

## **Guildhall Walk Healthcare Centre update report for HOSP March 2021**

### **Background**

The Guildhall Walk Healthcare Centre is located close to the city centre, with a list size of 8,400 patients. The practice holds an Alternative Provider Medical Service (APMS) contract with the CCG which was recently extended for a year until the end of September 2021 and this contract cannot be extended again. The current practice premise is in poor condition and there has been a change of landlord. Other sites in the area have been explored, in particular at the Somerstown Hub, but there is already a practice operating in the Hub, which makes this a less attractive option for both practices (for example, there is likely to be movement of patients between practices, affecting the stability of both).



### **Primary Care Commissioning Committee decision**

After discussion and review of the options the Primary Care Commissioning Committee of NHS Portsmouth Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), which includes clinical, officer, public health, lay member, NHS England and Healthwatch representation, has confirmed that the contract to provide primary care services through the Guildhall Walk Healthcare Centre will not be re-procured when it comes to an end on Thursday 30 September 2021. As a result of this, the practice will close on this date.

This decision was made due to a number of factors;

- The future of the building that currently houses the surgery is uncertain and the condition of the building is poor.
- The requirement to therefore relocate the practice patients regardless of any contract change
- Considerable investment is taking place in the new premises for the University practice in the city centre which is due to open in December 2021 (0.4 miles from the current Guildhall Walk premise)
- The University practice and other nearby ones have capacity to take on the patients from Guildhall Walk
- The NHS national direction of travel is towards bigger, co-located or merged practices which are more sustainable for the future

- The ability to offer patient choice, alongside minimum disruption for patients
- It is the most sensible option financially allowing more investment in primary care services and the wider NHS offer overall, bringing greatest potential benefits for patients

The CCG has considered the different options to ensure that the 8,400 registered patients will have continued and ongoing access to primary care services and will do this through what is called a 'managed transfer', which offers patients a choice of nearby practices.

This will secure the transfer of all registered patients to other practices in Portsmouth in an organised and facilitated way without any inconvenience to patients.

The three nearest practices all have capacity and are rated 'Good' by the Care Quality Commission. These practices are:

- The University Surgery – currently located a four-minute walk from Guildhall Walk and scheduled to move to new and improved premises in 2021 (see separate HOSP update letter for more details)
- The Somers Town Health Centre – currently located an eight-minute walk from Guildhall Walk
- The Southsea Medical Centre – currently located a 13-minute walk from Guildhall Walk

The NHS has also seen a lot of changes to the way that people access health care during the pandemic, and recent resident research suggests that many people will continue to take advantage of the convenience and flexibility offered by digital tools rather than in-person appointments.

We recognise the impact that this decision will have on staff, and it is with regret that this is happening in the current circumstances. Affected members of staff were informed of the changes on Wednesday 24 February 2021. Other practices in the city are, and will be, recruiting during the practice closedown timescales. The CCG will work with the practice to support staff, particularly to encourage a smooth closure of the practice with minimal disruption on the quality of care on offer.

## **Next Steps**

The CCG has written to all patients to inform them of the decision and outline the next steps. Patients will have a choice about which practice they move to, and every effort will be made to ensure that they are registered with a new practice that meets their needs. There will be online information events for patients to find out more about what the changes mean for them and their care.

Guildhall Walk Healthcare Centre will remain open until 30 September 2021 and patients can continue to access all of the same services. They are being actively encouraged to remain with the practice until there is a need to transition to a new surgery. The CCG will continue to work closely with Guildhall Walk Healthcare Centre to ensure that everyone affected by the changes is supported to make sure they continue to receive the care they need, particularly if they live with long term health conditions.

We recognise the impact this will have on both patients and staff working in the practice, particularly at this time. The CCG will be working very closely with the practice in the coming months ahead, to ensure that patients continue to receive consistent and high-quality care.

The CCG has had initial discussions with practices across the city and have been given assurance that there is capacity with regard to premises and workforce to accommodate the Guildhall Walk patients. The CCG will continue to work with practices to support and gain assurance that the transfer of patients can be accomplished in a safe and managed way.

The Panel is asked to note the update briefing.