



# Portsmouth Health Overview Scrutiny Panel

## Health and Care Portsmouth report

March 2024

### 1. Urgent care system pressures

#### 1.1. Fire Break Week in Portsmouth and South East Hampshire

- 1.2. Urgent and emergency services continue to be challenged with pressures impacting the whole health and care system but causing the most visible problems at the front door of the Emergency Department (ED) at Queen Alexandra (QA) Hospital.
- 1.3. A critical incident was declared at QA for much of January and organisations have been working tirelessly to reduce demand and admissions to ED.
- 1.4. While the critical incident has now been stood down, Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust (PHU) held a Fire Break Week - a large scale plan that pulls together senior colleagues from acute hospitals, community, ambulance, social care, primary care, and the Integrated Care System (ICS) to reduce occupancy levels by taking immediate actions - from 12-18 February, with another planned for 4-10 March.
- 1.5. Reasoning for the Fire Break Week included an increase in the average daily number of no criteria to reside (nCTR) patients (i.e. those who could be safely discharged), and a forecast increased demand for beds in March 2024.
- 1.6. The objective was to de-escalate from current Same Day Emergency Care (SDEC) areas through a sustained reduction in nCTR list size of minus 44 patients (setting the new nCTR baseline as 160 patients), through safe and efficient daily discharges.
- 1.7. During the week, senior representatives came together to operate under incident response protocols and address challenges as they arose. The number of nCTR patients within QA Hospital was reduced by 20, to an average of 180 patients with nCTR.
- 1.8. The next Fire Break Week will take place from 4-10 March and will build on the success of bringing senior colleagues together. Attendees will work from the QA

Hospital site one one of two groups, each addressing different challenges:

- Group one will focus on discharge - further reducing the number of nCTR patients and progressing plans to improve the pathways for patients with mental health needs and homeless patients.
- Group two will focus on redirection of patients attending ED inappropriately, progressing improvements to category two ambulance response times and the operational approach within assessment units.

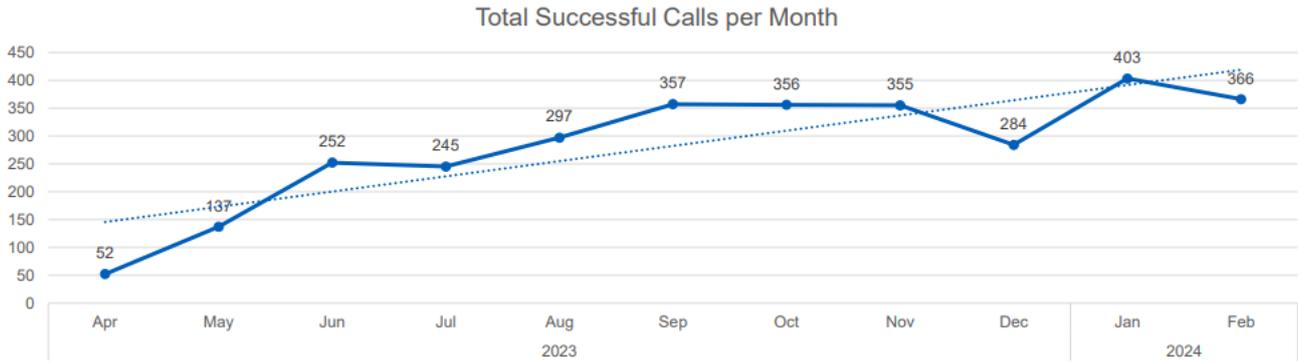
- 1.9. A final Fire Break Week is expected to take place before Easter weekend when an increase in demand is expected.
- 1.10. **Increase in step-down capacity at Shearwater Care Home**
- 1.11. To help alleviate pressure at QA and increase flow throughout the urgent care pathways, Portsmouth City Council and Solent NHS Trust have worked to open additional bedded capacity at Shearwater Care Home in the city.
- 1.12. The purpose is to support patients initially within Summerlee (formerly Jubilee) and Spinnaker wards who are medically optimised for discharge but are awaiting the next steps to be able to return home. This will allow those wards to take on patients awaiting rehabilitation services within acute settings including PHU to get the services they need sooner.

