



No.17 - 31 December 2016

## WELCOME

I hope you had a great Christmas and are all ready for 2017. A happy new year to you all. This week's issue is slightly shorter than usual as I've been busy with festivities, but a couple of important reminders are included just to get you back into the flow of things.

Welcome to any new readers, although I am not sure there are many this week as things have been quiet during the holidays. Let's hope we get a rush in the New Year as we have plenty of meetings to start things off. Getting the message out to the public is the order of the day. Remember to send your reports in so that we might include them in Redlines.

## CHECK The Diary for IMPORTANT JANUARY DATES (Page 2)

Material for future newsletters editor@sohs.co.uk by Thursday SOHS-Save Our Hospital Services (A non-party group whose aim is to campaign to protect our health services in North Devon)

# 2017 Here We Come

2016 may go down in history as one of the strangest of years. It was certainly a year that included many unforeseen, inexplicable and shocking events. For those of us in SOHS it was a year that took proposed changes in health services a step too far, and brought forth ranks of people to protest and campaign. As we embark on a new year we can reflect upon those things that have been done, the ground that has been gained and the small victories along the way. But we are also able to consider the improvements that we need to make so that small victories may lead to large ones and our campaign may achieve its objective.

These thoughts are just those of one writer, and you may have your own. Please feel free to share those thoughts by emailing the editor.

It is said that an army marches on its stomach. We all know the saying, but probably not who said it — either Napoleon or Fredrick the Great, apparently. Maybe they both said it. It means that front line troops rely on those working in the background to provide supporting services. These anonymous people, paper pushers and administrators are a vital counterpart of the more obvious action in the frontline.

In SOHS we need more of these background supporters, people working away to further the cause. Many rallied around when campaigning emails were needed, and there are lots of people already working away at petitions and letters, and attending public meetings. However there is room for a lot more. Let's look at some of the things we need to achieve in 2017.

**Reaching all Parts** Perhaps, inevitably, many of the campaigners in SOHS are shall we say, of more senior years. Those who have retired maybe have more time on their hands, and are not working around a family and a full-time job. Some are more mindful of health care because of their own condition. But we must remember that proposed cuts affect all ages, not just the elderly. Mothers and expectant mothers will be particularly challenged and hard hit. They will be facing the prospect of a trip to hospital 50 miles away. They need to be engaged in a way that will make best use of their limited time. Then there are teens and young singles, who may be harder to reach. At that age, people are still feeling "invincible" and health care needs seem a long way off. However they will become affected

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by any changes, if not now, at some later time in their life. We need these young people with their enthusiasm and energy. There are many other groups that could be identified; businessmen, sports people, traders, craftsmen, the elderly. Every age will be affected by the health cuts, so every age must be enlisted in our fight.

How do we get our message across to all these different strata of society? That needs some careful thought.

**Greater Publicity** We have done well with publicity so far, but there are still many people who have not received a leaflet, not heard of our cause, or have not been engaged. For 2017 we must increase our efforts to publicise our work. Valuable work has been done on social media, and undoubtedly this is an effective means of communication, but perhaps there are other modern methods that would help. I would like to see podcasts and short videos being made available. There are people who have the ability to make these without hardly having to think about it,

whereas for older people such as myself, they are a real effort. We also need to utilise the power of others to spread our message by engaging in things that are visually interesting. Years ago, I organised a Christmas event, complete with Father Christmas. Nothing significant in that, yet it made the TV news. Why? Because it took place in July, to make some particular point. But it doesn't need to be anything big like that. What about a completely red window display in a shop or in your home? How about a tea party, with red line cakes, red cups and plates, and a red tea pot? A display of red coloured art, maybe. Red gnomes standing in a line in your garden. There are dozens of ideas you could adapt to your own situation. Make sure they have an SOHS slogan as part of the display. Job done! People will photograph the display or event, and without any extra effort on your part, pictures will start appearing on social media. It may not be frontline publicity, but it is great for reinforcement of the message, and to back up the regular leaflets and posters.

