

# Save South Tyneside Hospital Campaign



**Press Release - January 1 2017**

## **Sustainability & Transformation Plans (STPs) – The Save South Tyneside Hospital Campaign Calls on everyone to get involved to oppose the “draft” STP**

The Northumbria Tyne & Wear and north Durham Sustainability and Transformation Plan (*NTWND* STP) released on November 9th which will cut by 2020/21 the annual health and social care budget for our area by nearly a billion pounds (£904m). For health this will be a massive annual cut of £641 million which will mean cuts to vital acute and Accident and Emergency services, hospital maternity departments, GP and other community and preventative services all over this region.

The South Tyneside Clinical Commissioning Group announced that the engagement on the current draft (*NTWNDSTP*) that started on 23rd November “will continue to Friday 20th January (8 weeks). They say they “will be organising some events so please sign up to MY NHS or check back for more information when these become available.” They say: “This period of engagement will then inform the next version of the STP.”

The Save South Tyneside Hospital Campaign has issued a briefing and response which was submitted to the South Tyneside CCG on Monday December 20<sup>th</sup> as part of this local engagement.

The Conclusion of the briefing points out:

*The draft NTWND STP is an attempt to pull the wool over our eyes and the eyes of clinicians, non clinicians and others alike. It is an attempt to try and justify the largest withdrawal of funding and resources from the NHS in its entire history. No serious plan for 9 the NHS can be decided upon under the threat of such a massive reduction in the budget of the NHS. No draft can be put forward and taken seriously if it starts from the direction of a major attempt to destroy the NHS, further open up privatisation and further create the conditions to make people pay for health and social services. Regardless of peoples' views on the direction for our NHS how can we have a proper discussion on these issues in such a climate. Without establishing public bodies and public services accountable to the people and local communities to provide the services that they need, where health care is a right and its funding is guaranteed, nothing can be properly sorted out.”*

The plan whilst hiding all the detail of the “Alliance” between South Tyneside Hospital and City Hospitals Sunderland, claims that there is “the urgent need to rebalance services across both organisations as it is no longer safe or sustainable for either organisation to duplicate the provision of services in each location.” SSTHC believes that this is an untrue statement that is deliberately misleading and should be removed from the document immediately. It seems to reveal a systematic intent to close down all services that are duplicated at our two hospitals by claiming that they are “unsustainable” and “unsafe”. No such claim has been made by the South Tyneside Foundation Trust, City Hospitals Sunderland or by the inspection body Care Quality Commission (CQC). On the contrary South Tyneside Hospital won a 2016 award and was in the top 40 performing hospitals. Our stroke unit which has already been transferred on a “temporary basis” has won an award for its care over recent years. Our consultant led and community maternity services also are among the top performing in the region. Our staff were praised in the STFT annual report by “recognising the outstanding level of care provided by our staff” which was highlighted in particular by

the recent Care Quality Commission inspection. It is the cuts driven by the *NTWND* STP which is clearly calling for the loss of all consultant led acute services including maternity services and not the sustainability and safety record of our hospital. The resulting loss of acute services will be a disaster for the people of South Tyneside and also for the people of Sunderland whose access to acute services will also be under even further pressure by the closure of acute services in South Tyneside.

No one should sign up to plans which are intent on wrecking, massively underfunding and privatising health care regardless of the consequence to the well being of the people. Far from being Sustainability & Transformation Plans it is these plans that will create an unsustainable health service with people travelling further and further for even more diminishing NHS services. Health care is a right and the people should decide on the basis that it is a right and it is a claim on the economy that must be guaranteed. We are calling on everyone to join with us to block these plans and organise to get people involved in the fight with us to safeguard the future of our hospitals and our NHS.

The full briefing is attached and also can be accessed at:

[http://www.savesouthtynesidehospital.org/news/response\\_to\\_stp/](http://www.savesouthtynesidehospital.org/news/response_to_stp/)

Roger Nettleship Chair of the SSTHC said: “Everyone in South Tyneside and Sunderland should be very concerned about these latest top down plans of the government to wreck our NHS as a viable health service fully available to all. The government clearly want to complete its privatisation and introduce charging and that is why they are making such massive cuts to our acute services. Being able to access our acute and emergency services at our local hospitals is a right not a privilege. It is vital to the health and well-being of our populations and especially such vulnerable communities that we have in South Tyneside and Sunderland. Everyone must get involved to block these STPs.”

The Save South Tyneside Hospital Campaign next meets at 6.30pm on Monday, January 9<sup>th</sup> 2017 at the Alberta Social Club, Railway Street, Jarrow.

*Save South Tyneside Hospital Campaign*

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