

## **Briefing Note: Improving our therapeutic care environments and mental health bed capacity**

**October 2020**

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One of the key strategic priorities for Southern Health is to ensure that everyone we serve, that needs a mental health bed, has access to one, and patients are cared for in the best environment possible.

Over recent months we have been working to reduce the number of out of area placements. These are when people receive care in beds that are not directly provided by the Trust, sub-contracted with another organisation or beyond the borders of Hampshire. These can be far from home which we recognise can be difficult for patients. We have been working hard to reduce the number of patients receiving care out of area, making significant progress over the last few months.

Alongside this we have identified that the environments on Poppy and Rose wards based at Gosport War Memorial Hospital (GWMH) needed improving.

As a result we are now planning a major investment to open additional beds within our own services and improve the wards at GWMH. The aim is to ensure all patients who need access to a mental health bed can get one within our NHS hospitals, and these beds provide the best therapeutic environment possible.

This paper describes three initial projects across Hampshire to help us meet this aim:

- Opening a Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) for female patients at Antelope House, our psychiatric hospital in Southampton.
- Opening a new acute mental health ward at Parklands Hospital in Basingstoke
- Improving the environment in Older Peoples Mental Health Wards at Gosport War Memorial Hospital.

### **Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit**

This project will enable us to provide female only PICU beds within Hampshire by providing a ward with 10 beds at Antelope House. There are a number of clear benefits including:

- Contributing to our aim of supporting all local patients within Hampshire
- Delivering equity of treatment for male and female PICU patients
- Complementing and supporting other wards in Antelope House and in our other acute inpatient sites across Hampshire

There are challenges, most notably in recruiting sufficient staff to run the ward, and carrying out the necessary building work to create a suitable environment for this type of care - which will involve significant capital investment.

We are proposing to make use of space in the unit vacated earlier in the year by the Crisis Lounge, which has now become a community-based crisis service called the Lighthouse (based in Shirley).

We will be engaging with patients, carers, staff and other stakeholders throughout this process to ensure their views are heard and taken into consideration in this development.

Our aim is to open the new unit, most likely in a phased approach as staffing levels allow, during 2021.

### **Acute Mental Health Ward**

We are looking to provide 18 acute mental health beds at Parklands Hospital in Basingstoke.

The new ward will be located on the top floor of Parklands Hospital, which is currently used as a base for teams to do admin work. These teams will be relocated appropriately. All clinical services currently on the ground floor will remain unchanged.

We are working with our service user group to help us shape the design of the new ward. They will also be helping us design a new staffing model to ensure we can recruit the correct mix of staff groups to provide the best care possible.

We hope the building work will begin in December 2020 with a target of opening the ward in mid-2021.

### **Gosport War Memorial Hospital**

Having secured funds we are undertaking significant improvement works at Gosport War Memorial Hospital to our Poppy and Rose wards. These wards support people with organic (Poppy Ward) mental health needs and functional mental health needs (Rose Ward).

Poppy and Rose wards are currently both arranged in a dormitory style with 16 beds on each ward. The work undertaken will remove the dormitory style format and replace it with individual ensuite rooms. This will afford patients greater privacy and provide a more therapeutic environment. It will also mean the wards meet the longstanding aim of the NHS to eliminate dormitory style wards in mental health settings.

The work is expected to take up to 26 weeks in total with the work running consecutively. Poppy Ward, which cares for those with organic mental health needs (e.g. dementia) will go first. The work to change the ward is estimated to take 16 weeks. During this time patients currently on the ward will be supported in the Trust's other organic mental health wards. Following the completion of Poppy Ward, patients will return and work will begin immediately on Rose Ward. Rose Ward supports those with functional mental health needs (e.g. depression). The timescale for this work is expected to be around 10 weeks. Again, patients will be supported in our other wards during this time, or if possible, they will be supported in the community.

As part of this work we will lose two beds from each ward to provide ensuite rooms with greater privacy and dignity for the patient as well as more flexibility with regards to the needs of a patient and patient mix, allowing us to be more responsive to local needs and care for more patients who might otherwise have had to go elsewhere for treatment.

### **Any questions?**

Please get in touch should you wish to discuss further, or if you would like to be more closely involved in developing these plans.

Grant Macdonald, Chief Operating Office

**ENDS**