

## Appendix 5

### Dudley MBC Select Committee on Health and Adult Social Care

Giving evidence to the Committee: a guide for witnesses.

#### ***1. What is Health Scrutiny?***

Under the terms of the Health and Social Care Act 2001 Dudley Council has the power to review and scrutinise the work of the National Health Service (NHS) in Dudley and to make reports and recommendations about how services might be improved. This task is carried out by the Select Committee on Health and Adult Social Care. The Committee also reviews and scrutinises the work of Adult Social Care and the plans the Council has to improve the health and wellbeing of people in Dudley.

Health Scrutiny aims to make sure that all the people who live in Dudley get the best care possible from the National Health Service (NHS) and Social Services and that their needs and wishes are taken into consideration by those who plan and provide health and social care.

#### ***2. How does the Select Committee on Good Health carry out its work?***

The Select Committee on Good Health is made up of local Councillors. We meet regularly to discuss matters to do with health and social care. We invite managers and staff from the NHS, Social Services and other services, when necessary, to explain how the services they run are helping people to keep healthy and well. From time to time the Select Committee investigates particular parts of the NHS and Social Services to find out in detail how things are working and where things might be improved. We call these investigations "Reviews". When we do a review we set up a scrutiny panel made up of members of the Committee. Those members will talk to people who use the services as well as to managers and staff to build up a picture of what the service is like and how it works.

It is important to bear in mind that the Select Committee looks at matters of general interest and importance but cannot deal with complaints from individual members of the public about treatment or care they have received from the NHS and Social Services. We will, however, give advice about who to contact.

### ***3. How do I go about telling the Committee about my views?***

The Select Committee uses different methods to find out what people think about health and social services. Sometimes we talk to people either singly or in groups. At other times we invite people to attend a meeting of the Committee to tell us about their experiences. Or again, people may find it easier to send us their views and opinions in writing, in a letter or in a report.

We also gather information from people and organisations in other parts of the country so we can compare and contrast what is happening in Dudley with what is happening elsewhere.

If English is not your first language you can write to us in your own language and we will get it translated. (Please let us know what language it is when you write so we can get in touch with the right translator).

### ***4. What happens to the information I give to the Committee?***

All the information we collect will be recorded and will be used to help us write a report, which will be published and a copy will be given to anyone who asks to read it.

### ***5. How do I send written information to the Committee?***

When we invite you to give information we will write to you explaining the sorts of information we are looking for. You can give us the information in a letter or in a report, or draw pictures and diagrams if that's easier. Please keep things as short and as simple as you can.

### ***6. Can I provide written evidence without my name being included?***

You must tell us your name (and how to get in touch with you) when you give us information. This is so we can check things with you if necessary. However, if you want we can use your information without including your name in the reports we write. But please make sure that when you write to us you tell us that you want your name left out.

### ***7. Can I give evidence without it being put into a report and published?***

We want to be as open as we can in our dealings so we would prefer that all the information we receive is made available to the public. However, if your information concerns someone other than yourself and is about someone else's private, financial or business affairs it might be possible to deal privately with the information. Please let us know in advance if you want this to happen.

### ***8. Where should I send my information?***

Send it by post to: The Health Scrutiny Officer, DACHS, Dudley MBC, Ednam House, Ednam Road, Dudley, West Midlands DY1 3JJ .

By fax: 01384 814757. Please mark it for the attention of the Health Scrutiny Officer.

By email to the Health Scrutiny Officer:  
Goodhealth.Cexec@dudley.gov.uk

*Or you may send comments through our website:  
<http://www.dudley.gov.uk/council--democracy/plans-policies--strategies/select-committee-health--adult-social-care>*

### ***9. If I am invited to give verbal information to the Committee do I have to attend?***

There are certain legal rules that may require representatives of the Council and the National Health Service to attend meetings of the Committee. But members of the public do not have to come to the Committee. We hope they will want to come for the information they have is most important because the Committee wants to find out the views of those who use services.

Everyone who attends a meeting of the Committee will be treated with respect and courtesy. We are happy to meet you before you come to a meeting to explain to you what we do, what sort of information we are looking for and to reassure you.

As well as individuals the Committee invites organisations to give information. The organisation can decide who and how many people it sends.

#### ***10. What if I cannot attend on the set date?***

We like to arrange for people to attend in a certain order because it helps us to collect information in a way that helps us to understand better how things work. For example we like to invite people who use services to come on one day and staff and managers on another day. We also work to a set timetable because we have deadlines to meet. So it is important to come along on the day agreed.

If you cannot attend you can ask someone else to come along on your behalf. Or you may like to give us your information in writing. The health scrutiny officer will be pleased to advise you.

#### ***11. Help for people with disabilities.***

We aim to have our meetings in places that people with disabilities will find easy to use. Please contact the health scrutiny officer before the meeting to discuss your own personal needs.

#### ***12. Who will be present at a Committee scrutiny panel meeting?***

There will be the Committee members (usually four or five at most) and the health scrutiny officer. There will be someone there to take notes.

#### ***13. Do I have to give information in a special way?***

You may give your information in whatever way you feel most comfortable. For example, you may like to read from a statement you have already written out; you may prefer just to

answer questions; if you want you may do a presentation using “Powerpoint” or overhead projector slides.

The members of the Committee may want to ask you some questions, too. Please remember that no one will try to trick you, or try to catch you out. Members may ask questions if there are things you say that they don’t understand or they want to explore a bit more the things you have told them.

#### ***14. What sort of questions will I be asked?***

We will let you know before the meeting what sort of questions you will be asked. At the meeting members of the Committee may want to ask you other questions. These will be based on what you have said. If you do not wish to answer a question or you do not know the answer to a question, just say so. No one will make you say things you would prefer to keep to yourself.

#### ***15. What happens after the meeting?***

As soon as possible after the meeting we will send you a copy of the notes we made about what you told us. You will then have the chance to tell us about any mistakes and we will correct them. We will send you a copy of the final report and keep you informed about what things change as a result of that report.