

**Portsmouth Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel
Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust update
16 September 2021**

Introduction

This is an extremely busy period for the organisation across all our services. We continue to see an increasing number of patients than usual attending our emergency department and regularly care for an average of 330 patients a day with just under half of those arriving by ambulance. This non-elective demand continues to increase and is also being seen across many other areas of the country.

Maintaining safe and effective services whilst under severe pressure from increasing non-elective demand remains a priority, alongside continuing our focus on the health and wellbeing of our colleagues across PHU.

As a result of the significant and sustained increase in patients attending the emergency department at QA, we continue to encourage patients to make the right decision in terms of where they attend to receive treatment or support, in order to aid social distancing in the ED.

This includes the NHS 111 service where patients are advised to contact 111 either by phone or online before attending ED, unless it is a life-threatening emergency, so they can be directed to the right service at the right time. NHS 111 is also able to book patients in for a time slot at the ED or direct them to mental health services, urgent treatment centre, minor injuries unit, GP practice, pharmacy or self-care.

Notwithstanding these challenges, development work continues across our site at QA to ensure we can continue to deliver high quality services in efficient, well-maintained and well-designed buildings (see below).

Ongoing response to COVID-19

We are seeing a rise in prevalence across Portsmouth and the surrounding areas and the number of inpatients we're treating with COVID-19 continues to rise. We remain extremely conscious of those in our local communities who have not yet been fully vaccinated, and our duty to care for those who are immunosuppressed, vulnerable, or unable to have a COVID-19 vaccination.

As a result, and in line with other NHS organisations, the infection prevention and control measures we have in place at QA did not change when national restrictions were lifted in July and patients and visitors must wear face coverings, with social distancing arrangements remaining in place throughout our sites.

Recovering elective services

We are seeking to manage increases in planned activity in order to recover our services and return to normal non-elective activity, as well as planning for potential further impact of COVID-19, while embedding transformation to sustain improvements for the long term.

An elective recovery fund has been established as part of the national planning guidance to support services recovery by attaining set national thresholds compared to 2019/20 levels.

It will take a considerable amount of time to fully recover to pre-pandemic waiting times for patients, however we are assessing patients' clinical needs to ensure those requiring the most urgent care, including cancer services, receive it as quickly and safely as possible. We continue encouraging people to contact their GP practice with any concerns around their health.

We continued providing urgent and cancer treatments throughout the pandemic as we understand the impact delay could have had on patient care and outcomes. We continue to work closely with our partners across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to the elective recovery fund, £160 million of NHS funding was announced earlier in May to support 'elective accelerator' sites. A share of that funding has been secured for Hampshire and Isle of Wight ICS to support the implementation and evaluation of innovative ways to address elective recovery for the benefit of our patients and population.

New emergency department

Our new emergency department received outline planning permission from Portsmouth City Council in July and we submitted our outline business case (OBC) to NHS England and Improvement the same month.

Clinical and non-clinical colleagues and teams were closely involved in developing the OBC, which describes in more detail the strategic, economic, commercial, financial and management cases for the programme. The purpose of the OBC is to seek approval for investment in the new ED capital project, which will align and support the new emergency care clinical model (below). The OBC has been developed with support from the Hampshire and Isle of Wight ICS to ensure the future of emergency care services within the Portsmouth and South East Hampshire system.

Development of the preferred site

The Trust has undertaken detailed option appraisal and have identified the east car park as the most appropriate location in the QA site to design and build the new facility. The ED will comprise three levels:

- Level A – a staff car park which will retain at least 200 of the existing 522 staff spaces in the existing east car park
- Level B – clinical facilities (majors, urgent care, paediatrics, radiology and resus) on level B, with direct access from Hunter road for ambulances.
- Level C – will include rest areas and wellbeing space for staff, as well as training rooms, relaxation space, changing facilities and office space.

Timeline

Work now continues to develop the full business case which, subject to national approvals later this year, is scheduled for submission in Spring 2022 for national approval in Autumn 2022. Thereafter, the construction period is a full two years with the new facilities planned to open to patients ahead of winter 2024.

Patient and public engagement

The capital investment will enhance the current provision of services, rather than changing their nature. The level of staff, patient and public engagement to-date has been recently limited by our significant role in the NHS response to the COVID-19 pandemic, however wide-ranging engagement activities will be restarted and undertaken to inform the detailed design, and we remain committed to continuing to engage with patients, the public, staff, committee members, partners and our communities, working with other statutory and voluntary and patient organisations.

Developing a new model of care

We know that simply providing a new facility will not enable us to make the improvements needed for patients in our communities. This capital investment provides an opportunity to redesign how unscheduled and emergency care is provided.

The new clinical model has been redesigned against a set of core principles that provide the framework for all decision making on pathways, processes, workforce, digital and estates options:

- seven-day specialty model
- seven-day access to diagnostics and reporting
- 24-hour, seven-day access to assessment and initiation of treatment by a senior decision maker
- All patients will be managed on a same day emergency or outpatient pathway unless/until requirement for admission to hospital
- Pathways will maximise first place admission under an appropriate specialist, minimising handoffs and handovers of care unless clinically justified
- Emergency workflows will be separately planned and resourced to allow sustainable delivery of emergency and elective activity.

The programme will deliver safer, more timely care, greater efficiency and an improved experience for patients, visitors and staff.

Wider improvements to the Trust estate

We continue to work to maintain and improve our buildings, facilities and the environment for the benefit of patients, visitors and staff in line with our Trust strategy, ensuring that we deliver flexibility for the future.

In March 2021, we started construction on a new two-storey ward building on the north car park site, a vital component of our wider plans, in collaboration with partners across Portsmouth and South East Hampshire, to make sure that patients who need urgent care are able to access it more quickly. It is also key to increasing resilience to support our existing partnership with the Isle of Wight NHS Trust.

In the same month, Portsmouth City Council approved our plans for the Trust to build a multi-storey car park alongside the new ward, which will ensure we are providing much needed parking for patients and visitors in the future.

We are also making improvements to enhance the physical environment across the QA site to increase biodiversity and improve the experience of our patients, visitors, and staff. Works

have recently been completed to develop two of the hospital's outdoor spaces for the benefit of patients, visitors, and colleagues.

The 'garden of life' opened earlier this year for patients and staff to relax and enjoy the beautifully landscaped garden.

The deck outside the paediatric department has been recently landscaped to include improved planting along the borders and inclusion of new play equipment, and a shade to enable the space to be better used during periods of hot weather.

Further updates

We will ensure that committee members are regularly updated and the Trust would be pleased to provide further updates as required.