

## **Staying in hospital beds longer than needed can do more harm than good**

North Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent CCGs want to transform the way that community health care is provided to help more people rehab and recover in their own homes and spend less time in a hospital bed.

It is known that the longer a person stays in hospital when they do not need to be there, the greater the negative impact on their health leading to what is known as 'deconditioning syndrome'.

Dr Lorna Clarson, Clinical Director for Partnerships & Engagement for North Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent CCGs said: "Deconditioning is really harmful for older patients, but it is something that GPs like me see all too often.

"By spending time immobile, mainly in a bed, patients lose physical strength and muscle mass. But there are many other physical consequences, such as becoming more prone to falls and the potential to develop bed sores. Patients can quickly lose self-confidence and self-esteem and suffer from other mental health problems.

"Anyone can become deconditioned, but for older people the effect can be more severe, more rapid and can be irreversible."

The number of frail and older patients discharged from acute hospitals (like Royal Stoke Hospital) into beds in local community hospitals has been about three times the national average.

The CCGs are currently running a consultation, the [Future of Local Health Services](#) to look at how to address this issue and help people to have better outcomes and gain their independence back as quickly as possible.

The consultation runs until Sunday March 17.

The proposals are based on a new model of care which puts the emphasis on care closer to home and six options proposed on where community rehabilitation beds could be located in order to deliver the best care in the most joined-up, patient centred way.

Modelling carried out as part of pre-consultation preparations estimated that 132 community beds would be needed with flexibility built in to deal with times of high need (see Notes to Editors).

Dr Clarson said: "Most patients want to go home rather than to a community hospital bed, but we shall continue to need some beds for patients who need to be in hospital for their rehabilitation.

"We have put forward a number of options, but people responding to the consultation are able to also suggest other options – we really are open to hear what local people have to say. All options retain beds at Haywood Hospital, which is the most modern of our community hospitals.

"We really want people to respond to the consultation before it closes on March 17. No decision has been made about where beds are located, and we need people to help us decide on next steps by giving us their feedback by filling in our survey."

People can complete the survey online at [www.healthservicesnorthstaffs.nhs.uk](http://www.healthservicesnorthstaffs.nhs.uk)

Alternatively, they can email [consultation.northstaffsstoke@nhs.net](mailto:consultation.northstaffsstoke@nhs.net) for a hard copy which can be returned by Freepost.

**ENDS**

**Notes to editors**

A more detailed explanation of how the number of beds has been modelled is attached (it refers to Deconditioning Syndrome as “decompensating”). This is an extract from the [Pre-Consultation Business Case](#)