

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

TO: Social Work Committee	Subject:
FROM: Jim Dickie Director of Social Work	Scottish Office White Paper- "The Scottish Health Service: Ready for the Future"
DATE OF COMMITTEE: 22nd April 1997	
REF: DM/JD	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report advises members of the background, the main proposals and the implications of the Scottish Office White Paper "The Scottish Health Service: Ready for the Future".

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The final version of the White Paper sets out the Government's approach to improving the Health Service, in response to the changing needs of patients and health service staff. This will take place in the context of the major structural changes introduced in 1989 which saw the creation of NHS Trusts and GP fundholders.
- 2.2 As a result of these changes the role of Health Boards has changed from that of direct health care providers to that of assessing health care needs and commissioning services to meet those needs, working in co-operation with GPs and NHS Trusts in giving a strategic lead to local health services.

3. PROPOSALS

- 3.1 It is intended that improvements in the Scottish Health Service will concentrate on six main themes. These are:
- ♦ An emphasis on prevention;
 - ♦ Better information for the public;
 - ♦ Better access to services;
 - ♦ Greater responsiveness to patients' needs;
 - ♦ Effective continuity of care;
 - ♦ Excellence in clinical and management practice;
 - ♦ The development of information management and technology.

3.2 It is envisaged that services will improve in a range of ways, principally by enhancing staff training and development and by promoting an increasing focus on service outcomes and quality.

3.3 The Government has identified three service areas as priorities for development. These are:

- ♦ Mental health;
- ♦ Coronary heart and disease and stroke;
- ♦ Cancer services.

4. IMPLICATIONS FOR NORTH LANARKSHIRE

4.1 The Council should respond to the proposed developments in the Health Service by:

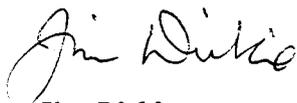
- ♦ Strengthening strategic planning activity with Lanarkshire and Greater Glasgow Health Boards, NHS Trusts and GP fundholders;
- ♦ Continuing to lead on joint planning for hospital discharge programmes for people with learning disabilities and mental health problems;
- ♦ Promoting opportunities for joint commissioning, the setting of service standards and monitoring processes;
- ♦ Developing liaison and joint working relationships with primary healthcare teams at local levels.

4.2 Specifically, the Social Work Department will wish to consider the implications of two planned developments, aimed at breaking down barriers between health and social care, with joint planning partners. These relate to the funding of six pilot "local care partnerships" and the establishment of a single "community care advice number" for community health and social care services.

4.3 Whilst the identification of mental health as a national priority is supported, this status has been seriously compromised by funding decisions taken by the Scottish Office. No new Mental Illness Specific Grant money has been made available for the last 2 years and last year the entire national allocation of Bridging Finance went to a single Health Board. Such decisions are not consistent with the adoption of mental health as a national priority.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Committee is asked to note the contents of the above report.



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
1st April 1997

For further information on this report please contact Duncan Mackay, Principal Officer (Planning & Development), Social Work Department (TEL: 01698 332067)