

**Written response from Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust (BHT)
and the Chairman of HASC to questions raised at Heath & Adult
Social Care Select Committee meeting held on
Tuesday 24 January 2017**

Questions submitted in advance of the meeting by County Councillor Julia Wassell, a Member of the HASC, in relation to Ward 5b.

Question 1

How can the pilot be reliable when it has not taken place in the most pressured time of the year in respect of admissions for older people?

Response from BHT - Demand fluctuates across the year and as it was a six month pilot it would have experienced this fluctuation. We continue to monitor and measure the impact of developing care in the community – the purpose of our attending the HASC meeting in September this year is to update on this since the pilot.

Question 2

Why are we being asked to look at this now after the decision has been taken and the ward is closed for its previous patient intake?

Response from BHT - We provided a report to the HASC before the pilot commenced, and details of the Committee's response appears in the July 16 papers. We have also provided details on the evaluation.

Additional point - in terms of beds at the hospital, we haven't closed or lost anything as we are using them for our expanding stroke service instead. The focus is on how we best care for this group of patients who don't need to be in hospital – and were staying 24 days extra because previously the right support wasn't available in the community.

The link below provides further information on the evaluation of the pilot.

<http://www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk/About/patients-benefitting-from-care-in-the-community.htm>

Question 3

Can the decision be referred to the Secretary of State for Health?

Response from the Chairman of HASC –This issue has been raised at HASC Select Committee meetings (July and January) and Members of the HASC had the opportunity to raise concerns throughout the pilot stage. If there is sufficient evidence to show that patient safety and quality of care is being put at risk, then the HASC would be looking to raise its concerns through the appropriate channels. To refer it to the Secretary of State at this stage would require the Select Committee to make a recommendation for Council to do so, and sufficient evidence to support the escalation. The HASC Select Committee will continue to monitor this and it will be on the agenda for the September meeting.