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Statement following the publication of the review by the Independent Reconfiguration Panel (IRP)

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Statement following the publication of the review by the Independent Reconfiguration Panel (IRP)

Posted on Friday 24th November 2017

Stephen Childs, chief executive NHS North Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Group, said:

"We are very grateful to the Independent Reconfiguration Panel (IRP) for the careful consideration they have given this issue.

"We have always been very clear that we are wholly committed to delivering Option 1 – which includes consultant-led maternity services at the West Cumberland Hospital, if they are safe and sustainable. This review endorses the work we are doing to secure that.

"We understand there may be some disappointment in the community with this decision, but we would absolutely urge everyone who cares about their community to work with us to make services at West Cumberland Hospital a sustainable success.

"Our commitment to co-produce future services is already bringing together members of the community, NHS and care staff, as well as health and social care leaders. By working together positively we believe we can meet the many challenges ahead, the greatest of which remains the recruitment of medical and nursing professionals.

"We heard very clearly through the consultation that the NHS does not have all the answers, and we are convinced that the only way to secure these services in west Cumbria for the future is by working positively and constructively together."

The full text of the letter from the IRP, which is reviewed by the Secretary of State before publication, can be found at the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/irp-cumbria-initial-assessment>

More information about the co-production work can be found here: www.northcumbriaccg.nhs.uk/ournhs

The next meeting of the Working Together Steering Group is on Wednesday December 6th at 6pm at Energus, Lillyhall, Workington.

The full detail of the decisions made on 8 March 2017 can be found here:

<http://www.northcumbriaccg.nhs.uk/about-us/how-we-make-decisions/Governing-Body-Meetings/2017/2017-8-march/wne-cumbria-public-consultation-decision-making-report.pdf>

Notes for editors:

What is co-production?

Co-production means 'working together' bringing together the energy and ideas of a wide range of people - from the community, the Third Sector and local authorities as well as frontline NHS staff and health and care system leaders - to tackle some of the problems which are undermining services.

Why are maternity services thought to be potentially unsustainable in west Cumbria?

There is a national shortage of some of the specialisms we need and we are struggling to recruit – particularly

What does the letter from the IRP say?

The full text can be found at the [link above](#).

The panel recommends that **this referral is not suitable for full review because further local action by the NHS with the HSC can address the issues raised**. Views from the panel include:

- The work that has been done and achieved in the two years leading up to this referral has many commendable features.
- It recognises the strength of the public's feelings about their health services, particularly in west Cumbria and with regard to the West Cumberland Hospital and supports the approach to implementation through co-production, whilst cautioning the NHS to be realistic about, and keep under review, what is involved and the timescales needed.
- The Panel views the establishing of the Independent Review Group (IRG) as fundamental to the implementation process for maternity and paediatric services. The panel considered the twelve month timeframe to test Option 1 potentially unrealistic and unhelpful if taken literally as the deadline for a final decision. The intention must be to do everything possible to implement Option 1 and make it work. Its safety and viability will be monitored and, in line with its terms of reference, the IRG will provide objective assessment of progress, risks and sustainability, whether that is before, at or after twelve months.
- Moving to Option 2, or even Option 3 (as set out in the CCG's decision) does not justify setting an expectation of public consultation, unless there is something new to consider. If that happens, it is something the NHS and Health Scrutiny Committee should work through.
- All parties should be open, realistic and committed to Option 1 with maximum effort invested in the co-production of the workforce solutions.

Posted on Friday 24th November 2017



Latest news

- **Community Stroke Prevention event in Whitehaven on 14 June**

Monday 10th June 2019

- **Next Governing Body Meeting to take place on Wednesday 5 June 2019**

Wednesday 29th May 2019