



Progress Report on The Disablement Services for the Hospital Overview and Scrutiny Panel (HOSP) January 2010

1. Introduction

1.1 It was agreed at the Professional Executive Committee (PEC) in April 2009 that Commissioners would test the market to establish if there were suitable alternative disablement service providers, prior to going out to a formal tender, as the current service was not meeting the required standards for the population it served. PHT have informed commissioners that the service is running out of budget in this financial year, which will increase the backlog further.

1.2 Since the paper was approved by PEC, commissioners have tested the market and developed a service specification. Whilst pulling the service specification together it became evident that there were major financial and operational risks associated with the tendering of the service. This has been echoed by NHS Hampshire. The risks associated with tendering are as follows:

- Insufficient data to produce baseline activity for service specification for potential bidders
- Inability to accurately assess future demand for the service
- Possible need to rationalise access to the service in future
- Spiralling cost of running the service (current provider running out of budget and slowing access, resulting in increased backlog and patient dissatisfaction)
- Future costs of providing service with potential unmet needs currently in the community
- Apparent increase in requirement for complex wheelchairs and associate equipment
- Increasing maintenance as numbers of wheelchair users increase

2 Way Forward

- 2.1 Taking into account the fact that there is likely to be a further increase in backlog, as a result of providers running out of funds, in association with the above risks, it is evident that patient care is likely to be comprised unless a speedy resolution is identified.
- 2.2 As a result of these considerations, the commissioners have concluded that the risks to tendering at this point in time outweigh the possible advantages. PEC agreed on the 18th December 2009 with the commissioners proposal, to give notice to Portsmouth Hospitals in January 2010 and undertake a service variation through the Portsmouth Community Services contract to provide the Disablement Services (wheelchair and orthotic service); to ensure Portsmouth residents have an improved service as quickly as possible.
- 2.3 Commissioners anticipate having the new service operational by the autumn of 2010. A period of double running of both services for three months will ensure that no patients fall between the two services.
- 2.4 Commissioners will ensure that HOSP are updated on a regular basis.