



News Release

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CHI reviews Hampshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust, NHS Direct Hampshire & Isle of Wight, and NHS Direct Online

The Commission for Health Improvement (CHI) will begin its assessment of the **Hampshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust, NHS Direct Hampshire & Isle of Wight and NHS Direct Online** next week. The trust provides accident and emergency and patient transport services to people in Hampshire county. The ambulance service is also the lead trust for the NHS Direct site, which provides 24 hour health information and advice to people in Hampshire and Isle of Wight, and NHS Direct Online, the website providing health information and advice to people all over England.

As part of the review, CHI would like to hear from people who would like to talk about their experiences of these services.

The assessment, known as a clinical governance review, will take 17 weeks and is part of a rolling programme that involves CHI visiting every NHS trust, health authority and local health group in England and Wales. The assessment will look at the management, provision and quality of service provided by the trust and identify best practice and areas for improvement.

Individual or small group meetings will be held on **Tuesday 6 August in Portsmouth, Wednesday 7 August in Winchester and Thursday 8 August in Southampton**. It is also possible to send comments by email or by post, or to discuss issues with a member of the review team over the phone. To arrange a confidential appointment, send comments or for more information, phone CHI on 0845 601 3012 (charged at local rate) quoting reference: Hampshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust. Send email comments to: kate.godfrey@chi.nhs.uk

The assessment will be carried out by a trained team that includes an NHS doctor, a nurse, a clinical professional such as a paramedic, a lay person, an NHS manager and a CHI manager who coordinates the process. Trust staff, local people and organisations with an interest in the NHS will be asked to comment on issues they believe are relevant to the assessment. A report will be published and made public at the end of the assessment.

CHI Chairman Dame Deirdre Hine said: “The patient’s experience of care lies at the heart of CHI’s work. We hope that taking part in a CHI review is a positive experience – one that everyone can benefit from. We want to hear from people who have used the Hampshire ambulance service and NHS Direct, as well as people who work there, so we can help the NHS to improve.”

Dr Peter Homa, Chief Executive of CHI said: “The wide variation in the quality of patient care that exists within the NHS is unacceptable. CHI is here to work with the trust to identify where clinical care can be improved. We expect patients to receive the same high standards of care wherever they live and whenever they need it.”

[ENDS]

Notes to Editors

- The routine assessment (clinical governance review) will take place at Hampshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust, NHS Direct Hampshire & Isle of Wight, and NHS Direct Online.
- CHI is an independent body set up to help the NHS monitor and improve clinical care across England and Wales
- CHI holds routine assessments (clinical governance reviews) in every NHS trust, health authority, primary care group or trust and local health group across England and Wales
- The definition of *clinical governance* is the system of steps and procedures adopted by the NHS to ensure that patients receive the highest possible quality of care. It covers how staff treats patients, the level of information provided to patients, their involvement in decision-making, the provision of up to date and well supervised services and the prevention of errors and accidents
- A routine assessment (clinical governance review) is not designed to investigate individual complaints. Other mechanisms such as the individual organisation’s complaints procedure, Community Health Councils and the Health Service Ombudsman exist to deal with such cases
- An assessment review has three stages – preparation, visit and report and takes about 17 weeks. The approximate timetable is:
 - Week 1-5: Pre visit preparation
 - Week 8: Site visit
 - Week 9-17: Report writing and preparation for publication
- Further details about meetings for local people and organisations to comment on issues relevant to the assessment will be announced closer to the time.

General

- The Commission's management structure comprises a Board with 13 commissioners and chairman, Dame Deirdre Hine
- CHI does not cover Scotland as it has its own body, the Clinical Standards Board for Scotland. The First Minister for Northern Ireland may invite CHI to undertake work at some point in the future.
- CHI's role is to undertake regular clinical governance reviews as well as hold investigations or inquiries into serious service failures. It is also responsible for studies which monitor and review the implementation of national service frameworks and National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidance.
- Further information on CHI is available on www.chi.nhs.uk

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