

Introduction

This paper provides a general update from Southern Health, with a particular emphasis on our services provided in the Portsmouth and South East Hampshire area. The update includes actions we are taking to support the wider health and care system, for example to prevent the need for acute hospital admission and to facilitate timely discharge of patients into the community. Also included are Trust wide updates including on proposals to bring together community and mental health services, as well as our response to ongoing workforce challenges impacting the whole NHS. A number of positive initiatives are also shared, such as a new gambling treatment service which has recently been launched.

Trust-wide update

Proposals to bring together community, mental health and learning disability services

As previously reported at this panel, following an independent review of services earlier this year, there are proposals to bring together all NHS community, mental health and learning disability services provided in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. The ambition is to create a single NHS Trust to deliver these services in a more joined up way, bringing benefits to patients and communities.

Plans are progressing well to develop a strategic outline case to go before the boards of all the organisations involved in March 2023. This case will set out the rationale for change and the work that would be required to bring services together and set up the new organisation. If approved, the programme will continue to develop a more detailed full business case later in 2023. Subject to the necessary approvals, the aim is for the new organisation to become a legal entity by April 2024.

The creation of this new organisation will form the platform upon which further integration and development of services can be made, taking what's best from each of the current providers and building on this.

All organisations are working together to develop detailed communications and engagement plans to ensure patients, service users, families, communities, staff and partners are informed and involved as this programme develops. Initial conversations within existing forums and meetings have already taken place. In October a letter was sent to stakeholders to provide an update and offer to meet and discuss further. Stakeholders were also invited to join a meeting to have initial conversations about the programme of work to create a new organisation, which was one of the recommendations. This meeting took place on 22 November and was attended by around 70 stakeholders.

A community engagement meeting took place on 25 November and was attended by local Healthwatch representatives and community and voluntary sector partners, including those from some of our seldom heard communities. The principles that will form the basis for the community engagement for this work were discussed and agreed. A strength-based approach to engagement was supported by all. The group also agreed to ongoing meetings to work alongside us to deliver the community engagement required.

Focus on our people

Workforce pressures continue to be a significant challenge for the NHS and Southern Health. In September the Trust's overall vacancy rate was 9%, (the Portsmouth and South East Hampshire Division was slightly better at 6.5%) with some areas and some professions seeing significantly higher rates. Particular challenges are in the recruitment of nurses, especially mental health nurses, and medical staff. The greatest staffing challenges for Portsmouth and South East Hampshire mirror those of the wider Trust with particularly gaps in mental health nursing and the medical workforce. We are focused on addressing these challenges in multiple ways, to improve recruitment and retention of our staff and ensure the health, wellbeing and experience of our people is the best it can be.

A new People Plan is being developed, in collaboration with staff, to set out how we will improve staff experience of working at the Trust.

The Trust is supporting staff with the rising cost of living, for example through increase fuel mileage rates, working with Citizens' Advice to provide financial support, access to grants and hardship funds, access to free, independent financial advice, and sharing resources and guidance for financial wellbeing.

'Action Groups' of staff across the Trust have been leading change on the things that matter most to them, including career progression, flexible working and the cost of living – this has led to changes which the Trust has adopted or priorities for the organisation to take forward in the People Plan.

We were encouraged to see a significant increase in the number of Southern Health staff completing the NHS Staff Survey this year, which has recently closed. This will provide access to even more representative information about our people's experience and enable us to better address their needs, when the findings are published in 2023.

The Trust is part of a People Collaborative alongside the other provider Trusts and the Integrated Care Board in Hampshire. By working more closely, our organisations have taken a more joined up approach to recruitment, retention and workforce wellbeing. This has seen reduced vacancy rates, improved Staff Survey results, increased focus on diversity and inclusion, and some significant progress, for example in the recruitment of international staff. The People Collaborative was recently a finalist in the national Health Service Journal Awards.

Industrial action

The Trust has plans in place, and is working alongside unions and partners, to ensure that urgent and essential services are able to continue operating during any industrial action that may take place in the coming months.

In November, Royal College of Nursing (RCN) members at Southern Health voted to strike as part of a national ballot. Of those organisations whose RCN members voted to take action, the RCN has selected a number of organisations to take part in strike action scheduled for 15 and 20 December. Southern Health is **not** one of these organisations and therefore Southern Health RCN members will not be taking action on these dates.

