

**Briefing Paper for Slough Health Scrutiny Committee.
September 2011**

Future of East Berkshire Mental Health Inpatient Services

Transport Solutions to support relatives and carers proposed by Berkshire Healthcare Trust

- 1.1 The results of both transport surveys, undertaken as part of the 'Public Consultation into the future location of mental health in-patient services', at the East Berkshire sites potentially impacted by the proposed relocation found that, "Visitors overwhelmingly travel by car (97%) to see patients in these hospitals" and that, "Travel problems per se do not appear to be a specific reason for patients not receiving visitors."
- 1.2 BHFT Board recognised that, despite the survey results, concerns were expressed regarding the impact on relatives and carers should inpatient services be relocated to the PPH site. Therefore they determined that specific focus should be given to exploring transport solutions within the production of the OBC for Option 1.
- 1.3 A broad cross section of stakeholders was invited to become part of the Transport Group. Representatives were sought from Health and Overview Scrutiny Committees' (HOSC's) and Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) in Bracknell, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead and Slough as well as service user and carers representatives.
- 1.4 Given the importance of understanding concerns and ensuring that these directly shaped the subsequent work to look at solutions, a range of methods were used to maximise engagement including; group meetings x 2, 1:1 meetings, telephone discussions and e-mail. The combined expectations, concerns and ideas were then reviewed at the 2nd meeting and formed part of the Transport Solution briefing document. The Transport Solutions Group gave generously of their time to ensure that the concerns and challenges which some relatives and carers potentially might experience were understood and considered fully.

Key recurring expectations were that solutions must:

- Be easily accessible including at weekends and during unexpected admissions
- Be affordable for both relatives and carers (including those on a low income) and for the Trust
- Support relatives and carers by not adding any unnecessary stress or anxiety
- Be sustainable

- 1.5 BSS were engaged and brought in the services of Peter Evans Partnership, a transport consultation company with local background knowledge (gained through their involvement with “Right Care, Right Place” and Wexham Park “Travel Plan” projects) to deliver the brief through researching possible solutions. A national review was also undertaken to identify any similar consultations and to ensure that learning from these was considered.
- 1.6 2 consultations; Lancashire Care (September 2009) and Northumberland Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust (2009) were identified as similar in remit. The learning from these, where appropriate, has been considered when shaping the possible solutions that BHFT might provide.
- 1.7 BSS report is attached Appendix 5
- 1.8 In summary the Options identified were:
 - 1.81 **Hopper bus service.** The advantages are that, on the face of it, this is a simple solution. However importantly, it may not provide the flexibility that is needed to support some carers thus take up may be low. The cost is greater than the budget currently identified.
 - 1.82 **Community Transport and Social Enterprise.** There is a number of existing Community Transport operators who have expressed an interest in providing a service. The advantages are that these schemes are currently running; provide a valuable community service for individuals via a simple booking system, and offer the option of a door to door service for carers. It is anticipated that BHFT would support operating costs via a subsidy to the provider.
 - 1.83 **Reimbursement Scheme.** This scheme supports those who would currently drive to existing inpatient facilities. This is applicable to 97% of existing visitors; however it does not address the needs of those who do not drive currently and for whom public transport options may be complicated. Whilst it appears simple to put in place, it is costly and has a potential tax liability/benefit impact for those who use it.
 - 1.84 **Private Hire:** This has similar benefits to option 1.82. The potential cost however is significantly greater and it would require a very robust administration to ensure its appropriate use.
 - 1.85 **Reimbursement of Public Transport Costs:** This would make use of existing public transport options. It would address additional financial pressures but it may not resolve the additional complexity of the journey faced by some carers. Again, there is a potential tax liability/benefit impact for those who use it.
- 1.9 The views of the Transport Group were sought on the options identified above. 4 responses were received. 3 identified a clear preference for option

1.82 (Community Transport) which, it was considered offered the greatest flexibility to provide support tailored to individual need. It was recognised that the practicalities of this option including; door to door for some people or group pick up options for others and whether to consider a small charge for some and financial support to those needing it, would need to be part of the subsequent discussions and scheme parameters should the decision be made to relocate inpatient services. A further respondent expressed concern regarding the long term financial viability of this option and noted that the service would need to operate at evenings and weekends. There was no preference expressed for any other option.

1.10 To inform the OBC and enable the Board to consider whether to progress Option 1 indicative costs associated with the identified options have been included. Should the Board decide to progress, then work can commence to finalise arrangements and confirm costs against the preferred travel solution.

Option	Considerations	Indicative costs
Hopper Bus Service Based on hire of mini buses, fuel and staff costs	1. Individually from each site affected to PPH 2. As part of a loop service; Wexham, Heatherwood, St Marks to PPH	£132K-£213K in 1 st Year. £63K on-going £94K - £154K in 1 st Year £54K on-going
Community Transport and Social Enterprise (Preferred Option from Transport Group feedback)	3 organisations expressed an interest and provided indicative costs All suggested a charge to users; (range dependent on provider) £10 - £20 return for Maidenhead and Slough areas £15- £18 return for Bracknell and Ascot areas	People2places (Social Enterprise)(£75K) Keep Mobile & Slough Community Transport (96K) Bracknell Forest (75K - £150K) Also suggested that any revenue collected could support the reduction in operating costs
Reimbursement Scheme (Mileage) Applicable to 97% of relatives/carers visiting existing sites		18.9p per mile based on an additional 36 miles x number of visitors could = £155K p.a plus additional administration costs IRO £30K p/a (Option to consider payment cost in line with healthcare Travel Cost Scheme paid to eligible patients making own way to hospital, average of 12p per mile)
Private Hire	Need to consider additional administration costs associated with robust monitoring - assumed £30K p.a	Costs between £324 and £1300 per day St Marks – PPK = £35 per single trip Wexham – PPK = £45 per single trip Heatherwood – PPK = £32 per single trip £120K to £480K p.a
Reimbursement of Public Transport costs	Does not address the complexity that some carers relatives might face	Bus, Train & Taxi Train costs between £5.30 - £7.40 off peak return

		Bus from Reading station to PPK = £1.70 single, £3.80 return, £13 weekly, £52 for 30 days and £154 for 90 days Taxi from Reading Station to PPK = £8 per trip
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- 1.11 As an addition to supporting carers and relatives to visit in person, it was suggested that access to internet based communication options, such as Skype might help some patients and their carers/relatives maintain contact between visits.