

Health Overview and Scrutiny

Briefing paper

Title: Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust update

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Purpose of the paper:

To update the committee on the work being carried out by Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust (PHU). It covers an update on our recent performance and general updates.

Additional context on performance

- Our [Integrated Performance Report \(IPR\)](#) is published on our public website and provides data on how the Trust is performing against our strategic aims.
- A slide deck will follow shortly and will provide detail of our Trust's performance over time with a focus on:
 - Total General and Acute (G&A) beds which have increased over time
 - How the use of escalation and surge beds have increased
 - Total occupancy across the hospital which has increased consistently through the year

Performance

Our performance is remaining stable and is in line with our operating plan for the year.

ED

66.1% of patients attending A&E were seen within 4 hours in July 2024. Following a focused effort by teams, we have seen a significant and sustained improvement in patient triage times over the last five months. This helps to ensure patients are routed and prioritised upon arrival to the ED. However, the number of patients in ED at any one time remains very high, with patients requiring admission having to wait longer due to the lack of available hospital beds.

Occupancy levels

Across July, there was an average of 1,055 occupied overnight General and Acute (G&A) beds, against a core bed stock of 1,022. As a result, a high number of escalation spaces remain in use to support day-to-day patient flow throughout the hospital. The growth in occupancy has been partly driven by an increase in the number of patients remaining in hospital who no longer meet the criteria to reside. In July, an average of 213 beds each day were occupied by patients who no longer met the criteria to reside, equivalent to one in five beds compared to core bed stock.

We are working with our health and social care partners to ensure care is delivered in the right place, focusing on improving internal pathways and processes, and facilitating timely discharge from the hospital.

Elective care

The Trust continues to focus on reducing elective long waits. As of the end of July, there were seven patients who have been waiting more than two years for their treatment. Six of these patients have received their treatment dates, and teams are working with the final patient on a date. There has been a continued focus on booking our longest-waiting patients and increasing capacity across those specialties with the largest backlogs.

Preparations are well underway to deliver additional activity across ENT (Ear Nose and Throat), DIEP (plastic surgery breast reconstruction), and Colorectal services, with the Trust aiming to significantly reduce the number of patients waiting longer than 78 and 65 weeks by the end of September.

So far this year the Trust has seen a 16% increase in suspected cancer referrals compared to the same period last year. Routine capacity has been repurposed across certain specialties to meet this increased demand and maintain cancer waiting times.

Finance

The Trust's approved 2024/25 operating plan requires delivery of a full year financial deficit of no more than £31.9m. Intensive financial improvement is ongoing, led by executive directors.

Creating a single corporate service

We are progressing our partnership between Isle of Wight NHS Trust (IWT) and PHU to develop clinically and financially sustainable services to all our patients and communities.

As part of this, we are redesigning our corporate and support services across both organisations to effectively and efficiently support our clinical and operational teams across both sites.

In July, we launched a consultation to gather the views and feedback of all staff on the draft structures and job descriptions that will form the new single corporate services across both IWT and PHU. Union representatives have been fully involved and working with us to ensure staff are fairly engaged and all opportunities for feedback are taken.

The consultation will run for 45 days, concluding in mid-September. We hope to have the single services up and running before the end of the year.

General updates:

Building Better Emergency Care: progressing our clinical models

Construction on a new Emergency Department at QA Hospital began in March 2023, however work to develop more resilient and effective clinical models of care to help tackle some of the long-standing challenges we know exist within our current location began before then. This continues to be a vital piece of work alongside partner organisations such as South Central Ambulance Service and Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board.

Teams are working together to ensure that when the building is complete, they are ready and prepared with new ways of working to provide care to our patients. The new layout allows us to work more flexibly including cubicles over curtained areas to improve infection prevention and control levels and space that can be adapted dependent on patient and clinical need. All of this goes alongside a wider piece of system work to improve flow across all providers ahead of winter 2024. This includes the system wide Firebreaks held across Portsmouth and the South East over the last year, which did enable all of us to see a visible impact on the number of patients with No Criteria to Reside.

Below are some of the identified areas of work we are currently progressing:

Single Point of Access for ambulances

Historically ambulances arriving for paediatrics have had multiple points of arrival depending on the child's requirements. We continue to develop a new clinical model that in-line with the national standards creates a single point of access for paediatric ambulances arriving at QA Hospital.

Initial assessment and access to diagnostics

The new space will allow us to adopt a new model of triage where our sickest patients will be assessed quicker providing a better quality of care and improved outcomes. There will be additional resus capacity for both adults and paediatric patients, as well as direct access for imaging such as x-ray and MRI within the department. By reducing the time spent in our ED, we are putting further emphasis on the value of our patient's time and importance of improving outcomes.

