

**Derby City Council – Overview And Scrutiny Committee**  
**Social care & Health Commission**  
**20<sup>th</sup> September 2004**

# ITEM 7

## **Changes to Out-Of-Hours GP Medical Care**

### Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to inform committee members of the changes to Out-Of -Hours (OOH) GP medical care, which will take place as a result of the new GP contract and the Change of Responsibility for organising this care.

### Background

GP's have traditionally been responsible for the care of their patients for a 24hour period. Most have discharged this responsibility to Out-of-Hours co-operatives formed by groups of GP's. In Derby this service has been provided by Derby Medical Services (DMS), which covers all of the Derby city GP practices currently.

The new GP contract means that GP's will no longer be responsible for organising this care and the responsibility will be handed to the Primary Care Trusts (PCTs). The Derby City PCTs have been working with DMS to continue to use their service and expertise in the future and are planning to take over the OOH care responsibility from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2004 ahead of the Government target of the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2004. Planning for OOH services has taken place across Southern Derbyshire jointly and DMS have recently secured the contracts with the other Southern Derbyshire PCTs to provide OOH services to the whole area.

### GP provision

Although GP's will hand over responsibility for organising Out-Of-Hours care this does not however mean that they will not continue to work for Derby Medical Services in the future. GP's have the option to continue to undertake sessions of work for DMS at new enhanced rates of remuneration and consistently in surveys in excess of 50% have indicated that they will continue to work sessions in OOH work. DMS have taken steps to address the retention of GPs at an early stage by establishment of a new structure and rota and engagement of a number of salaried GPs specifically to work in OOH care. Overall both DMS and the PCTs are confident that the rota is staffed adequately and robustly. This resource level will be extended and strengthened by the development of a wider skill mix of health professionals to deliver the service in the future.

### Service Provision (patients perspective)

This process is exactly the same as the current process and there will be no perceptible difference to patients in the service delivery from October 2004.

A patient making an OOH call to their GP surgery will be either automatically redirected or given a number for Derby Medical Services. As now NHS Direct will initially handle the call and those who condition dictates will be connected to a Derby Medical Services Doctor who will decide with the patient, the next course of action.

### Future service provision

The PCT are currently developing other forms of Health Professional to work alongside GP in this service in the future and are currently training Emergency Care Practitioners who are expected to be in practice from April 2005. This skill mixing will be similar to the use of other health professionals such as Nurse Practitioners in hours. Further details on this change to service will be communicated to future committees.

### Conclusions

Members can be assured that the PCT has a robust plan in conjunction with Derby Medical Services to continue to provide safe, responsive and effective medical cover to the population of Derby and its' surrounding suburbs, outside of normal surgery hours.

Andy Magee  
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18<sup>th</sup> August 2004