

Solent NHS Trust Covid 19 Update (end Oct 2020)

The impact of Covid-19 locally and nationally has been genuinely unprecedented. However, as an organisation, we have always taken a planning approach to planning for the worst. Last year the Trust achieved full compliance against the NHS England EPRR assurance framework which meant that we were in a strong position to adapt or use existing plans throughout the response and on to the recovery phase. Clearly, no plan ever really covers all the bases, but our processes, conceptual approach and ability to implement and adapt plans has served us well.

The internal 'Gold command' has retained a strong command and control structure enabling internal staff to escalate issues and then receive information and direction.

Services have used their business continuity plans effectively particularly in the early days when they needed to identify which services could be stopped and which if any could be scaled down or made available in a different way.

Despite the huge challenges and the often very dynamic nature of the crises, Solent NHS trust's EPRR framework and arrangements have held up well during this incident. There will, of course, be lessons learnt, and we will continue to seek to improve and review our plans during the recovery phase.

As in line with other healthcare organisations, we are aware that staff welfare is paramount, and we will continue to offer support and information for staff together with online recreational activities and updates from occupational health.

It is recognised that staff have endured a prolonged period of working differently such as working from home and adapting to the constantly changing work environments and guidance. This is being addressed with a continual focus on the wellbeing of staff with advice, workshops and therapies. We have also very proactively encouraged our people to ensure that they take a break and some leave to look after their resilience and wellbeing.

As part of the reset and recovery agenda, all services participated in a focused forum which was open for other services to attend where not only future service plans were discussed but also opportunities for learning from the events. Research was also conducted with staff at an individual level evaluating their experiences. The findings will be shared with the trust as part of the ongoing learning.