

## **Patient and Public Involvement Forum Whittington Hospital**

Evidence to the Overview and Scrutiny Review on the Whittington Hospital application for Foundation Status

Meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> October 2007

*As a Patient and Public Involvement Forum our remit is to monitor how well the Trust is meeting its duty to involve and consult with the public and therefore have primarily addressed the area of 'Process'.*

Key staff from the Whittington Hospital came to the Forum business meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> July to give the presentation on the Hospital's application to become a Foundation Trust and to gain feedback from the Forum on the effectiveness of this presentation. The Forum gave some positive feedback and also suggested some changes to make it more accessible for people eg. Font size, colour and background; slide order and on the general ease of understanding of the content.

Employees then came to a second meeting of the Forum, a public meeting, on the 18<sup>th</sup> September 2007 to give the presentation again in front of the members of the public present. Four members of staff were on hand to address any questions which arose.

Forum members have been given the leaflets "New Horizons for the Whittington" and "New Horizons, public consultation document supporting our application to become an NHS Foundation Trust". We have also been told that the Trust has distributed these leaflets to local groups by attending their meetings. The leaflet "New Horizons for the Whittington" also states "we will be sending a leaflet like this to households...in the areas of Islington, Haringey, Camden, Hackney and Barnet" however we are to understand that this street drop was not made because of the cost involved. We are not clear how the Trust planned to reach the average person in their home who may not belong to one of the community groups the Trust has presented the consultation to.

The Forum is not entirely clear what the Whittington is consulting on. We feel there are 2 main questions underlying the consultation. These are:

1. Should the status of the hospital be changed to that of a Foundation Trust?
2. Who will the members be and how should the council be made up if (or when) the hospital becomes a Foundation Trust?

Is the Trust consulting on whether the community thinks they should become a Foundation Trust or on how Foundation Trust status should look at the Whittington when it becomes a Foundation Trust?

It seems to us that the hospital feels it must become a Foundation Trust and understand that it's the government's policy to encourage hospitals to become Foundation Trusts as many hospitals have already done so. The Whittington is in the next wave of hospitals applying for Foundation Trust status. The hospital has also made proposals in its leaflets and presentation as to who the members of the council will be and how it will be made up.

Will any objections or comments on these two questions be put in the Trust's application to the Department of Health and subsequently Monitor? We feel that in consulting with the public the Whittington have not necessarily provided people with all of the facts, that is, the negatives as well as the positives. However, in saying this, the Trust has said they will address any concerns that people have raised throughout the consultation process and have been active in taking down the Forum's comments at meetings.

We do wonder whether the distinction between the two questions has become rather blurred in the Whittington's consultation. The consultation seems rather to presuppose that the hospital will become a Foundation Trust