

News release



28 September 2007

Lurgan Hospital in the Spotlight

Changes to Lurgan Hospital's respite care arrangements for older people will take heed of the views of patients and their families, was the message delivered to the September meeting of the 'watchdog' body, the Southern Health and Social Services Council (SHSSC).

Speaking after the meeting, Mrs Lynne Cairns, SHSSC Chairman, said, "The Southern Trust's Chief Executive told the Health Council that the proposed changes are in line with Trust policy and current best practice. We heard that the Trust has also had discussions with patients and their families about how the new service should be delivered. The SHSSC was pleased to hear that service users are fully involved. However, the new package of services must work well in practice and not just look good on paper if there is to be real service improvement."

Mrs Cairns added, "At the meeting, the SHSSC also expressed concern about the reform of the provision of in-patient dermatology services, which may result in the removal of beds from Lurgan Hospital. Whilst we appreciate that services must be delivered in a safe and cost effective way, the centralising of services at Craigavon Area Hospital is not necessarily always the best solution.

The SHSSC will continue to be alert to developments in both these areas."

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 :

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