



## Strengthening the partnership between Isle of Wight NHS Trust and Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust

### Context

1. Across Hampshire and Isle of Wight our goals are to keep people as healthy and independent as possible and to provide swift access to high quality care for those who need it. As such the acute partnership is one of the Integrated Care System's key strategic programmes to help us meet these goals.
2. A stronger partnership between neighbouring NHS trusts will help tackle the long-standing challenges of delivering healthcare for the Isle of Wight and ensure the provision of high quality, safe, and sustainable services to all the populations they serve.
3. Isle of Wight NHS Trust and Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust will take the logical next step in their Acute Services Partnership and are committed to continued engagement with partners and the public to shape the way forward.
4. All partners are ambitious for the Isle of Wight and want to ensure that Islanders, as well as those visiting the Island, receive the best possible care and health outcomes. Operating many fragile services, as the Trust currently does, puts this ambition at risk.
5. Together, partners across the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care System, have been exploring how we ensure the provision of high quality, safe, and sustainable services to all the populations we serve across Portsmouth, South East Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

### Acute Partnership

6. Isle of Wight NHS Trust and Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust, with the backdrop of a long history of working together, entered into an Acute Services Partnership in 2020 to address the clinical and financial sustainability of small and fragile hospital services on the Isle of Wight.
7. Since its creation, the Partnership has delivered improvements in services on the Island including Stroke, Cardiology, and Urology. Bringing the two organisations closer together will mean they can better respond to the challenges facing the NHS and the changing needs of the people they serve.
8. Both Boards recognise that working together provides the best opportunity to achieve this. The logical next step is to confirm a single Chief Executive with a mandate to create a single Executive Team and single clinical leadership approach across the two Trusts.
9. Creating a single leadership team and establishing shared clinical leadership will allow our trusts to better plan and deliver services for a combined population of 800,000 people across Portsmouth, southeast Hampshire and on the Isle of Wight
10. By working in partnership, both organisations will be able to create job roles which are more attractive, with more chance to take part in training and research, more

opportunities for progression, and a wider range of clinical experience available across the two hospitals. Flexibility in working patterns will also be an important part of the offering as a partnership.

11. We know that in some areas Isle of Wight NHS Trust and Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust face similar challenges in recruitment, where there are recognised shortages of staff nationally. However, closer partnership working means they will work together to recruit colleagues into single services, rather than compete with each other. It means neither organisation is facing those challenges alone.
12. The challenges facing the Isle of Wight NHS Trust are in many ways unique. Due to its island location, it needs to provide a wide range of services to a comparatively small population. Its geographical isolation makes its services expensive to run and difficult to recruit to. As a result, they are neither financially, operationally nor clinically sustainable. Many of the clinical services it provides are so fragile they rely on a single member of staff.
13. In recent years, it has achieved a huge amount for the people who use its services and the colleagues who provide them. Many of these improvements have been made by the Isle of Wight NHS Trust working in close partnership with mainland organisations, who have helped build resilience in its teams, and share professional expertise, resources and support. However, the Trust is increasingly dependent on these partnerships to sustain and improve services and, in some cases, the support it requires exceeds what would normally be expected through collaboration.

### **Next steps**

14. The work of the acute partnership is running in parallel to:
  - exploring how the Isle of Wight Ambulance Service can strengthen the partnerships they have with South Central Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust,
  - the implementation of the recommendations set out in the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Community and Mental Health Review, and
  - the development of the Isle of Wight Health and Care Partnership.We will keep the committee updated on how these projects progress.
15. We will continue to engage with local people on how this partnership develops further. All partners are ambitious our populations to receive the best possible care and health outcomes and any proposals to the way care is provided will be underpinned by clinical expertise, with the needs of our patients at the heart of what we do.