

# Argyll & Bute Community Health Partnership

Health Check - October 2011



## Introduction from Derek Leslie, General Manager



I would like to welcome you to the first edition of the Argyll & Bute 'Health Check' - our Community Health Partnership (CHP) Newsletter. This builds on the recent distribution of NHS Highland's newspaper 'Health Check' and at the same time provides more details of what is happening locally.

In Argyll and Bute we are changing the way some of our health services are delivered so that we can focus on maintaining people's health, prevent hospital admissions, fund new procedures/equipment as well as tackling issues such as health inequalities and the rising elderly population. This is being achieved through the implementation of a Better Health Better Care Better Value plan in which our services are being redesigned to meet these and other challenges while at the same time ensuring that services remain safe and sustainable.

The CHP is also facing financial challenges and it is therefore essential that we operate as efficiently and effectively as possible. We will continue to focus on removing wasteful practices, reducing overhead costs and making better use of our buildings. The changes we are making may result in new ways of working but will not be detrimental to patient care.

I also want to emphasise that we are fully committed to working with patients, communities and staff in an open and constructive manner. I am always keen to receive your comments and you can find contact details, including a direct email for myself and the CHP Chairman, at the bottom of page 2.

### New Chemotherapy Service

From September 2011 staff at Mid Argyll Community Hospital in Lochgilphead are providing a range of day case chemotherapy and supportive therapies. These services have been developed through close working with the Beatson.

Delivering these treatments locally fits in with NHS Highland's aim of providing care closer to home wherever possible and means patients will no longer have to make the return journey to Glasgow.



### Mental Health Modernisation

The Scottish Government has confirmed to NHS Highland that they are fully committed to supporting the investment to modernise and redesign mental health services in Argyll and Bute. This will result in a significantly increased community mental health service with a new inpatient facility in Lochgilphead.

This is good news for our communities as it will allow the CHP to deliver wide ranging enhanced services locally such as additional occupational therapists, mental health workers and clinical psychologists.

Overall, our objective is to promote mental wellbeing and prevent mental ill health. Where people do become unwell we are designing the services to promote independence and recovery.

### Infection Control is a Top Priority

Controlling the level of healthcare associated infections in Argyll and Bute remains one of our top priorities and good hand hygiene is the single most important factor in reducing and preventing avoidable illnesses such as MRSA.

Not only can an infection put our most vulnerable patients at risk (the elderly, frail or very unwell) and slow down their recovery, it also means health service resources such as beds and staff are tied up with something that could possibly have been initially prevented.

We have been working very hard to tackle the level of infections and our rates are among the lowest in Scotland but more needs to be done.

### Breastfeeding Peer Volunteers

More babies are being breastfed in Argyll and Bute which provides lasting benefits for the mental and physical health of babies and mothers. Support is also available in the CHP thanks to the training of peer volunteers who share their experience and knowledge around the practical aspects of breastfeeding as well as providing support and information.

The CHP has passed Stage 2 of the UNICEF Baby Friendly initiative. This means NHS staff have undergone a training programme to better equip them in the promotion of breastfeeding and teaching mothers breastfeeding skills.

## Spending Less Time in Hospital is Good for Everyone

Surgical techniques, technology and follow up care are continuing to improve and this means less pain, lower risk of complications and quicker recovery for our patients. We also have more and more planned surgery carried out on a day case basis. In addition, there has been significant change in how we reduce the number of patients that are admitted to hospital as emergencies and we have achieved this partly through the creation and management of anticipatory care plans.

There is also ongoing work to build on the range of services that are available in the community so that more patients can be supported at home rather than in hospital. Examples include developments in technology such as 'homepods' which benefit patients through supporting the monitoring of individuals with respiratory and other diseases to avoid them being admitted to hospital as an emergency.

Because of these and other developments the way hospitals and hospital beds are used has changed. In the period 1986 to 2011 the time people spend in hospital in Argyll and Bute reduced from an average of 35 days to 6 days and this has allowed the number of beds to reduce from 922 in 1986 to 240 in 2011. Over the same period hospital waiting times for an outpatient appointment or inpatient procedure have dropped from years to weeks, waits in emergency departments are a maximum of four hours and life expectancy has gone up by five years.

### Investing in Volunteers Award

NHS Highland recently received accreditation in the Investing in Volunteers award. The CHP invited volunteers from across Argyll and Bute to a ceremony in

Lochgilthead where their hard work was acknowledged by Bill Brackenridge, Chair of the CHP, and Glenn Heritage from Argyll Voluntary



Action who is also a CHP Committee member.

### How to Get Involved

Members of the public who would like to have an opportunity to influence the planning and delivery of local health services are encouraged to join the Argyll and Bute Public Partnership Forum. This Forum is made up of patients, community groups, voluntary organisations and individual members of the public and you can participate as much or as little as you want.

If you would like to find out more about what is happening with the Forum in your area or other ways to get involved then please get in touch with Caroline Champion, Planning & Public Involvement Manager on 01546 605680 or email [caroline.champion@nhs.net](mailto:caroline.champion@nhs.net)

#### Your Comments are Welcome

If you have any comments or would like a copy of our newsletter in a different format please contact:

David Ritchie, Communications Manager

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or

CHP General Manager - [derek.leslie@nhs.net](mailto:derek.leslie@nhs.net)

CHP Chairman - [billbrackenridge@nhs.net](mailto:billbrackenridge@nhs.net)

### Cowal Palliative Care Services

In January 2011 a Palliative Care Implementation Group (PCIG), chaired by an independent public member, was formed to help review palliative care services in Cowal. During the spring it identified an initial list of ten options which after public engagement was reduced to a short list of six at the end of May.

In the summer a formal options appraisal process was carried out to discuss and review these six options and the PCIG at its meeting on 27th September 2011 identified a preferred service option and made a recommendation to NHS Highland.

This recommendation outlined that Ward 1 in Cowal Community Hospital would be designated as the inpatient palliative care/rehabilitation ward (4 beds for inpatient palliative care), the Hospice Unit would be a rest area for relatives/carers, Ward 2 would be the acute/admissions ward, there would be 19 inpatient beds in the hospital and that a single integrated nursing team should be established.

The recommendation has been endorsed by the Cowal Project Board, the CHP Core Management Team and will be considered by the CHP Committee on 26th October 2011.

### Good News for Islay and Jura

Islay GPs, Dr Jean Knowles and Dr Grace Gibson, were recently successful in their joint applications to provide GP services in Bowmore on Islay and the Jura Practice. This change, which came into effect on 1st October, will see GPs based within each Practice and supporting each other with cross cover for annual leave/study leave ensuring continuity of care.

This is good news all round. Patients will have increased choice, the need for locums will be reduced and professional peer support will be enhanced.