

Alton Community Hospital – new ward

Introduction

Alton Community Hospital provides a range of services for the Mid & North Hampshire system and local population. We have an opportunity to modernise the offer to improve services for people and meet changing needs across community and inpatient pathways.

The focus of the improvements to provision will be for Discharge-to-Assess Pathways 2 (rehab and recovery), including our end of life care (EOL) for patients.

There will be two main focuses for rehabilitating patients, Alton Community Hospital will continue to focus on step down from Hampshire Hospitals Foundation Trust (HHFT) and step up from Primary Care Networks (PCNs) and the community.

In conjunction, we will also be able to support with preventing acute hospital admissions, working closely with our Urgent Community Response (UCR) team. Alton Community Hospital will further develop closer working relationships with UCR colleagues to admit directly to the ward in the community hospital to prevent acute hospital admissions, this will ultimately support HHFT patient flow.

Background

Alton has provided community step up beds for GP practices and rehabilitation pathways for patients from HHFT for many years. As demand has changed and discharge to assess pathways have become more widely understood, Alton continues to provide support for patients requiring rehabilitation alongside ongoing medical needs.

Using data to inform change, an options appraisal has been developed identifying the safest and most sustainable way to provide additional high-quality care provision in a bed-based setting for patients and to support the wider Hampshire and Isle of Wight system.

After reviewing the options, the recommended option 3 was approved for consideration as it is the most cost effective and will provide an additional 22 beds in a purpose-built ward on the first floor of Alton Community hospital. Increasing total occupancy to 40 beds - where infection prevention and control standards are closely adhered to ensure appropriate care for patients with rehabilitation and recovery needs.

Funding

- £1.7 million for the renovation (Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust)
- £3.5 million for staffing (HIOW CCG)

Impact

This new ward will provide an additional 22 beds increasing the bed capacity at Alton from 18 (currently on Anstey ward) to 40.

This will enable timely transfers from HHFT once they no longer meet the criteria to reside on a discharge-to-access pathway 2, providing rehabilitation and recovery in a community environment, thereby reducing inpatient length of stay, a national NHS priority to improve outcomes and experience for patient, releasing capacity for urgent and planned care pathways.

The Anstey and Inwood wards would be run as two separate units, but the medical cover and staff could support one another. Having two wards would provide 8 side rooms which would allow a greater level of isolation for patients as well as increased cohorting.

Engagement

Service users and carers engagement

All patient facing services currently operating from Alton Community Hospital will continue. No inpatients are affected by this ward redevelopment.

The Trust's Patient Involvement Manager is on the project board and is engaging with service user and carer groups on plans for the ward use and clinical model, as well as ward layout and design. In addition, service users will be included in recruitment processes to the new staffing model.

Staff

There are around 40 staff currently located at Alton Community Hospital who are non-patient facing. These staff will be permanently relocated to alternative accommodation.

A staff consultation started in November to inform and engagement with staff on this relocation and teams successfully relocated to new premises in early January.

External

Southern Health briefed the Alton Town Council on this project in September 2021.

The clinical model for the ward has been consulted on with all system partners – including our Clinical Commissioning Group, Hampshire County Council (HCC), South Coast Ambulance Service (SCAS), Hampshire Hospitals Trust (HHFT) and primary care networks and has been signed off.

Timescales

It is expected that the new ward will open 8 beds in May 2022 and be fully opened by July 2022