



PRESS RELEASE – WED.22ND MARCH 2017

FIVE YEARS OF NHS CUTS DISGUISED AS ‘SUSTAINABILITY TRANSFORMATON PLAN’

Barnstaple residents at a public meeting organised by Save Our Hospital Services(SOHS) heard that the consultation on the cuts to NHS acute services at North Devon District Hospital Devon(NDDH) is a sham. The meeting at the Grosvenor Church attended by some 100 people was informed that the NHS England review known as the Sustainability Transformation Plan (STP) is a five year plan to cut £550M from Devon’s NHS budget. Sue Matthews, a campaigner from SOHS who has worked in the NHS for over 30 years said: “*that while the STP public consultation is being conducted, patient access to health services is being reduced so that the management can declare a drop in demand and close beds as they have done at Torrington and recently at Holsworthy.*” Already £1.4M has been spent on salaries and consultants conducting the STP review where proposals are to cut nursing staff by 11% and leave Devon with two acute acute hospitals instead of the current four. Phillip Wearne, a campaign organiser, recalled working at the old Infirmary in Litchdon St and the opening of the new hospital in 1978 after a long campaign and reminded the meeting that: “*with the development of 17,000 houses in North Devon, a population increase of over 25% that there is an even greater need today to maintain all health services at NDDH – the resistance to these cuts will be determined by the public’s support given for the SOHS campaign.*”

Local councils are supporting the campaign to keep acute services such as A&E, Maternity, Stroke and Post Natal at North Devon District Hospital and retain our community hospitals and SOHS are asking everyone to write to their MPs and follow the campaign at www.sohs.org.uk The next public meeting is at 7.00pm on Thursday 23 March in Christ Church, 8, Bear Street Barnstaple EX32 7BU

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