

### **The Friends of Whitstable Hospital & Healthcare**

The Friends support Whitstable Hospital, Whitstable Health Centre, Chestfield & Estuary View Medical Centres, Saddleton Rd Surgery and primary healthcare services in the Whitstable area

### **The future shape of Community Service provision**

We would like make the following points for consideration:

- Care to be provided nearer to patients wherever possible and appropriate with services easy for people to access.
- Real integration between the many providers of health and social care services so that the focus is on the patient rather than on the different systems and management of their care.
- Community Hospitals - We are great enthusiasts of Community Hospitals and we do hope that the already excellent care these provide can be further developed and expanded. Not all patients require the hi-tec specialist care in an acute setting and a community hospital provides the alternative for those who need in-patient care – and this need is growing with an increasing elderly population. Local palliative care is important and there is the potential too for the provision of other services and procedures which can safely be carried out in a Community Hospital setting. Community Hospitals are well supported by local people.
- We would like to see consultant and specialist clinics provided locally whenever possible. Elderly folk and those with disabilities find travel particularly difficult and becoming ever more expensive – with the risk that they do not attend for an appointment. Community settings provide more easily accessible and familiar surroundings although it is, of course, recognised that this has to be dependent on the type of clinic and equipment availability.
- Alongside the drive for fewer admissions to hospital and shorter hospital stays, it is important that all services are in place in readiness for a patient's return home. Any gap can cause a setback to a patient's recovery and possibly lead to re-admission to hospital
- It is important for the role of carers to be fully supported and recognised and their health and social needs given full consideration. Respite care – both short and longer spells - is essential for carers. Adequate day care provision should be ensured. Carers also need to be fully consulted about a patient's discharge and on-going support given to ensure they are able to cope.
- Low-key early interventions can often assist in alleviating problems such as loneliness or depression and can often be provided at a relatively low cost
- With a large county-wide Trust we do hope that examples of best practice continue to be built on and that innovation won't be stifled.