## **2. Adult Mental Health**

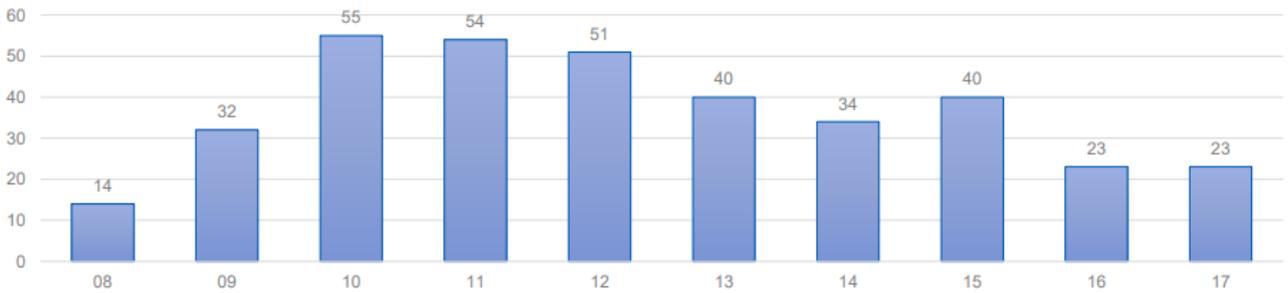
### **2.1. Portsmouth Mental Health Hub**

2.2. The Portsmouth Mental Health Hub is a free phoneline that anyone aged 16+ in Portsmouth can call to get support for their mental health. It is operated by a team of advisors, employed by Solent NHS Trust and based at St. Mary's Health Campus. The phoneline is open Monday to Friday, 8am-6pm, and aims to connect callers to the right support for them. This could be to community mental health services, such as NHS Talking Therapies or Positive Minds, or signposting to other relevant services such as the council's Cost of Living Hub, housing offices, Citizens Advice etc. The phoneline is not a crisis line.

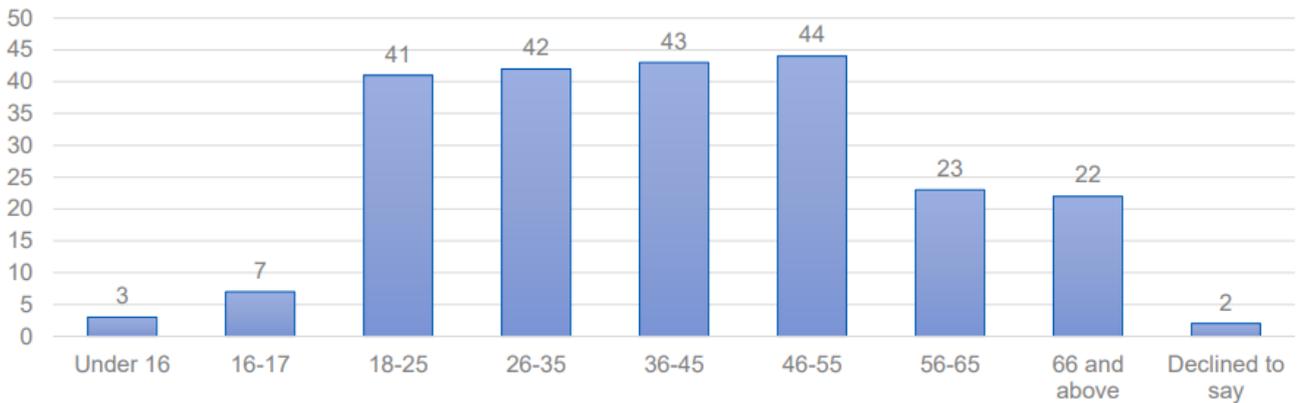
2.3. Since launching on 1 April 2023, there have been 3,105 calls to the Hub (an increase of 1,413 calls since our last report in November 2023).