**More Fundraising** You remember the army marching on its

(Save Our Hospital Services Devon)

**RICKY KNIGHT AND FRIENDS**  
With special guest Jim Jones  
A Benefit for SOHS  
Keep the red line going - wear red on the night!  
**Saturday 28 January 8pm**  
All Tickets £7

the plough  
ARTS CENTRE  
Great Torrington  
Box Office: 01805 624624  
www.theploughartscentre.org.uk

stomach? Well someone has to pay for that food. It is vital that SOHS raises more funds to enable our campaign to be fed the materials of our campaign. Printing leaflets, paying insurance for events, funding promotional items: all these cost money. Although we are appreciative of those who already give generously and selflessly, we need to find ways to ensure sufficient funds flow in. It would be great if we could find some supporters who wanted to organise simple, yet fun events that would publicise our cause and raise funds. There are many ideas, from a simple coffee morning, or sale of work, through to a concert, a quiz night, or even – dare I say it? – bingo. Sponsored events are another good idea and younger people can have the opportunity of taking part in some of these. Perhaps we could engage businesses — indirect funding is good. If we have sufficient funds we can pay for the publicity and the events that would promote our campaign more widely. Of course, we have a natural reluctance to ask for financial support, but an effective campaign needs it.

**Easier Access** I am thinking here about making it easier for people to find out the facts and information they need. Not everyone

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## Diary Dates

Visit our new diary page on the website. More dates, maps and pretty pictures!

**Wednesday 4 January** 19.00 Northam, the Town Council public meeting with SOHS. Northam Hall, Fore St, Northam, Bideford EX39 1AN (Note: at the junction of Heywood Road and Fore Street)

**Thursday 5 January** 13.00 NEW Devon CCG Governing Body meeting, Committee Suite, County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter EX2 4QD

**Thursday 5 January** 14.00 at Westward Ho! Town Council public meeting with SOHS, Kingsley Hall, Atlantic Way, Westward Ho!, Bideford EX39 1HX

**Wednesday 11 January** 19.00 SOHS general meeting, The Castle Centre. Castle Street, Barnstaple EX31 1DR

**Friday 13 January** Braunton, SOHS Public meeting (details to be confirmed later)

**Saturday 14 January** 11 am to 5.30pm The People's Assembly at The Golden Lion Tap -

special guest speaker Steve Sweeney, Morning Star journalist and an NHS campaigner. Come for all or part of the day and tell your own NHS stories

**Monday 16 January** South Molton SOHS Public meeting (details to be confirmed later)

**Tuesday 17 January** 19.00 Paignton Methodist Church, Palace Avenue, Paignton TQ3 3EQ

**Thursday 19 January** 10.00 – 13.00 Devon CC Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee to question the STP team. Followed by normal Committee meeting from 14.00

**Wednesday 25 January** Holsworthy SOHS Public meeting (details to be confirmed later)

**Saturday 28 January** 20.00 - 22.00 Ricky Knight and Friends, benefit event for SOHS. The Plough Arts Centre, Torrington EX38 8HQ £7 from Box Office: 01805 624624  
www.theploughartscentre.org

**Saturday 28 January** Hands Off Our NHS! D-Day March 11.00 · Gower St to Trafalgar Square

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reads leaflets or has the time to go through all the material on the website. And certainly not everyone has the time – or the wish to attend committee meetings. So we need to find other ways for people to get involved. The public meetings have already done very well with good numbers attending, and there are more of these yet to come. However it would be good to have other gatherings, perhaps some which are less formal. I had an idea of starting a group that met at a local café every week at the same time. Any supporter would be welcome to

drop in and could enjoy sharing ideas and encouragement, without having to commit to doing it every week. It would also be a good point to collect leaflets and other supplies while providing a break in shopping. The format would make it suitable for people with young children. If anyone in Barnstaple likes this idea, drop me an email, and if you live in other places, then consider a similar thing. I've already mentioned coffee mornings, and I am sure there are other convenient places where SOHS supporters could gather to discuss news and make plans, and especially welcome new supporters.

**Improved Networking** By this I mean forging links with other groups and working on projects together. There is opportunity to pool resources and even to organise joint events. By doing this we can widen our influence and have a more co-ordinated approach.

As we approach 2017, SOHS supporters can be encouraged by the progress that has been made so far, but the fight is not over. We must fight on, using every means at our disposal. This is not a battle we have chosen, but it is one we must win.

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## Complete Your CCG Your Future Care Response by 6 January

To help you prepare your own replies we are re-running an edited version of a number of questions that need to be answered by the CCG. These might also be useful at public meetings. The list was compiled by Ian and Paul, with additional material from the Editor.

