

02 May 2019

HASC Update: The re-opening of Beaulieu ward

This paper provides an update on the plans to re-open Beaulieu Ward, based at The Western Community Hospital, Southampton, which was temporarily closed for six months from November 2018 due to staffing issues and challenges with the environment.

We are pleased to inform you that Beaulieu Ward will now be reopening on Monday 3rd June.

The ward was originally meant to re-open in May and we had set the provisional date of 13 May for this. Even though we still aim to complete the works to the environment by this date, we want to ensure that the ward is clean and clinically safe before we accept any patients.

Once building work to the ward is complete, the ward will undergo a thorough deep clean and all the necessary procedures to ensure that it's fully ready to accept patients. During this time we will also be working closely with the patients, and their families, to ensure they have a smooth transition when being repatriated back onto the ward.

The reason we have chosen to re-open the ward on 3 June is because we are dependent on external suppliers to complete a thorough deep clean of the ward to a high enough standard for our patients. We are aware that some companies have reduced hours over the bank holiday weekend and did not want this to cause any delay to the re-opening of the ward.

Refurbishing Beaulieu Ward

Throughout the temporary closure of Beaulieu Ward, we used this time to review our services to patients with dementia and worked with system partners to redesign services that are appropriate for the future across Southampton and Hampshire. This is also supported by the Trust's new Dementia Strategy.

By refurbishing Beaulieu Ward, we have been able to improve the environment for our patients by making the ward dementia-friendly.

An overview of changes made to the ward:

- New dementia friendly flooring that has very low reflection and will therefore help to reduce falls and trips
- New furniture in all the rooms
- New staff room, meeting room, and family room to meet CQC requirements and national standards
- The soft room has now been fully refurbished and made into two bedrooms
- The patients will benefit from being single-sex compliant with the creation of a male and female area to maintain privacy and dignity for our patients
- New dementia-friendly furniture and activity equipment throughout
- New therapy equipment for art, music, exercise and much more. Equipment was also bought using a £500 donation from a patient's family
- A robust recruitment plan put in place to ensure we can maintain safe staffing levels on the ward (more details below)

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- To adhere to national regulations and become dementia friendly and single sex compliant, significant changes needed to be made to Beaulieu Ward's physical environment. As a result the ward now has 14 beds available to support older people with mental health needs. Previously there were 17 beds.

Please note, we have been carefully monitoring the availability of older people's mental health beds across Hampshire and, despite the temporarily closure of Beaulieu Ward, there has been a surplus of beds. We therefore have a high level of confidence that a small reduction in beds at Beaulieu Ward will not impact our ability to meet demand for hospital beds and will help us to focus on the patients residing on the ward that require one-to-one specialist care.

Staffing on Beaulieu Ward

All staff had a one-to-one meeting with senior managers and HR representatives to discuss available placements and any individual requirements whilst Beaulieu Ward was closed. Following this, all staff were allocated to appropriate placements as agreed with them. The staffing numbers shift by shift for Berrywood Ward were temporarily increased to allow for the fact that the ward, as an Older Person's Mental Health (OPMH) ward, stands alone at the Western Community Hospital (WCH). The increase in staffing numbers enabled a substantial number of Health Care Support Workers to remain at the WCH.

The registered nurses on Beaulieu Ward transferred temporarily to Berrywood Ward. A small number of staff elected to develop their skills within other services for the duration of the closure. These include the Specialist Falls Team and secure mental health services.

Recruitment/staffing update for Beaulieu Ward

Using the recruitment processes, outlined below, we are delighted to inform you that we have recruited new staff to work on the ward both registered nurses and Health Care Support Workers. We are now confident we have the correct level and skill mix of nurses and other health care professionals to safely staff Beaulieu Ward from 3 June 2019.

We are communicating with our staff including a weekly/fortnightly newsletter updating them on progress. Staff have attended a number of training sessions, away days and induction that will support them to work on Beaulieu Ward.

Patients on Beaulieu Ward

All patients and their families were fully informed both verbally and in writing by senior staff of the plan to temporarily close Beaulieu Ward on Friday 16 November. Patients requiring ongoing inpatient treatment were transferred to Poppy and Elmwood wards. Patients requiring an appropriate discharge destination were identified and, with support from Adult Services and the CCG, these were safely discharged. On Friday the 16 November, two patients remained on the ward who were transferred to Berrywood Ward. Both patients were then safely discharged. The staff that transferred to Berrywood from Beaulieu Ward had been able to support these patients to ensure continuity of care.

Since the temporary closure of Beaulieu Ward, eighteen patients have required admission to our inpatient service on either Poppy Ward or Elmwood Ward. We have continued to collate and monitor this to ensure all patients and their families have been supported. We continue to consider alternatives to admission, including care home placement and additional support in the community.

For those patients requiring admission to either Poppy Ward or Elmwood Ward, we speak to individual families to offer support to cover additional transport needs they may have in order to visit loved ones.

As part of whole system working, we continue to focus on effective and safe discharge planning and have initiatives in place to support this process.

Re-admitting patients onto the ward

Any re-admissions onto Beaulieu Ward will be a gradual process and will be focused around the needs of our patients.

In the coming weeks prior to re-opening Beaulieu Ward, we will be looking at those patients on Poppy Ward and Elmwood Ward who could be repatriated to Beaulieu Ward if clinically appropriate and the patient and family are in agreement. Any new patients will be assessed and admitted onto Beaulieu Ward if it's the best possible place for them to receive the care they need.

Recruitment/Staffing Update across our OPMH services

Our Recruitment Specialist has supported the development of a recruitment plan to focus on staffing Beaulieu Ward to enable re-opening; and there will be a continued focus also to recruit to other vacancies across OPMH Services.

Recruitment events took place on the 28 January 2019 and the 5 February 2019.

A social media recruitment campaign is being supported by our Communications Team that includes Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter and Facebook. The campaign will work on showing the engagement and diversity of working within OPMH Services.

Workforce development plans have been formulated and an OPMH Workforce Strategy will be ratified shortly to reflect the skill mix required on the ward and across OPMH. We are working to develop new career pathways and roles and a new care model for OPMH. This has included visiting other services in the country to learn about their successful models of care. This aims to deliver more effective care and make working in this service a more attractive proposition for clinicians. The OPMH Service Manager is attending a student nurse focus group event on the 17 May 2019 to explore with students what it is they look for when applying for posts. It is hoped that this insight might help us further with our recruitment plans.

A continued focus will remain on OPMH staff attending University recruitment events.

Official opening

We have a dedicated communications plan in place to help publicise the re-opening of Beaulieu Ward. Once patients have been admitted onto the ward and are settled, we will be inviting all our key stakeholders (including Local MPs, HASC, HOSP, staff and the families and carers of the patients on the ward) for an official opening event (**Date to be confirmed**).