West Cumbrians’ VOICE for Health Care

The Editor

Whitehaven News

26 January 2016

Sir

We are pleased that The Whitehaven News has taken up the fight again to help save the services we need at the West Cumberland Hospital.

From our previous letters your readers might remember that we have a shimmer of hope that the Success Regime will be able to deliver a package which will include a full and sustainable service at WCH.

However we agree with you that proper engagement with members of staff (who are indeed still afraid to speak out) and with the public so far has been well below what was expected when the Success Regime started its work.

With you we share the worry that consultants will resign because they are not properly listened to or because they are expect to work unworkable rotas with insufficient lower grade staff. It would mean that an already precarious situation could escalate into a situation where there is no way back.

From your interview with Sir Neil McKay it is clear that even if he wants to he cannot guarantee fully consultant led A&E and maternity services, using the words ‘safe’ and sustainability’ as a get out. He has to realize that years of intended downgrading and asset stripping of the WCH by the Northumbria Trust has put us in this position. No surprise that the CQC found it necessary to put the North Cumbria Trust in ‘special measures’. It is this ‘buddy’ who should turn around and start bringing services back where they belong before it is too late!

Our group, the West Cumbrians Voice for Health Care, in supporting your efforts and the efforts of the We Need West Cumberland Hospital group) will continue to positively engage with the Success Regime and others to achieve the health care we need including local hospital services.

Yours

Jan den Bak, chairperson of West Cumbrians Voice for Health Care

Carole Wood man, secretary of West Cumbrians Voice for Health Care