**18th November 2016**

**PRESS RELEASE: Derby and Derbyshire LMC (DDLMC) respond to the publication of the Derbyshire Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP): ‘Joined Up Care’.**

DDLMC is cautiously optimistic about the publication of the Derbyshire STP today. We view the STP as a *framework* for health and social care in the county, and hope, with the continued involvement of the LMC, that we can ensure general practice is at the heart of developing the system further. We applaud the emphasis on preventative medicine, well-being and self-care, and the understanding that this can, and should be the responsibility of everyone across the STP, patients, and health care workers alike.

General practice is fundamental to the success of the STP and it must lead from the front in shaping and delivering the STP. GPs and practice teams are experienced health innovators; their input is vital. They understand the needs of their patients, and how those needs are best met. The STP must enable GPs and their practice teams to use their skills and expertise to shape future healthcare for their unique practice populations for the better.

We acknowledge that ‘doing nothing’ is not an option for providing health and social care across Derbyshire. Resources are not keeping pace with demand. Not only will the £219million health-funding gap continue to rise, but the inequities in healthcare across the population will also become more marked. Any transformation demanded of general practice *must* deliver the necessary resources to sustain it, giving it the headspace to change, and release time to care for its population.

The concept of splitting the country up into 44 STPs remains a concern. We are worried not only by the strict financial targets, but also the Department of Health absolving itself of accountability. However, STPs are now a reality, and, we are generally reassured by the contents of the Derbyshire plan.

It would be naïve to think STPs are not an NHSE cost-cutting initiative, but we are pleased that locally, this does not appear to involve the large-scale bed closures, reported in some parts of the country. We applaud the local STP Support Team, for acknowledging the need for general practice involvement, and for welcoming the involvement of the LMC. The strict time pressures, and secrecy demanded by NHSE has made this process unnecessarily difficult. We hope that now there can be an open and honest dialogue with health and social care professionals and patients across the county about what the STP means for them.

DDLMC will continue to steer the Derbyshire STP, to make sure local practices are appropriately resourced and supported through the changes. We will not accept inappropriate workload transfer, inadequate resources, nor transfer of debt from secondary to primary care. We intend to hold those at the centre to account, and to guarantee that the resources promised in both the STP and General Practice Forward View make it to frontline general practice.

DDLMC Chief Executive, Dr Kath Markus says *‘Many of us have seen multiple top down reorganisations of primary care, which have not made things better for patients or doctors. With a whole system approach we may have a better chance with the current plan, only time will tell.’*