

COMMITTEE: SCRUTINY BOARD

DATE: 30TH MAY 2002

SUBJECT: HEALTH SCRUTINY UPDATE

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF SCRUTINY

CONTACT OFFICER: GEOFF. BOCUTT

546073

IMPLICATIONS:

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|------------|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| LEGAL | <input type="checkbox"/> | COMMUNITY SAFETY | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| EQUALITIES | <input type="checkbox"/> | ENVIRONMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| FINANCIAL | <input type="checkbox"/> | CONSULTATIONS | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| STAFFING | <input type="checkbox"/> | OTHER | <input type="checkbox"/> |

WARDS AFFECTED: NONE

PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Board about the work of scrutiny and current issues.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. Scrutiny Board is recommended to note the report.

BACKGROUND

3. The Government has legislated to give social services authorities the power to scrutinise local health organisations. The Department of Health has issued a consultation paper about how that power should be exercised and the Board, at its last meeting, authorised me to respond to the consultation on the basis of the draft submitted to the last meeting. The final version of the response was 'cleared' with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board and was submitted before the deadline for replies. The Government's intention is that authorities should begin to exercise this new power from January 2003; however the timetable for consulting on the draft regulations and guidance that have not been issued yet makes this improbable. There is no indication yet whether the Government is going to provide local authorities with any funding to support this new function.

REPORT

4. Work on the arrangements within Bedfordshire is continuing in partnership with Bedfordshire County Council. A training programme about the new power and the arrangements for exercising it is being developed but this is hampered by lack of

knowledge about what the regulations and the guidance will say. In particular the arrangements proposed in the joint pilot bid envisaged a joint committee overseeing the work of a number of trust facing panels. However the consultation referred to above expressed a strong preference for themed scrutinies based around patient journeys. If this is what appears in the regulations and guidance the arrangements for health scrutiny in Bedfordshire will have to be redesigned and this will to a large extent determine the content of the training programme.

PROPOSAL/OPTIONS

5. The Board is asked to note the report

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, SECTION 100D

6. Previous reports to the Board on the overview and scrutiny of local health services.