 31st January 2010, what aspects of your service delivery worked well for NHS Hampshire?

- Community patients are prioritised according to need and visits are carried out on this basis
- A system of supporting patients and families with telephone calls was also used
- Planning for swine flu and the problems of reduced numbers of staff assisted in the response
- Daily system resilience teleconferences across the whole health system including PCTs, Acute Hospitals, Community services, Mental Health Services and Local Authority Adult Services representatives
- HCHC established an emergency team that met twice daily
- A central staff contact number so that staff unable to reach their normal place of work could be redeployed
- The commitment of staff to use innovative solutions

4. Have you made changes (or do you intend to make changes) to the way you plan for severe weather as a result of this experience, if so how?

- NHS Hampshire attended the Local Resilience Forum multi-agency debrief and are awaiting the report
- The location of key health sites have been passed to Hampshire County Council Highways project team looking at gritting routes

5. Reflecting back on the period in question what would be your 3 priorities for action and how could these be implemented?

- Business continuity plans will be reviewed to take account of access problems
- Implement recommendations from the LRF debrief report
- Access to 4x4 vehicles

6. Please provide an analysis of the complaints, comments and feedback NHS Hampshire received from the public between the 1st December and 31st January 2010, identifying the key issues raised.

- Communications team did not receive any comments from the public
- One complaint was made from a person taken ill whilst staying with a friend during the bad weather and the local Practice couldn't give them an appointment so they had to drive to their own GP 14 miles away.

Please note that this response is from NHS Hampshire and does not take a full account of the impact across the whole of the NHS.

I note that it is your intention to hold a select committee style session in June involving key witnesses.

Thank you for giving NHS Hampshire the opportunity to formally feed into the process.

Yours sincerely



D M Fleming (Mrs)
Chief Executive
NHS Hampshire