Southern Health is also not an organisation whose Unison members will be striking at this stage.

Stage 2 Action Plan

Further to previous, specific updates to this panel, the Trust continues to make progress against the specific areas recommended by the Stage 2 Independent Report. This includes improvements to our approach to responding to complaints and how we support carers and family members of our patients. For example, the Trust has established a new Carer and Patient Support Hub, achieved accreditation in the Triangle of Care approach, and set up a complaints review panel which includes services user, Healthwatch and Integrated Care Board representation.

New gambling treatment service launched

An innovative, NHS-funded gambling treatment service has been launched, delivered by Southern Health. The Service is one of only a handful such NHS services nationally. The service offers evidence-based, specialist treatment to people with gambling-related harms and gambling disorder, including individual and group psychotherapy and medical interventions. The service is delivered by a multidisciplinary team including psychiatrists, psychologists, clinical therapists and peer support workers. Based in Southampton, the service is also open to people living in Portsmouth and Hampshire and uses a range of approaches including digital technology to enable people to access care in a way that best suits them.

Covid vaccination programme

The Trust continues to play a key role in delivering Covid-19 vaccinations to vulnerable and housebound patients, working alongside primary care colleagues and other partners.

Staff vaccinations:

Flu Clinics have been provided across Trust sites with our occupational health services team and also there are peer vaccinators in all teams who can provide flu clinics or ad-hoc services. Clinics are booked through until mid-December and then any further clinics will be supported by local peer vaccinators.

The Willow Group in Gosport are offering COVID vaccinations to staff if they cannot access them elsewhere.

Trust achieves University Hospital Status

Southern Health takes research, innovation and education very seriously, understanding the benefits to patients, staff and communities. Following a rigorous application process, Southern Health has been awarded membership of the University Hospitals Association and is therefore a University Hospital Trust. This is a reflection of the high-quality research, innovation and education that Trust staff are involved with. It also recognises the strong links forged with universities, including the University of Southampton. At this stage the Trust has decided not to change its name to reflect this status, but will be ensuring that patients, staff and prospective staff are aware of the status and what it means for them.

Trust takes on Primary Care service in Basingstoke

Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust, in collaboration with Hampshire Hospitals Foundation Trust (HHFT), Solent NHS Trust and North Hampshire Urgent Care (NHUC) officially took over the running of Shakespeare Road Medical Practice in Basingstoke on 1 December. The collaborative approach being delivered at the practice will hopefully have a significant impact with each provider bring their expertise, resources and experience to the practice, ensuring patients get the highest the quality

services. Southern Health and its partners will provide GP services with the site remaining a GP surgery.

Portsmouth and South East Hampshire (PSEH) specific update

The following are some of the key initiatives that we have put in place to address system challenges to ensure we are doing all we can as a community provider to manage current and future demand, and ensure patients get the right care at the right place and time, working collaboratively with our acute and primary care partners.

Urgent Community Response (UCR) and Virtual Wards (VW)

Patients on all caseloads and new referrals are prioritised based on need and those with urgent clinical care, which can be supported at home, are seen the same day (or 2-hour response) as required. Patients can be referred to the Virtual Ward if they have suspected or known frailty, presenting with an acute exacerbation/decompensation related to their condition, where clinical care can be managed within the home as an alternative to care in hospital, for a short duration (up to 14 days).

Frailty virtual wards opened on 1st August and have admitted patients to support the PSEH community frailty strategy model drawn up by the Integrated Care Board. The virtual wards have been operating successfully since opening and allow patients with frailty to avoid admission to the acute hospital while receiving care, support, and the consultation of multidisciplinary teams. Average number of people on the frailty virtual wards across Fareham and Gosport and South East Hampshire is 12 people with an average length of stay of 6 days.

People are admitted to the frailty virtual ward by the local urgent community response (UCR) teams. The UCR team takes calls from GPs, ED and SCAS and dispatch local community nursing and/or therapy teams to assess within two hours, plan treatment and admit to the virtual ward if required. The service is running 8.00am-8.00pm, seven days per week. In October 2022 the UCR and VW team prevented 195 people from being admitted to the acute hospital. SCAS referrals are received from two of the clinical desks at their Control Centre and from paramedics on scene. Referrals from SCAS have increased from 25 in August to 60 in October 2022. From the beginning of December the UCR teams are working with the Fire Service to assist with calls related to patients falling.

