



**Consultation on the Proposed Future Configuration of Emergency  
Department Services in Belfast**

**Pro – forma for responding to the Consultation Document**

- The consultation period will run **from Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> February 2013 to Friday, 10<sup>th</sup> May 2013.**
- Comments are invited from all interested parties on the Consultation Questions listed below.
- Responses must be received no later than **5pm on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2013.**
- Before you submit your response, please read Annex A regarding the confidentiality of response to public consultation exercises in the context of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- The Consultation Paper and Equality Impact Assessment documents are available on both the BHSCT and the HSC Board website pages. An electronic web – form for the Consultation questionnaire and the Equality Impact Assessment is available on the HSC Board website at [www.hscboard.hscni.net/consult](http://www.hscboard.hscni.net/consult)
- Responses should be sent to:

Email: [EDConsultation@hscni.net](mailto:EDConsultation@hscni.net)

Written: Belfast Emergency Department  
Consultation  
HSCB  
12 – 22 Linenhall Street  
Belfast  
BT2 8BS

Telephone: 02890 960069

Text Phone: 02890 566755

(Please note Telephone and Text Phone facilities are to be used only to request a posted copy of the consultation documents or to request the documentation in an alternative format)

## A Consultation on the Future Configuration of Emergency Department Services in Belfast

### Consultation Questionnaire

1. I am responding:

- As an individual
  - As a Health and Social Care Professional
  - On behalf of an Organisation
- (please tick one option)

2. About you or your organisation:

Name:	Suzanne Wylie
Job Title:	Director of Health & Environmental Service
Organisation:	Belfast City Council - Cecil Ward Building,
Address:	
	028 90320202 – Ext:3260
Tel:	n/a
Fax:	wylies@belfastcity.gov.uk
E-mail:	

3. Do you agree that the reasons for change (Section 4 Drivers for Change) clearly show why a three – site Emergency Department service in Belfast, at the Royal Victoria, Mater and Belfast City Hospitals, cannot be maintained in its current form?

Yes I agree  No I do not agree

If not, why not?

4. Do you agree with how the criteria have been applied in the assessment of the 4 options (Section 6 Assessment of Options)?

Yes I agree  No I do not agree

If you do not agree please state your reasons below.

Are there other factors or criteria which should be used in the assessment? If so, please detail below.

5. Do you agree that the proposal for a two – site Emergency Department option, at the RVH and Mater Hospitals, supported by direct access arrangements for patients into the BCH, will deliver a safe, high quality, timely and effective service within the Belfast Emergency Department Service?

Yes I agree  No I do not agree

N/A – Belfast City Council agreed that this question would be a matter for the individual Party Groups to respond to.

**Thank you for completing this response**

### **Additional Points raised by politicians from Belfast City Council:**

Members of Belfast City Council received a presentation from representatives from the Trust. Following on from this it was agreed that the Council would submit a response to Questions 3 and 4 of the questionnaire, but that Question 5 would remain a matter for the individual Party Groups to respond to. The Members also wished to make the following points in the Council's response;-

#### **The Patient Experience**

- The changes ongoing in the Emergency Service provision are not patient-centric enough and could benefit from a "whole system" approach to joining up the "patient experience" from admission through treatment to discharge.
- The particular example of transport and transfers across and between sites (by ambulance) was referred to as not yet being patient-centric and robust enough to cope with the new proposals;
- Too many patients are still being transferred too late at night – Out of Hours service for GPs are not well enough understood and used with the result that people still tend to choose going to A&E;

#### **TYC: More community based services**

- More non emergency patients should be seen in the Health and Well Being centres rather than in A&E (in line with the TYC vision) – and more local "hubs" such as the example of the older peoples hub at Musgrave would be welcomed;
- Members highlighted the need for much more joined up approaches to out of hours GP and dental services, minor injuries treatment, etc. to discourage people from opting for A&E and also to ensure that non emergency cases don't create an A & E log jam;
- The process around admission of patients needs to be stream-lined. The existence of the GP Direct Admission unit on level 5 of the Royal was welcomed but it was felt that this service is not yet well used enough by GPs and that it should be promoted more.

#### **Inappropriate Attendance at A&E**

- The fact that most GPs still only work 9-5 was highlighted as a practice which should be urgently reviewed in light of this proposal and TYC;
- Members also queried figures on "re-admissions" and whether there was any link to the quality of service received on first admission.

#### **Other issues raised**

- Members were concerned that the number of admissions is continuing to increase and queried whether or not the data used in the development of the proposal had forecast future demand and potential for further increases and queried if the sites remaining could cope – eg. Parking, infrastructure etc in and around the Royal and the existing expanse of the site;
- With regard to the shortage of suitably qualified consultants, Members emphasised the need for adequate education, training and development as well

as appropriate incentives to attract the required level of consultants to the Belfast hospitals;

- Members also expressed concerns that waiting times were still not coming down enough

## Annex A to consultation response

### Freedom of Information Act (2000) – Confidentiality of Consultations

The HSC Board will publish an anonymised summary of responses following completion of the consultation process. Your response, and all other responses to the consultation, may be disclosed on request. The HSC Board can only refuse to disclose information in exceptional circumstances. **Before** you submit your response, please read the paragraphs below on the confidentiality of consultations and they will give you guidance on the legal position about any information given by you in response to this consultation.

The Freedom of Information Act gives the public a right of access to any information held by a public authority, namely, the HSC Board in this case. This right of access to information includes information provided in response to a consultation. The HSC Board cannot automatically consider as confidential information supplied to it in response to a consultation. However, it does have the responsibility to decide whether any information provided by you in response to this consultation, including information about your identity should be made public or be treated as confidential.

This means that information provided by you in response to the consultation is unlikely to be treated as confidential, except in very particular circumstances. The Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Freedom of Information Act provides that:

- The HSC Board should only accept information from third parties in confidence if it is necessary to obtain that information in connection with the exercise of any of the HSC Board's functions and it would not otherwise be provided
- The HSC Board should not agree to hold information received from third parties 'in confidence' which is not confidential in nature

- Acceptance by the HSC Board of confidentiality provisions must be good reasons, capable of being justified to the Information Commissioner.

For further information about confidentiality of responses please contact the Information Commissioners Office (or see web site at:

**<http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk/>**).