



RCN London response to the review led by Michael Mansfield QC into
the impact of the Shaping a Healthier Future programme of
hospital reorganisation in North West London

With a membership of over 415,000 registered nurses, midwives, health visitors, nursing students and health care assistants, including 53,000 working in London, The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) is the voice of nursing across the UK and the largest professional union of nursing staff in the world. The RCN promotes patient and nursing interests on a wide range of issues by working closely with Government and other national and European political institutions, trade unions, professional bodies

6. Investment in out of hospital services

The benefit for patients of the Shaping a Healthier Future programme was based on an increase in out of hospital care to enable more patients to be kept well or treated at home to reduce hospital admissions. In November 2013 Jeremy Hunt promised seven-day access to GP surgeries throughout north-west London and the creation of over 800 additional posts to improve out-of-hospital care. In practice, though, little seems to have been done to boost capacity elsewhere in the system to make up for the closures.

We always hear a lot about how we can reconfigure, improve care and save cash yet with both the current situation with mental health and A&E services it is clear that alternative services have not adequately been put in place. Proper replacement services, transition arrangements, funding and a workforce plan should have been in place before the existing units were cut.

What is clear is that frontline staff do not feel they are being given the support they need to safely deliver services. Cuts to hospital care have been made first, before the increase in capacity has been delivered.

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