



Briefing note: Proposal to create an elective hub for Hampshire and Isle of Wight

Introduction

The NHS response to the COVID-19 pandemic has been exceptional. Throughout the course of the past two years our staff across Hampshire and Isle of Wight continued to perform urgent surgery and other treatments when hospitals were busy caring for the most unwell COVID patients. However, we are all too aware that one impact of the pandemic has been to increase waiting times for patients requiring non-urgent surgery and reducing these waiting times is a priority for all NHS organisations.

Nationally there has been a focus on rapidly recovering routine NHS services and in May 2021, £160million of funding was announced nationally to help tackle waiting lists and allow patients to benefit from a range of innovative initiatives.

The proposals

Across Hampshire and Isle of Wight, NHS leaders have come together and agree that the construction of a new dedicated 'elective hub', a facility to provide more capacity and allow more operations to take place, is the best approach to addressing the backlog here. Proposals are being developed to secure funding and allow construction of the new facility to begin.

What will the hub provide?

If approved, the hub will offer a central location for adults across Hampshire and Isle of Wight who require operations for urology (kidney, bladder and urinary), Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) and orthopaedics (such as hip and knee replacements). The hub will focus on those patients who have been waiting the longest time for their operation and are in the greatest need. Operations taking place at the hub would be in addition to surgery already taking place at our hospitals across Hampshire and Isle of Wight, and eligible patients would be offered the choice of having their operation at their local hospital or the hub.

It is proposed that the hub will provide pre-operative assessment, theatre, day case and inpatient facilities for the three selected specialties mentioned above. It would provide four operating theatres and 44 beds, staffed by a multi-disciplinary team to allow patients to access a full range of services. A new recruitment campaign focused on the hub will seek to attract staff for the facility nationally and internationally. The hub would operate six days a week (but with inpatient facilities operating over seven days) and accommodate weekends and extended weekdays to allow for additional theatre sessions.

The key benefits

Significantly improve patient care. The hub will reduce the time some patients have to wait for their operation and in doing so will reduce the impact waiting can have on their physical and mental wellbeing. Capacity needs to be expanded to ensure that our patients can receive the right interventions, at the right time to achieve the best outcomes.

Strengthen clinical practice. A single hub operating across the whole health and care system in Hampshire and Isle of Wight will draw on and feed into care pathways across all organisations. By acting as a model of best practice and evidencing the value of a



standardised approach, the facility can add value to patient care that will extend beyond the hub.

Enhance resilience across the system. The hub will provide additional capacity and so will be able to provide resilience when our hospitals and services are under pressure (such as during the winter period).

Deliver better value for money. The hub will allow NHS organisations to make better use of their resources through higher levels of productivity and economies of scale. For example, it is hoped that clinicians will not have to cancel lists due to unexpected, unplanned demands.

Strengthen integration. NHS organisations have been working together with partners to improve services and transform how we deliver care. As we move towards the formal establishment of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care System from 1 July 2022, the proposed elective hub will expedite and add to the improvements already underway.

Location

The proposed location for the new facility is on the site of the Royal Hampshire County Hospital in Winchester. There are a number of factors that influence where the facility is located including:

- a site appropriate for additional wards and theatres
- links to existing services
- the potential to be expanded, to ensure the investment is future proofed
- can be ring-fenced, with a separate entrance.

The proposed Winchester location also provides a geographically central location for our population.

Timeline

NHS England are supportive of our plans in principle, and the next step is for the proposals to be formally approved following the submission of an outline business case and a full business case. We anticipate that we will know whether our plans can proceed by December 2022. A high-level timeline has been prepared (see below) which would enable construction to start at the end of 2022 and anticipating the new facility being fully operational by April 2024.





Working with partners and our communities

NHS organisations across Hampshire and Isle of Wight believe the proposed elective hub offers a fantastic opportunity for our patients. Over the course of the coming months we will work with our partners, stakeholders and our communities to develop our proposals further. Key to this will be understanding how we ensure as many of our patients who are eligible to make use of the facility can do so, taking into account their feedback on issues such as travel and transport. The hub represents additional capacity for us to carry out operations for urology, ENT and orthopaedics and so whilst we don't anticipate formal public consultation, we will work with patients, partners and our communities and listen to their ideas through a co-ordinated programme of engagement. The hub also represents an opportunity to grow and develop our workforce and so working with our teams will be fundamental to its success.

Next steps

As highlighted above, over the course of the coming months we will be developing our proposals in more detail. This will include working with architects to design the physical space for the hub, developing the detailed business case to secure funding and finalising the recruitment strategy. This will inform the detailed proposals that will be put forward for consideration by NHS England later in 2022.

Further information

We will continue to keep you updated on progress. In the meantime if you have any queries or would like a conversation to discuss the proposals, or discuss how you can work with us please contact Emma McKinney, Director of Communications and Engagement via Emma.McKinney@nhs.net