UCR Matrons are working with OSDEC (Older Peoples Same Day Emergency Care) and the FIT (Frailty Interface Team) at QA hospital to provide education and create pathways to enable timely diagnostic investigations and enable people to return home with appropriate support and care. This interface work started in early November and is ongoing.

Bed Management

The Portsmouth and South East Hampshire division opened all surge beds at the beginning of November (an increase of 6 beds to 88).

Improved decision-making processes are now in place to enable swifter discharge of patients from QA hospital to our community hospital beds – our principle is to use trusted assessors who are best sighted on patients' acuity and current demand who are best able to allocate patients to the most appropriate setting based on individual need and dependency. We also have improved processes to securing patient transport at an earlier stage of the patient's journey through hospital, to further reduce delays to discharge. The month of November saw an increase of 29% more discharges

through our community hospitals as a result and an increase of 30% more discharges to our beds before noon, part of the Home for Lunch initiative.

Care Home support

We are working to support care home residents and staff, recognising that care home residents may be at increased risk of deteriorating health and therefore hospital admission. The PSEH division has a small, dedicated nursing home team that provides support and education to nursing homes in the locality. The Willow Group also provide an acute home visiting service and this includes visiting house bound residents in care and nursing homes.

In addition, our PSEH division has started a pilot with an older people's mental health (OPMH) care home in-reach service with a focus on care homes with high admission rates and remodelling teams to support with education of staff. The In-Reach Team is providing advice to support residents with their mental health needs, sign posting to other agencies and enhancing the transition of collaborative working between services involved in patient care. The care and nursing homes are very receptive of our input, they have expressed that maintaining continuity of care has been highly beneficial for the resident, next of kin, and themselves. We are engaged with ICB and adult services safeguarding colleagues in quality review meetings, attending a number of primary care network meetings and the Care Homes Team to amplify joint working.

Finally, the diabetes team in the PSEH division are working with Solent NHS Trust in a 'Hard to reach' project with short term funding, which involves going into care homes to provide diabetes support to staff and residents.

Community Mental Health Transformation with primary care networks

Further to previous reports on community mental health transformation, steering group meetings are in place every fortnight and include all Primary Care Network (PCNs) as well as other partners to ensure effective collaboration and communication between primary care and community mental health teams. The ICB has shared that in the South East the relationships are positive and there is a sense of shared ownership and purpose, which is a really good platform to build on. This is part of the wider HIOW work focussed on "No Wrong Door" – aiming to improve access and signposting to the right mental health support.

Mental Health Roles

The division has collaborated with local district councils to develop a joint housing and mental health role. This role aims to support the mental health teams to reduce the challenges brought about by housing concerns within the mental health inpatient units. This is part of a broader, Trust- and system-wide focus on mental health and housing, recognising the huge impact on patients and on services when there are challenges with accommodation.

Joint work with Solent NHS Trust

Aligned to plans to bring Southern Health and Solent Trust's services closer together, clinical teams in Portsmouth and South East Hampshire have continued to develop clinical pathways across physical and mental health services between our two organisations. This is in line with the Hampshire and IOW ICB clinical delivery group workstreams.

Progress has been made by working jointly in areas such as palliative care, diabetes, community services and admission avoidance, and community inpatient services. This is increasing the communication and collaboration of the Trusts and is already starting to bear fruit.

Patient experience feedback

Patient feedback is incredibly important to us as it helps us understand where we are doing well and where improvements are needed. Despite the current challenges we are pleased that the majority of feedback we received from our patients has been positive.

For example, the Portsmouth and South East division received 293 feedback comments from patients in the month of October, the comments being either compliments, complaints, or concerns. Of the 293 comments, 78% have been compliments and less than 1% have been complaints which displays the positive experience that patients have while attending PSEH services. Concerns are reviewed and triangulated in a monthly Quality and Safety meeting. Over the last 6 months, the average percentage of complaints is 0.5%, concerns 13.1% and compliments 86.4%.

A further example is the Gosport mental health team at Hewat centre. When patients were asked "How likely are you to recommend our service / team to friends and family if they needed similar care or treatment?" 93% of the respondents were positive; with 62% saying "Extremely likely" and 31% responding "Likely."

END OF REPORT