

## **CANCER SERVICES**

**Report By: Director of Social Care and Strategic Housing**

### **Wards Affected**

County-wide

### **Purpose**

1. To consider further issues regarding the provision of cancer services.

### **Financial Implications**

2. None identified at this stage. Work is to be carried out from within existing resources.

### **Background**

3. This Committee was informed on 23 June of a letter received from the Cheltenham and Tewkesbury NHS Primary Care Trust. This advised that the Three Counties Cancer Network Board (CNB) responsible for overseeing the provision of cancer services across Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and South Worcestershire was, "currently working to implement a series of action plans linked to improving Outcomes guidance for each of the main types of cancer. It is likely that that this will identify the need for continued development and change in services to meet the stringent standards set."
4. An informal meeting was held on 12th July between representatives of the CNB and the Overview and Scrutiny Committees affected. It was explained that the CNB had recently agreed an action plan on Upper-Gastrointestinal (UGI) cancer treatment. This would see treatment, currently provided in hospitals across the Network's area, being centralised at Gloucester. Gloucester Hospitals NHS Trust was due to present a detailed business plan moving towards implementation of a centralised service in approximately 18 months time.
5. Some concern was expressed at that meeting by the Overview and Scrutiny representatives that the Committees had not been consulted. The view expressed by CNB representatives was that the change was not regarded as significant enough to warrant a formal consultation exercise.
6. Further information setting out the background to the decision is to be circulated to each of the three Scrutiny Committees affected by this service change. The CNB is to meet on 1st September, 2004 and has requested that the views of the three Committees on the way forward be received before that date.

### **Issues**

7. At the time of drafting this report the additional information from the CNB has not been received. The Director of Social Care and Strategic Housing's advice to the Committee is that the CNB's proposed approach has been endorsed by the West Midlands (South) Strategic Health Authority and, at this late stage, given the clinical

---

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Tim Brown, Committee Manager (Scrutiny) on 01432 260239

governance case for the change; the direction from the NHS nationally, and that the service is to be retained within the sub-region, there is little benefit to be gained by seeking to request a formal consultation exercise, or otherwise debate the principle of the proposal. The Committee may well however, wish to request the opportunity to comment on issues flowing from the proposal such as patient/visitor travel arrangements and after care arrangements, which it is expected will be set out in the Trust's action plan. It is suggested that the Director be authorised to respond on this basis to the CNB, subject to there being nothing in the additional documentation awaited from the CNB to warrant reconsideration.

8. It is important to recognise, however, that the CNB will soon be seeking to sign off a further 10 action plans to address issues highlighted in the National Cancer Plan. The Committee has already agreed that the Director of Social Care and Strategic Housing be authorised to take any necessary action to facilitate the establishment of a Joint Committee after consultation with the Chairman of the Committee and the County Secretary and Solicitor. It is now clear that there is also a need to emphasise the importance of appropriate consultation and agree protocols which will govern the operation of that Committee, what matters are referred to it and how those are to be considered.

## RECOMMENDATION

- THAT**
- (a) the Director of Social Care and Strategic Housing be authorised to submit the view to the Three Counties Cancer Network Board on the Committee's behalf that it does not at this stage wish to revisit the proposed centralisation of Upper-Gastrointestinal (UGI) cancer treatment at Gloucester, subject to there being nothing in the additional documentation supplied by the Board to warrant reconsideration of this view;**
  - (b) the Director of Social Care and Strategic Housing be asked to request the Three Counties Cancer Network Board that the Committee, or Joint Committee to be established as appropriate, be kept informed of the development of the proposed centralisation of Upper-Gastrointestinal cancer treatment at Gloucester and given the opportunity to comment on issues flowing from the proposal such as patient/visitor travel arrangements and after care arrangements;**
- and**
- (c) the Director of Social Care and Strategic Housing be asked to emphasise to the Three Counties Cancer Network Board the importance of proposals being discussed at an early stage with the Committee, or Joint Committee to be established as appropriate, to agree whether or not emerging proposals are substantial and the need for protocols to be put in place as soon as possible to govern how future proposals will be considered.**

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None