

SCOTTISH CONSUMER COUNCIL REPORT ON EXPERIENCE OF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC IN CONTACTING THEIR NHS BOARD

1. Purpose of Paper

This paper has been prepared to brief Board members on a Report to be published by the Scottish Consumer Council on 28 May 2007; NHS Lanarkshire previously received a draft for comment.

2. Introduction

In October 2006 the Scottish Consumer Council undertook research to explore the experience of members of the public seeking information or advice from their NHS Board. This comprised comparing the accessibility of contact information contained within phone books and on Board websites; contacting Boards through “contact us” addresses on Board websites; and telephoning Boards as “mystery shoppers” seeking information or advice through a series of pre-determined scenarios.

3. Key Issues

Based on the draft, it is anticipated that the Report will highlight deficiencies in the response to various forms of contact that the Scottish Consumer Council made with NHS Lanarkshire. It is understood that the majority of telephone contacts were with the Board’s offices in Hamilton. It is of note that, since the research was conducted and prior to the receipt of the draft Report, a number of changes have taken place, such as amendments to the NHS Lanarkshire website and others are planned, for example the arrangements for switchboard services to the Board’s offices in Hamilton.

4. Actions

Following review of the draft Report a small working group is being established to review the recommendations made in the final report; this will be led by the Property & Support Services Department with input from Patient Affairs and Communications. An action plan will be developed focussing on the delivery of a “customer focussed” service, progress with which will be monitored by the Modernisation Stakeholder Engagement Group.

5. Recommendations

The Board is asked to note the actions proposed to address the anticipated recommendations of the Scottish Consumer Council.