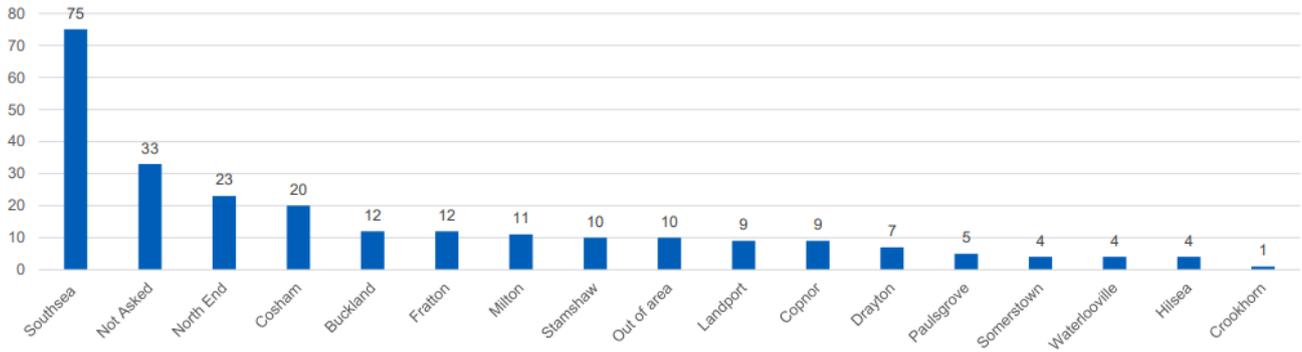
2.4 In February (our latest data set), there were 366 calls with an average of 17.4 per day. The busiest time of the day is 10-11am.



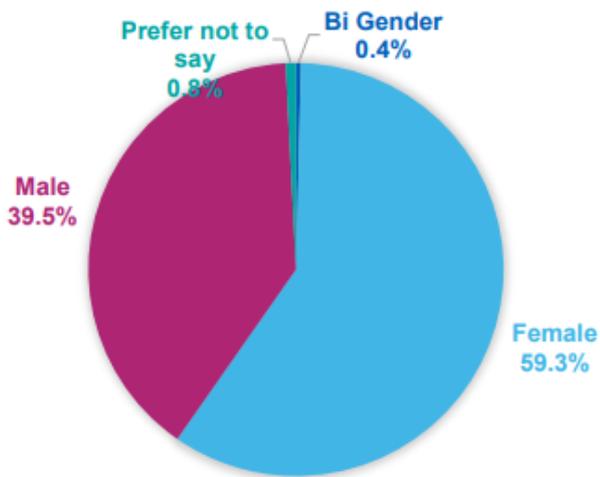
2.5 In February, most callers were aged 46-55 years, although there is a relatively even distribution from 18-55 years.



