

# News release



28 April 2006

## **CASUALTY-WATCH REPORT LAUNCHED**

Accident & Emergency Services at Daisy Hill Hospital (DHH) are generally coping well with increasing numbers of the public using the service, according to the Southern Health & Social Services Council's (SHSSC) Casualty Watch report recently launched.

Casualty Watch involved lay members of the SHSSC observing the environment and patient experience in the Accident & Emergency Department at DHH during a week in early February 2006. The exercise also compared patient 'flow' and waiting times with the same period in 2005.

Mrs Lynne Cairns, Chairperson of the SHSSC said, "The findings of Casualty Watch were generally pleasing. The hospital treated all attenders within a four hour period, which is good news. However, the A&E treatment area within the hospital is very limited for space, and staff do not have access to a computerised record system. Casualty Watch has enabled the SHSSC to visit the A&E Departments in both acute hospitals in the Southern Area to assess what the experience for patients was like. We feel that this is an important part of our role as the voice of the patient. Both hospitals were fully co-operative in the matter and found

it a useful exercise to get the patients perspective on using the Department. ”

Patricia Jordan, Project Development Officer, with the SHSSC said, “The project has enabled the SHSSC to gain an insight into the particularly busy and hectic world of Accident & Emergency Services. We welcome the chance to work with both hospitals in carrying forward improvements for patients. Staff in the hospitals, undertake tremendous work, in what is sometimes very difficult circumstances and this needs to be recognised. The Casualty Watch report highlights several areas for improving the patient experience, such as providing more parking spaces, providing more information and introducing more comfortable and user friendly surroundings.”

Stella Cunningham, Chief Officer for the SHSSC adds, "We look forward to working in close collaboration with service providers to improve the patients' experience of services. The SHSSC will revisit the report's recommendations in due course to see whether any improvements have been put in place."

If you would like to find out more, or obtain a copy of the Casualty Watch report please contact the SHSSC office on Tel: 3834 9900. It can also be downloaded from the website [www.shsscouncil.net](http://www.shsscouncil.net).

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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**The Council's website address is: [www.shsscouncil.net](http://www.shsscouncil.net)**