



# The Case for Change



Shaping a  
healthier  
future





#### NHS North West London boroughs:

Brent

City of Westminster

Ealing

Hammersmith & Fulham

Harrow

Hillingdon

Hounslow

Kensington & Chelsea

NHS North West London plans, buys and oversees the delivery of healthcare for nearly two million residents in eight boroughs. Over the next few months we will be working with other NHS bodies, local councils, patient groups and others to explain why and how our local NHS needs to change.

In June 2012 we intend to launch a major public consultation on the plans we develop and the choices that need to be made. The consultation will be led by senior family doctors on behalf of all the patients they serve. They will seek patient and public views, and offer real choices about how health services can be better delivered across North West London.

## Why do services need to change?

The NHS in North West London has many good health services, but they are under intense pressure. The population is living longer and more people have long term illnesses like heart disease, diabetes or dementia. New drugs and advances in medical technology can help people with these conditions enormously, but they mean that NHS costs are rising far faster than the funding available.

## What people tell us about their experience of the NHS

Too many people in North West London end up in hospital when they could stay at home and be treated by their GP or other community healthcare professionals. Often this happens when it is hard for patients to find the right healthcare professional. When patients are asked how easy it is to get an appointment or see their GP or other appropriate local healthcare professional, national surveys put most of North West London in the bottom 10%.

## Healthy lives

A strong NHS should help people to lead healthy lives as well as provide high quality, easy-to-find, care when they are ill. Yet still, residents in some parts of North West London die on average 17 years earlier than those in nearby areas. We need to try and reduce those differences and make high quality care available to all, at the right time and in the right place.



## Supporting independence

People with long term illnesses, or who are becoming more frail with age, want help to stay as independent as possible for as long as possible. The NHS needs to work better with local councils and their social care services to provide such support. In parts of North West London, patients, doctors and other health and care workers are co-operating to make this happen. If these successful schemes were introduced across all our boroughs, we believe we could prevent up to 10,000 people a year going into hospital unnecessarily. This would mean better care, less disruption for patients and carers, and more money for local community services.

Some GP and community services in North West London are well organised to provide a better alternative to a hospital stay, but others are not. So, currently the hospitals are under strain and not able to focus on more complicated cases where their expertise is really needed. We need to spend more money on those services that can be better provided near to people in their own communities.

## Helping hospitals do better

North West London has more hospital space per resident than in other parts of the country. Our spending on hospital care is above average, but for each £1 spent, less goes on care than it does elsewhere in England. Several hospitals in North West London are under financial pressure. Three quarters of the hospital buildings need upgrading, and the bill for that runs to hundreds of millions of pounds.



Our hospitals vary in the quality of care and the time it takes for them to see and treat patients. A recent study showed patients treated at weekends and evenings in London hospitals – when fewer senior doctors are available – stand a higher chance of dying than if they are admitted during the week. Around 130 lives could be saved in North West London every year if survival rates of those admitted during normal working hours could be achieved all the time.

In recent years the NHS has brought together London's heart attack, stroke and major trauma services onto fewer hospital sites. This has saved more lives, highlighting that not every hospital can safely do everything. Some need to be highly specialised, dealing with the most complex cases. Others can then concentrate on providing more routine care. In North West London, we need to review hospital sites and decide where services are best located, enabling the NHS to save even more lives.

## What we need to do

In short, our health needs are changing, demands on our health services are increasing, so the way we provide care must also change. Modern healthcare is expensive and we must use our money better, which means making some tough choices. Piecemeal change will not be enough to achieve this.

The NHS in North West London must:

- Support its residents to lead healthy lives and offer safe, high quality care to all
- Help patients to make informed choices about their care and help ensure they do not go into hospital unnecessarily
- Provide more specialist hospitals on fewer sites to treat patients with the most complex illnesses, with round-the-clock professional expertise on call
- Encourage co-operation between those delivering care and support – GPs, community services, hospitals, local councils and social care
- Make it easier for more patients to be treated in their community and focus future investment more in these services
- Get the best value from all NHS spending
- Improve the quality of NHS buildings to bring them up to standards set by the Care Quality Commission

## What doctors and other clinical experts say

A wealth of medical evidence shows that patients are better served where specialist care is offered by fewer hospitals and routine services are provided closer to home. Where health and care professionals work closely together, patients receive a more comprehensive and caring service.

Our local doctors who lead the NHS in North West London – your GPs – support this case for change and have made the following pledges:

“As clinical leaders in North West London, we believe that the case for making changes to how we deliver services in North West London is compelling and places a clear responsibility on us now to deliver better healthcare for our patients in years to come.

“We believe that increasing the amount of care delivered closer to the patient’s home will enable better co-ordination of that care, ensure the patient has access to the right help in the right setting and improve quality of care and value for money. We will take on that challenge. Its scale should not be underestimated, but neither should we underestimate the rewards of getting this right – better healthcare, more lives saved, more people supported and a system that is more efficient.

“As the current and future commissioners of services in North West London and the leaders of the programme to deliver this change, we have made four key commitments. These underpin our vision for how services should work in the future and though there will be difficult decisions to make, these commitments are, we think, obvious, uncontroversial aspirations for any world-class healthcare organisation.

“We would add one final pledge – to listen to our patients and staff throughout the process of change and make sure that we are always working to create a system that works, first and foremost, for them.”

*Dr Ethie Kong - Brent GP Federation CCG Chair*

*Dr Ruth O'Hare - Central London CCG Chair (covering Westminster)*

*Dr Mohini Parmar - Ealing CCG Chair*

*Dr Nicola Burbidge - Great West Commissioning Consortia Chair (covering Hounslow)*

*Dr Tim Spicer - Hammersmith & Fulham CCG Chair*

*Dr Amol Kelshiker - Harrow CCG Chair*

*Dr Ian Goodman - Hillingdon CCG Chair*

*Dr Mark Sweeney - West London CCG Chair (covering Kensington & Chelsea)*

## How to get involved

We want to hear your views and there are a number of ways you can feed into the programme.

You can call the *Shaping a healthier future* office on **0800 881 5209** or email us via **[communications@nw.london.nhs.uk](mailto:communications@nw.london.nhs.uk)**.

If you are part of a community group or organisation we would be happy to send a *Shaping a healthier future* representative along to a meeting to explain and discuss the programme.

We are particularly keen to communicate with typically hard-to-reach and under-represented groups and communities and over the coming months will be in touch about opportunities to get involved. If you want to know more please do contact us on the details above or visit our website:

**[www.northwestlondon.nhs.uk/shapingahealthierfuture](http://www.northwestlondon.nhs.uk/shapingahealthierfuture)**