- What is the Clinical justification for the removal of Stroke facilities to Plymouth?
- What is the Clinical justification for the removal of Obstetric facilities to Exeter?
- What is the Clinical justification for the removal of Neonatal facilities to Exeter?
- What is the Clinical justification for the removal of Paediatrics facilities to Exeter?
- What is the impact of the above losses on the full range A & E Services in Barnstaple?
- Up to what level of accidents will be treated at NDDH, when do they become "trauma" and have to be treated at Plymouth? How will those presenting know whether they should go to Barnstaple or Ply-

mouth

- Where is the proof that Care in the Home is the preferred option for treating patients?
- What Clinical Care resources are available to treat patients in the home, to take blood samples etc, or to regularly monitor the patients progress and well being?

- What will be the impact on the Ambulance Services when they are required to deliver patients to Exeter and Plymouth?
- It is generally recognised that Family and Friends support has a positive effect on recovery. Given the rural nature of the area with

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much reduced public transport, how does relocating patients to Exeter and Plymouth benefit the patient?

■ Why are Patients, Parents and Carers obliged to take a day off work to have a 10/15 minute Consultation in Exeter or Plymouth prior to admission?

■ Why are Patients obliged to be admitted at 7.00am requiring the sick patient to rise from bed at 5.00am at the latest in order to attend?

■ Why are Patients released from Hospital Care at 10.00pm or later when public transport is non-existent?

■ What provision to get to hospital is made for those without cars, or unable to use cars, and who live without a bus route? Are there any plans to revive and finance the hospital car service that was vital for such needs?

■ The further reaches of Northern Devon (Hartland, Clovelly Lynton and Lynmouth) are 1 hour and 30 minutes travel time from R.D & E. assuming perfect travel conditions i.e not summer, no road works, no rush hour traffic in Exeter. Assuming the instant availability of an Ambulance, what will be increased risk to a stroke patient taking into account the 'Golden Hour'? How many additional deaths are likely to be

## Fund raising in Combe Martin.

We had a brilliant night on 23 December at the Bottom George. The owners provided a free buffet and Tanya Kingham the landlady sang for us. She is a professional opera singer so it was awesome to be in a pub full of young people listening to live opera in the name of SOHS. People were very generous both with contributions and drinks! We raised £125.00 for the campaign and had a great time. Lots of lovely young people discussing important issues too. It was heartening to hear their concerns and support for the campaign.

Barbara

caused by these changes?

■ Where are the Risk Assessments and Equality Assessments for the proposals to limit Acute Services in Devon to two Centres of Excellence in Exeter and Plymouth?

■ The consultation document identifies that a large proportion of patients in hospital do not need hospital medical treatment. It also says that the proposed alternative is medical care at home. Can the CCG confirm that all the patients not requiring hospital medical treatment are capable of living at home with only visits, and if not all what proportion of them will NOT be capable of living at home and what the CCG's proposed alternative is for these patients?

■ When patients are treated in hospital, they effectively get both medical and social care. Can the CCG confirm that their plans are to provide like-for-like care in people's homes and that the social-care element will be provided, and explain how this will be provided and who will be responsible for its provision (NHS or local councils)?

■ Can the CCG state when they will have a fully costed business case for these changes to include costs other than staff such as travel costs, the additional costs of providing specialised equipment in people's homes which cannot be shared with other patients etc.?

■ Can the CCG please provide the detailed evidence from com-

## SOHS New Year's Resolutions

1. Increase our efforts and actions to oppose health cuts.
2. Recruit and engage many more members and thus increase our army of Red Line Warriors.
3. Greater circulation of publicity so that more people become aware of the campaign.
4. To network with other groups engaged in similar fights.
5. Produce more facts and detailed research to counter lies and misinformation produced by our opposition.

parative clinical studies that show that care at home is as effective and safe as care in hospital?

■ Can the CCG please provide their detailed risk assessments that show that there are no additional risks from complications and emergencies to patients receiving care at home without the immediate nursing care and emergency facilities available in hospitals?

■ Can the CCG confirm that at least high-level outline plans for the implementation of community care will be made available as part of this consultation so that the public can confirm that the transition will be done safely?

## Free SOHS Calendar

A free print-your-own calendar for 2017 will be available shortly. I'm just adding the finishing touches, but the first three months are ready for download, and the rest will be there in a day or so. It contains 12 beautiful pictures of North Devon and has spaces for you to add important dates like SOHS events.

It is quite suitable for giving to friends, and the advert for SOHS will be a reminder to continue supporting us.

