

News release



19 October 2006

YOUR VOICE IN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

Representing the interests of the users of health and social care services is the role of the Southern Health & Social Services Council (SHSSC). To highlight its work over the past year, the organisation has recently published its latest annual review.

Mrs Lynne Cairns, Chairperson of the SHSSC, comments, "We feel that it has been a profitable year with a number of issues raised or researched including ambulance services, the new GP contract, GP Out of Hour Services as well as impact made by involving service users in how services are organised. 84 people were assisted in making a complaint about a health/social care service. In addition, strengthening links with local communities has been a particular priority and we believe that we have made good progress during the year through the delivery of our new community programme."

If you would like a copy of the SHSSC's annual review, this can be obtained by contacting the office on Tel: 028 3834 9900 or the report can be downloaded from the Council's website: www.shsscouncil.net

Notes to Editors:

- **The Southern Health and Social Services Council is one of 4 Health and Social Services Councils set up in 1991 to represent the views of patients and users of the health and social services. The Council has a total of 24 members, 40% of whom are nominated by District Councils in the Southern Area. The remainder are appointed by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety – 30% voluntary/community representatives and 30% are nominees with an interest in health and social care.**
- **Health and Social Services Councils have a right to be consulted by Health and Social Services Boards about and plans for development of services, or where significant changes are being considered. Councils play an important part in representing the views of consumers of services to the decision makers, and provide advice and support to patients and service users in relation to complaints procedures.**

If you require any further information please contact :

Mrs Stella Cunningham, Chief Officer. Tel: 028 3834 9900

The Council's website address is: www.shsscouncil.net