2.6 In February (and similar to other months), most callers to the Hub are from Southsea:

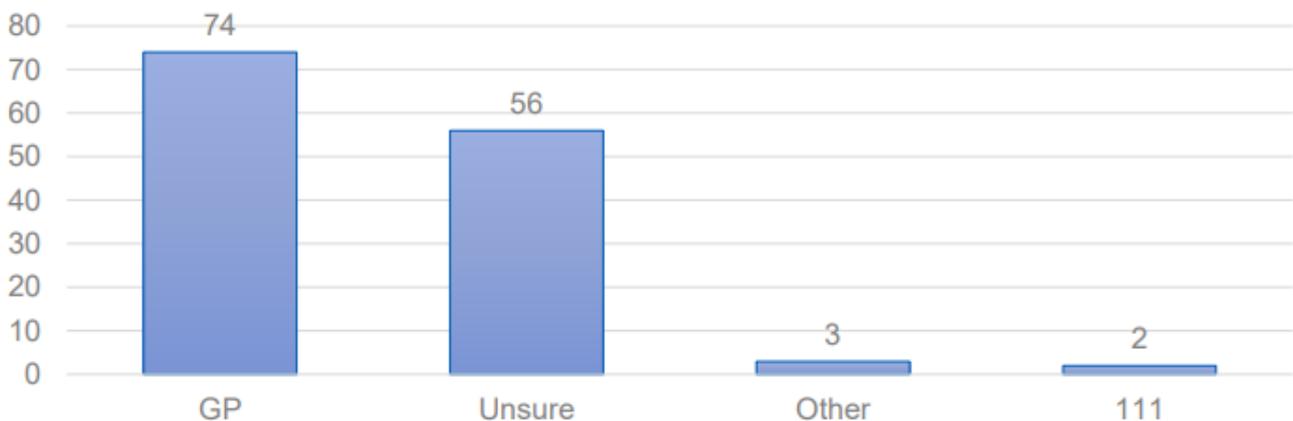


2.7 In February, most callers to the Hub were female:



2.8 When residents speak to the Hub, most are encouraged to complete self care at home, or are referred to NHS Talking Therapies. Some are referred to their GP practice, Positive Minds, A2i or other services. 28% of calls in February required a call back from a practitioner.

2.9 In February, 74 of the calls were diverted from GP practices, with people saying they would have gone to their GP if they didn't know about the Hub:



2.10 The service is also diverting calls away from NHS 111 and other services.

- 2.11 **Increasing physical health checks for people with Severe Mental Illness (SMI)**
- 2.12 In June 2023, Portsmouth welcomed a new team of specialist pharmacists to offer expert care and advice in GP practices and the community, to support patients with complex health conditions.
- 2.13 Mental Health Specialist Pharmacist, Muhammed Alnagdi, conducted a pilot programme with Trafalgar Medical Group Practice between 1 September and 31 December 2023, to increase the uptake of physical health checks for patients living with severe mental illness (SMI).
- 2.14 Taking certain SMI medications can put individuals at increased risk of developing health problems so physical health checks are offered yearly through GP practices.
- 2.15 After observing current practices, identifying challenges and trialling ideas, Muhammed made recommendations to improve patient responses to physical health checks and began testing some of his recommendations.
- 2.16 During the pilot, Trafalgar Medical Group Practice doubled the number of SMI patients receiving physical health checks from the previous reporting period - 26% (94 patients) in Q2 2022/23 to 51% (179 patients) in Q2 2023/24.
- 2.17 Successful patient-facing interventions include:
- Calling patients and making the appointment there and then, rather than sending an invitation via SMS/letter (in which patients then have to call back to book the appointment)
  - Having the same person make initial contact with the patient, then conduct the mental health view, and any necessary follow-up calls
  - Flexibility with the duration of the mental health view and availability of alternative appointment dates/times, which puts the patients at ease and strengthens the relationship
- 2.18 Additional work by the Specialist Pharmacist allowed coordination with secondary mental health practitioners, to prevent duplication of work in primary care, by ensuring the correct coding template was utilised and information was recorded in the patient's GP record.
- 2.19 **Improving access to physical activity for people with severe mental illness (SMI)**
- 2.20 A pilot project delivered in partnership between Solent NHS Trust and BH Live has provided adults accessing secondary mental health services with access to leisure facilities to improve their physical activity levels, and reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, hypertension, obesity and mental health disorders.

- 2.21 The Physical Activity Improved Lifestyle project received funding from No Wrong Door, the adult community mental health transformation programme across Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight.
- 2.22 The project aimed to support adults who experience severe mental illness (SMI) - who are more likely to engage in low levels of physical activity and high levels of sedentary behaviour.
- 2.23 Five cohorts of people took part in the six-week programme at BH Live where staff members would meet the individual at reception, work with them to build their confidence in the gym and develop a further 12-week personalised programme.
- 2.24 Feedback from participants included how supportive and enjoyable the sessions were with people feeling more motivated to use the gym independently as a result of the initial project.
- 2.25 A subsequent pilot project was also undertaken by NHS Allied Health Professionals and BH Live Active which explored the benefit of hiring exercise professionals to provide physical activity and exercise sessions across psychiatric wards and a psychiatric intensive care unit.
- 2.26 This resulted in an increase in patients' physical activity levels as well as improved mental health.
- 2.27 Feedback from patients included how the exercise sessions helped add structure to the day. Some feedback did suggest patients would like to visit the gym to exercise.
- 2.28 The pilot projects demonstrate the benefits of collaborative working for the benefit of improving provision for patients and ensuring opportunities to improve physical health and lifestyle are more accessible.
- 2.29 Funding has now been secured through the Portsmouth Provider Partnership (P3) to expand the community-based supported gym partnership between Solent NHS and BH Live to run four six-week programmes for up to 10 people, and to increase exercise on acute wards, providing a six-day service and throughput into community exercise options, for more than 250 people.
- 2.30 In addition, the project will expand beyond exercise and will look to improve awareness of improved lifestyles i.e. smoking cessation, finances, relationships, cooking and nutrition, in partnership with Public Health and Adult Social Care colleagues at Portsmouth City Council.

