

Issue 12: Sunday 29th September, 2019

Green light on funding for Epsom and St Helier hospital

This weekend the Government confirmed that hundreds of millions of pounds of funding is to be made available for Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust to develop a new major acute hospital.

This multi-million pound investment will transform patient care for the 500,000 people who use the Trust's services, greatly improve the experience of the 6,000 committed staff working in the hospitals and secure a long term and sustainable future for hospital services in our area. It will allow the Trust to create a state-of-the-art hospital facilities for the sickest patients, invest in and refurbish the older parts of all our hospital buildings (which are currently not fit for modern healthcare), and support the medical workforce to improve staffing levels and patient care.

Daniel Elkeles, Chief Executive of Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust, said: "I am delighted that the government has announced further investment in the NHS and specifically that the capital will be made available to invest in a new major acute facility to be built on any one of our three sites - Epsom, St Helier or Sutton. This is the largest investment in healthcare in the region since the hospitals were built (which in St Helier's case was 80 years ago), and I would like to say a huge thank you on behalf of local people and our staff to everyone who played a role in securing this investment for us.

"This is incredible news for our patients and staff, and will be of huge benefit to our local communities. For anyone who has been to Epsom or St Helier hospitals recently, it is clear to see that – while our staff work incredibly hard in some difficult conditions – our buildings are just not up scratch for 21st century healthcare and our way of working at the moment is not sustainable forever. This investment will mean that, instead of facing an uncertain future, our acute hospital services can be retained and continue to thrive in our local area.

"For the first time ever, we have just been rated as Good by the Care Quality Commission, but the thing that will make us Outstanding is modern buildings that will enable us to deliver great patient care for decades to come. This is amazing news, and I would like to say a huge thank you to those who have supported us in recent years."

Sarah Blow, from Merton and Sutton NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and Matthew Tait, from Surrey Downs CCG, are the Accountable Officers that run these organisations that plan and pay for health and social care locally, and have responsibility for the Improving Healthcare Together Programme.

Sarah Blow said: "This is excellent news about this unprecedented level of investment into our local NHS services. This will benefit thousands of people, their children and their grandchildren for many years to come. We can now move towards a formal public consultation and further engage with our local communities to hear their views on our proposals."

Matthew Tait said: "It is not right that some of our patients do not receive the high quality of care that we should provide for everybody. We can now invest in both Epsom and St Helier hospitals to make them high quality facilities, as well as building a new facility for very sick patients so they can be cared for by senior clinicians in modern, safe buildings."

Both CCG accountable officers were clear that no decisions have been made about the location of the new hospital and that local people needed to have their say about proposals before any changes to services can be made. An announcement of the date of a formal consultation will be made in the coming weeks.

The proposals will see both Epsom and St Helier hospitals continuing to provide local district hospital services, meaning that the majority of services (c.85%) would remain on the same sites. The proposal also includes bringing services together onto one site at Epsom, St Helier or Sutton hospitals when patients are critically ill, this comprises c.15% of hospital activity.

The CCGs will consider all the information, evidence and outcome from the public consultation before making a decision.

Patient and public engagement this year

What clinicians, staff, GPs and local people think is key to us developing the right local health and care services.

We continue to engage with staff, local people, community groups, local councils, MPs and other key interest groups to set out why change is needed and what the potential options are.

>From January to June this year, as part of our ongoing and wider participation work, the programme has engaged with a diverse range of community groups across all three CCG areas to provide updates on our work, gather local intelligence and feedback, strengthen local partnerships, and embed the [case for change](#).

Read more about what people say on our website:

<https://improvinghealthcaretogether.org.uk/about/what-people-think/>

What next?

All of the evidence, research and data we are currently working on, will be reviewed by the CCGs before deciding whether we should hold a public consultation on any of our proposals.

We will not go out to public consultation on any proposals until we have agreement in principle for the funding from our regulators.

No decisions have been made about these services yet. This will only happen after a public consultation, and after all the evidence and feedback has been reviewed.

If you have any further questions or want to learn more about the work we are doing please visit our website [here](#).

We want to hear about your experiences and ideas for improving healthcare in the local area. Our website, describes the challenges and opportunities our local area is facing, visit

www.improvinghealthcaretogether.org.uk

You can send us your thoughts, comments or questions via the following:

- **Email:** hello@improvinghealthcaretogether.org.uk
- **Twitter:** [@IHTogether](https://twitter.com/IHTogether)
- **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/ImprovingHealthcareTogether
- **Post:** Freepost IMPROVING HEALTHCARE TOGETHER 2020-2030 (No stamp needed)

