

Service development summary and updates

Our ambition is to constantly improve our services and ensure they are responsive to the changing needs of our patients and communities. The below provides an overview of several service developments which have been delivered or likely to be proposed over the coming months, relating to our hospital services. These proposed changes are designed to improve access to the most appropriate type of care and to enable ongoing improvements to care quality and patient outcomes, whilst delivering the best possible value from finite resources.

Mental health services

Adult mental health inpatient care

In recent years the Trust has carried out multimillion pound investments in improvements to ensure people receive inpatient care as close to home as possible, in the best environment. We have eliminated the use of 'out of area' placements and have reconfigured wards to ensure they are more therapeutic environments, geared for recovery, and meet national standards.

We have created new and refurbished wards at Parklands Hospital, Basingstoke and in the coming weeks we will be re-opening completely re-designed wards at Melbury Lodge. This includes Kingsley Ward, which will now be single sex compliant with separate male and female wards. We will also be opening Snowdrop, a specialist ward for older people with mental health needs, and a refurbished mother and baby unit. In addition, we have now opened a highly specialist psychiatric intensive care unit for women, Abbey Ward, at Antelope House, Southampton. The only such unit of its kind in Hampshire, this ward provides much needed intensive inpatient care for women in crisis and is part of our ambition to develop a complete, dedicated mental health care pathway for women. Abbey ward is being opened in a phased approach as we recruit to the full complement of staff.

Older people's mental health

The Trust is looking across the whole pathway for older people including community and inpatient provision, and considering the best practice for supporting people with mental health and dementia needs. We have recently refurbished Poppy and Rose wards at Gosport War Memorial Hospital and Elmwood ward at Parklands, Basingstoke. We have also been working with patients, families and professionals to begin designing what the future community provision for older people will look like. This includes enhancing memory assessment services and piloting intensive support services in the community.

Over the last two years we have been reviewing the demand for different types of inpatient care for older people. During the adult and older people's ward refurbishments highlighted above, we have successfully responded to the demand for inpatient care for people with dementia, with fewer overall beds (28). Over the same period we have seen a rise in demand for beds for older people with other mental health conditions (which we call 'functional' mental health). As a result, we are now proposing to reconfigure our mental health inpatient services for older people to ensure they are best shaped to respond to this demand. This will involve reconfiguring Beaulieu and Berrywood Wards at the Western Community Hospital to be a single space for functional mental health care.

Wards at Gosport and Basingstoke, which serve the whole Hampshire population, will remain as specialist dementia wards with the same overall number of beds as are currently in use (28), and we will continue to provide inpatient dementia care for any patients who need it across the county. We are beginning to talk with patients, families and staff about these proposals.

Rehabilitation in Mental Health

Crowlin House is a residential unit in Calmore providing social care for people with long term mental health rehabilitation needs. The Trust and the Integrated Care Board have looked carefully at the care model and environment at Crowlin House within the context of national best practice and quality of care. The residents who were originally placed at Crowlin House have now moved on to more suitable accommodation and the transition of residents into more appropriate settings over time has meant that Crowlin House is now significantly under occupied. Of the remaining residents, all have move on plans in the coming months. In addition, the building is no longer fit for purpose as a modern, accessible residential unit and the service model doesn't enable people to receive support for their recovery in their local communities.

Our proposal, once all residents have moved on, is to develop more suitable mental health rehabilitation services in Southampton and Hampshire, which more closely fit with the long-term vision for mental health rehabilitation which we are in the process of co-designing. Once the building is no longer required, the Trust would engage with the market and with local stakeholders to understand options for the future use of the site.

The Trust has informed residents, their families and staff at the site about this recommendation and continues to engage closely.

Specialist services for young people

Across England rates of mental health problems for children and young people have increased considerably with one in six (16.0%) children aged five to 16 years identified as having a probable mental disorder in 2020, increasing from one in 10 (10.8%) in 2017. In the South East of England this proportion is even higher, with 17.4% of children aged between five and 16 identified as having a probable mental health disorder. The increasing acuity and complexity of children and young people's needs is also having a huge impact on complex care providers, including Southern Health. Access is significantly challenged, it is becoming more difficult to place children and young people into appropriate residential, foster care, specialist educational and specialist health placements.

Locally, we have seen a 295% increase in demand for inpatient care for young people, and more than half of this demand is for specialist eating disorder care.

In this context and alongside partners, the Trust is developing proposals to increase capacity and support for young people with mental health needs.