Same Day Emergency Care

We are working across all our Same Day Emergency Care (SDEC) pathways that the Emergency Department often feeds into to learn from what is working well and could be adopted elsewhere, as well as what needs further improvement. Our SDECs enable us to ensure people who need to be treated urgently, but not necessarily admitted can receive the care they need in a timely way before returning home or their place of care. Our surgical and older person's SDECs have been identified as exemplar areas across the Trust, so we are working with them to learn and improve ahead of the opening of the new ED.

Mental health

We recognise the challenges around the provision of mental health support in the ED and are working with partners including South Central Ambulance Service and our newly established PHU Mental Health team consisting of a senior lead for mental health, mental health matron, dementia lead and Admiral nurse. The team work independently but in partnership with the Southern Health Mental Health Liaison Team based at QA Hospital.

Transition planning

Representatives from across PHU are looking at the transition plan for moving between the existing and new Emergency Department and how we will communicate these changes internally and externally. This includes information on accessing services, contact information, radiology, IT, security and wider updates. Ensuring partners are also aware of

information is key to the successful transition to the new location so we will continue to work closely with key stakeholders.

Building progress

Work progresses well with the building now watertight and key milestones such as internal doors and the fit out of many rooms commencing. Installation on the solar panels to provide sustainable energy to the building has begun and floor coverings are complete. Fit out of the department continues and progress remains on track.

The link bridge connecting the new ED to the main hospital is installed, helping improve access for patients being transferred for admission, and will open when the new department does.

Work continues to remain on schedule for Winter 2024 with time scheduled for staff to familiarise themselves with the layout ahead of opening.

Endoscopy Unit at Queen Alexandra Hospital

The Endoscopy Unit at QA Hospital provides a wide range of diagnostic and therapeutic procedures to more than 15,000 patients a year. Due to growing demand for day-patient procedures, we are developing the ground floor of Lancaster House, near the North Car Park at QA Hospital, into a new endoscopy unit. Planning permission was granted in February 2024 and work began to develop the space that was previously occupied by corporate teams. The new unit will increase the number of rooms that the procedure can be offered in, as well as providing two recovery areas and improved access to the building. The unit is due to open in early 2025.

Two new theatres at Queen Alexandra Hospital

Our two new theatres on the QA Hospital site are complete. They will help improve patient experience by reducing the risk of last-minute cancellations due to the emergency repairs in older theatres and allow us to deliver a higher number of procedures. The new theatres also mean that when we are carrying out work in other theatres, there won't be a reduction in activity.

Entrance developments at Queen Alexandra Hospital

Work to redevelop the main entrance at QA Hospital is now complete and includes further food and retail options for patients, visitors, and staff (Marks and Spencer Food and The Stock Shop), as well as a new upper floor lecture theatre to support the provision of high-quality training facilities. The development also included the provision of an accredited Changing Place facility. In June, work to develop our North Entrance began and works are due to be complete by early 2025. The extended entrance will include a second Costa Coffee outlet providing somewhere for people collecting prescriptions from the outpatient pharmacy to wait, as well as clinical research space on the first floor. A temporary entrance into the hospital has been made available through the B-level Haematology and Oncology Unit entrance. Our estates project team has been working closely with contractors and clinical teams to minimise disruption and ensure safety remains our top consideration throughout.

Engagement

AGM and Health Fair

On Tuesday 17 September between 4pm and 8pm, PHU will hold its AGM alongside a Health Fair at the John Pounds Centre in Portsmouth. Members of the HOSP are invited and we would welcome their attendance to hear more about the work the Trust is doing.

The Health Fair will run between 4pm and 6pm and will feature stands from services such as SCAS, research, maternity services and the Patient Carers Collaborative. Then, between 6pm and 8pm, members of the Trust's Board will host our AGM which will also feature presentations from the Surgical Scarf Project and an update on the new Emergency Department amongst others.

Information on attending can be found on our website: www.porthosp.nhs.uk If people are unable to attend in person and would like to submit a question in advance, they can email: communications@porthosp.nhs.uk by 5pm on Tuesday 10 September and we will ensure this is answered.

MP visits

Following the election of a new Government earlier this year, we hosted our first MP briefing session for Portsmouth and SE Hampshire MPs. Since then, we have welcomed Stephen Morgan, MP for Portsmouth South, to QA Hospital to see how we are embedding research across the Trust and supporting patients to have access to clinical trials in a range of specialities. We also welcomed Amanda Martin, MP for Portsmouth North, for her first discussion with our Chief Executive, Penny Emerit, on how we are working closely with system partners to tackle the increase in demand for services we are all seeing and share an update on developments.