### **3. Healthy Living in Paulsgrove**

- 3.1. The Healthy Living in Paulsgrove project continues to engage and involve residents in how we can promote healthier and happier lifestyles in Paulsgrove.

- 3.2. On Saturday 13 April, a community workshop is being held at Paulsgrove Community Centre, for residents and organisations to come together and discuss the emerging themes from conversations over the last nine months. These include:
- Activities, events and support for children and families
  - Community activities and services - for all ages
  - Transport - to/from the supermarket, North Harbour, Mountbatten, further into Paulsgrove
  - A community space - a place to meet and talk, a hive of activity, potential for a charity shop etc.
  - Shopping and food - making healthy choices, budget restraints, cooking classes, cooking on a budget, food bank
  - Using online services - shopping, banking, healthcare etc.
  - Health - including access to primary care, dentistry, mental health and loneliness
  - Awareness - knowing what's available/accessing services
  - Raising aspirations and upskilling - motivating young people, developing skills, volunteer workforce
  - Greening/environment
- 3.3. At the workshop, a series of solutions - as identified by residents - will be set out by colleagues and residents to implement over the next 12 months and beyond in Paulsgrove.
- 3.4. The work is supported by colleagues across the council, NHS, voluntary sector, education and other partners. More than 50 people sit on the working group and we expect 50+ to attend the community workshop in April.

## **4. Portsea Working Group**

- 4.1. Work also continues in Portsea, where we are undertaking a piece of work to better understand the health and wellbeing needs of people living in the area.
- 4.2. 252 people completed a survey (which closed on 29 November 2023) which asked how people would describe their health, what they do to stay fit and well, what things would help them to improve their health, where they go to find healthcare information, their understanding of primary care, and what already works well.
- 4.3. Key findings from the survey were as follows:
- Nearly 80% of respondents considered their health to be poor or average
  - Over a third of people said they lacked motivation or confidence to manage their health
  - Over a third said they needed support with improving their housing
  - Around a third said they needed more support for their condition
  - Cost of living was a significant issue for just under a third of respondents

- Over a quarter of people found using online services difficult
- Other than GP and nurse roles, well under half of respondents did not have awareness of the various other roles that can support patients
- There was variable knowledge of the pharmacy services on offer, with less than half of respondents having awareness of vaccinations, medication deliveries and blood pressure checks for example
- Some feedback noted regarding difficulties accessing services, particularly for GP appointments
- Many positive comments in relation to:
  - Community Hub
  - Pharmacies
  - Pantry
  - Bingo at various locations
  - John Pounds Community Centre

4.4 Feedback from the survey was taken to the Primary Care Operations Group (PCOG) in February with a draft action plan, created in partnership with the Portsea Working Group (made up of officers from across the council, NHS and voluntary sector, councillors and residents), following several conversations with the community.

4.5 Follow-up conversations will take place, but draft actions so far include:

- Linking in with community connectors and social prescribers to support residents in accessing primary care services
- Mapping the available assets in the Portsea area and producing an interactive map of places, activities and services people can access
- Deliver face-to-face workshops, focus groups and events on various health topics e.g. self-care, screening, using digital services etc.
- Sharing information about services for families and young children in the community, linking in with Portsmouth City Council's Early Help and Prevention team and local Family Hub offer
- Link housing providers, contractors and residents in with SwitchedOn Portsmouth and the council's Cost of Living Hub around keeping warmer homes in winter

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