We are planning to reconfigure inpatient capacity at Leigh House, an acute adolescent psychiatric service in Winchester, and developing an eating disorder day service. We are developing a 10 bedded residential unit for young people with acute and severe mental health needs (Leigh House currently has 8 beds). The refurbished residential unit would continue to support young people (aged 12-18) presenting with acute and severe mental disorders/mental health difficulties – such as emerging emotionally unstable personality disorder, deliberate self-harm, major mood disorders, psychoses, complex neuropsychiatric disorders, eating disorders and severe obsessive-compulsive disorders.

The 10-space day hospital programme will be for young people whose physical health is stable and with the aim of preventing admissions where possible and appropriate and any further decline in individuals' physical health. The focus of the day programme will be to empower families, helping young people and families to eat together again and supporting parents and carers to be able to feed their young person independently rather than the service managing the young person.

In addition, we are securing pilot funding for a new 'transitions team' to support young people leaving the residential unit and moving back into their community.

Finally, we are in the early stages of establishing a children's Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) on the Bluebird House site at Tatchbury Mount. The recent national capital bid for this development has been approved and planning has commenced.

Conversations with young people, their families and our staff have begun to take place and we are keen to involve people with lived experience throughout the design of these new enhanced services.

Physical health services

Review of community hospitals

Community hospitals play an important role in enabling people to be discharged from acute hospitals as part of their recovery and rehabilitation. They also host other services, such as diagnostics and community teams. The roles of these hospitals have evolved over many years – with some buildings pre-dating the formation of the NHS. The review of community and mental health services commissioned by the Integrated Care Board recommended a review of community hospitals across the county, to better understand the roles community hospitals play now and how this can be developed in the future to ensure they continue to best meet the needs of local people. Southern Health is working with commissioners and other partners to carry out this review, which is at the early stages and will include engagement with staff, patients and partner organisations.

Expansion of beds at Alton Hospital

In May 2022, the Trust opened a brand new 22-bedded ward at Alton Community Hospital. The purpose-built ward was created to increase the provision of rehabilitation and recovery inpatient care in the area. It also improves the care we give to patients who are coming to the end of their lives. Inwood Ward sees the number of beds available at Alton increase from 18 (on the existing Anstey Ward) to a new total of 40 beds. Patient and carer groups were involved in the clinical plans for the ward, as well as the ward layout and design, and a number of patients were also involved in the recruitment of staff to the new ward.

Community Diagnostic Centre

As part of the national drive to improve timely access to diagnostics, the Trust has worked with partners to develop a state of the art community diagnostic centre at Lymington Hospital. This facility includes a range of equipment and expert staff and means more people are able to receive potentially life saving diagnoses sooner. It also means that local people can access these services more conveniently, without the need to travel and park at a busy acute hospital. The Centre at Lymington was visited by the Chief Executive of NHS England as is seen as a very good example of community diagnostics in action. This service builds upon existing enhanced diagnostic facilities at the hospital, including a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scanner which was purchased with the generous support of the Friends of Lymington Hospital.

Response to Care Quality Commission (CQC) following inspection report

In April 2023 the CQC published a report following inspections of the Trust's mental health inpatient units which took place in October 2022. Further to the briefing provided to Overview and Scrutiny on this matter, the Trust has developed a detailed action plan which has now been shared with the CQC.

The CQC found a number of areas of improvement and good practice. Inspectors also found some areas where there hadn't been as much progress as expected. As a result, the overall rating for these services remains as 'Requires Improvement'. These services remain rated 'Good' for the domains of Caring and Effective, and 'Requires Improvement' for the other domains. The overall rating for the Trust did not change as a result of this inspection report, and remains at 'Requires Improvement.' All of the Trust's community physical health services are rated 'Good' in all domains. The Trust remains rated 'Good' for being Well Led.

Overall the Trust is disappointed that the CQC found some issues which had not been progressed as quickly as expected when they visited in October 2022. The Trust has already been addressing areas for improvement in the months since the inspections took place and will carry out the action plan to respond to the outstanding areas highlighted in the recent report.

There continue to be significant staff shortages in some of our mental health units but the staff on all our mental health wards do an incredible job. We are focussed on recruitment and retention of staff, and have recently held successful recruitment open days and other activity.

Recommendation

The panel is asked to note this paper and advise the Trust of any further information required. The Trust is willing to present and answer questions on any of these items in more detail, should the panel find this helpful.