Chair recruitment

Melloney Poole joined the PHU Trust Board in May 2017 and was appointed as Chairman on 1 November 2017. In October 2020, she also took on the role of Chairman at the Isle of Wight NHS Trust. Following her decision to retire from both roles later this year, recruitment has begun to recruit a new Group Chair for both Trusts. The closing date for applications is Monday 23 September 2024 with the final panel interview on Tuesday 22 October.

New Emergency Department visits

Engagement remains an area we continue to develop as the project progresses to support the delivery of Building Better Emergency Care both now and for the future.

System partners are engaged clinically through dedicated workstreams, while we have a clinical engagement plan in place including familiarisation visits for staff. These have all been positively received.

Patient and public engagement remains key and we have participated in some media opportunities, as well as involving patient representatives within the BBEC programme board and specific workstreams. We have also offered a number of visits to community

groups including the Portsmouth Deaf Society and Patient and Carer Collaborative. Others are planned for the coming months.

We are also offering key partners the opportunity to visit the BBEC site and welcome the opportunity to provide this to the committee. Please let us know if you would like for this to be arranged.

Safe at Work campaign launch

Over the last three years the number of violent attacks on people providing health and social care services was three times higher than in other industries. Violent assaults against NHS staff are rising, with around 75,000 people each year experiencing physical violence & aggression from patients, relatives or the public. We already work closely with Hampshire Constabulary as part of Operation Cavell and in September 2023, signed the NHS Sexual Safety Charter to clarify the importance we place on improving how safe our patients, visitors and staff feel when on our sites.

To support this drive to improve awareness and safety, we are developing a new public and staff facing campaign called “Not in a day’s work” that reiterates that whatever reason a person comes to work, being the victim of abuse, violence or injury is not part of their job and will not be tolerated at PHU. The campaign will feature real members of staff sharing their reasons for coming to work and internally reiterate the importance of reporting incidents and seeking support. The campaign will include clinical and non-clinical colleagues and be rolled out over the coming months.

T-level students

In July we celebrated our first cohort T Level students as they finished their placements at PHU. T Levels are an alternative to A Levels, apprenticeships, and other courses for people between the ages of 16 to 19. They focus on vocational skills and help students into skilled employment by offering them practical placement work within their studies.

Choices College

This summer we congratulated our third cohort of Choices College students as they graduated from their supported internship. Choices College is a Specialist Post-16 College providing a person-centred, individually tailored Supported Internship to young adults with learning difficulties, disabilities and/or Autism. Through the Internship, 16–24-year-olds gain work experience, develop independence skills and increase their employability.

RHS Hampton Court Garden

The Rheumatology Team partnered with Arthritis Action to create a themed garden at the RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival to get people talking about arthritis. This was the third year that the team have welcomed visitors to their garden at the festival helping to raise awareness about arthritis, which is estimated to affect around 10 million people in the UK. Their theme this year ‘Be Our Guest’ - focused on creating positive conversations around arthritis and inviting people to come forward and find out more.

Previous themes include exploring the relationship between people living with arthritis and the healthcare professionals supporting them.

NHS Green Libraries Grant

The PHU Library have been awarded a grant of £2,000 from the NHS Green Libraries Grant Programme. The NHS Green Libraries Grant is a programme designed to empower and encourage libraries to promote sustainability and environmental awareness through their projects. For PHU Library, their project goals include bringing awareness of sustainability within the library and hospital community, demonstrate how libraries can contribute to a greener NHS, encourage eco-friendly practices in the library, and share valuable insights and best practices with other NHS libraries. Using the grant funding, the library will be able to launch a range of initiatives, such as enhanced waste management, green procurement practices, digital services promotion, and a collaborative mural project where they'll be partnering with local artists to create a permanent mural that will highlight the importance of recycling library materials.

Walking aid recycling scheme launched

To help reduce the amount of walking aids ending up in landfill, the Therapies and Sustainability Teams at PHU recently launched three new walking aids recycling points at QA Hospital. Located in the main entrance, fracture clinic and entrance to the discharge lounge, the new drop off bins are for items such as metal walking sticks, walking frames, and crutches. By encouraging patients to return walking aids they no longer need and us reusing these items, carbon emissions reduce on average by 98% when compared to using a new walking aid. While if just two out of every five walking aids were returned, we could save up to £46k per year.