

BERA E-NEWSLETTER 2nd August 2019 – www.bera.co.uk

(printable version of Newsletter is available soon on website if needed)

Dear Members, it was thought that this latest information below, should be shared with our membership and it seems to be that the NHS bureaucrats are blindly intent of following their own plans and letting us down again. It appears to be a sad state of affairs that a short-term solution to the lack of professionals in the NHS is being sort and actioned in an attempt to cover for the bureaucrat's failure to plan for the future population growth not only of Southend-on-Sea, but that of Rochford and Castle Point. We all know that the growth plans for this area of Essex is tremendous, but do they care? I don't think so; we are an ageing population and a growing population. The bureaucrats and our local MP's will state this is a once in a lifetime transformation of our health service, personally I would call it a once in a death knell of our local NHS and sadly in 20 years' time it will be our children and grandchildren who will suffer the consequences of this decision.

Ron Woodley

Controversial hospital plan to go ahead as health secretary rejects challenges

A once-in-a-lifetime transformation of hospital care in south Essex will go ahead after attempts to stop the plans were rejected.

The plans involve sharing services between Basildon, Broomfield and Southend Hospitals and closing Orsett Hospital.

Southend and Thurrock Councils claimed the consultation was flawed as were proposals to remove stroke services from Southend Hospital and to close Orsett Hospital.

Concerns were also raised about the lack of detailed planning as part of the £118m plan.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock rejected the claims after taking advice from an independent reconfiguration panel, which stated the concerns raised by both councils were “not a sufficient reason not to proceed”.

Southend Council objected to the entire plan including moving stroke services from Southend to Basildon Hospital.

Thurrock Council claimed the plans to close Orsett Hospital in Grays and replace it with four new integrated medical centres were “not in the interest of health services in Thurrock”.

The panel accepted the consultation, like all consultations, could be improved but concluded “the public consultation were satisfactory”.

The panel also accepted details about the relocation of stroke services from Southend were “a little light” but pointed out expert bodies were in favour and had a full review been carried out “Basildon Hospital would have been the more likely site for a single hyper-acute stroke unit serving the whole population.”

The report by the independent panel, on the issue of stroke unit placement, added: “The panel does not presume to have any greater expertise than those bodies already closely involved.”

The impact of the change once it takes place will be reviewed by medical experts to assess what it means for patients and could be reassessed.

The panel also noted the closure of Orsett Hospital had been set out in 2015, agreements had been signed and the plans were still valid.

The report stated: “The panel consider that both decisions are in the interests of health services locally.”

Critics also objected to the lack of practical details about how patients would be transferred between hospitals and what it would mean for staff.

The panel concluded: “If issues around safe transfers and workforce are still the cause of concern locally then the opportunity exists to deal with these concerns and provide necessary assurance as the NHS works with its stakeholders towards the implementation phase.”

Tom Abell, deputy chief executive of Basildon, Southend and Broomfield Hospitals, said: “We are pleased we now have the green light from the independent panel of experts and the Department of Health to improve care for residents. We look forward to delivering the commitments we have made.”