

News release



19 January 2007

CHANGES COMING FOR 'HEALTH WATCHDOG'

Consultation on the legislative changes, which will enable the biggest shake-up ever of health and social care services, has commenced.

As part of this, the local 'health watchdog', the Southern Health & Social Services Council (SHSSC), will be abolished and, along with the other Health and Social Services Councils, will be replaced by a single body, the Patient Client Council (PCC).

The role of the PCC will be to represent the interests of the public, promote the involvement of the public, provide advocacy services and provide advice and information to the public about the design, commissioning and delivery of health and social services.

Mrs Lynne Cairns, Chairman of the SHSSC, says, "We welcome the advent of the PCC. There is a real need for a unified, strong voice to represent the interests of the public within the new health and social services structures. The SHSSC will be going out and about over the next two months talking to service users and community groups to make them aware of the changes and ensure that we represent their views in our own response to the consultation."

Further information about the work of the SHSSC or about the proposed PCC can be obtained from Stella Cunningham, Chief Officer. Tel: 028 3834 9900.

Ends

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