

## Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Update 15<sup>th</sup> June 2023

Public papers are available here:

<https://worcestershire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Mid=5771&x=1&>

### Update on improving Patient Flow:

The Trust are disappointed that they haven't been able to completely eradicate delays in patient handover or timely discharge from ambulances. They mentioned that they have been hampered by both industrial action and hot weather.

The trust is working to quickly identify the most appropriate care for patients presenting to the ED and transfer the patient there as quickly as possible. This helps reduce overcrowding and facilitates faster ambulance handovers.

The main reason for delayed ambulatory handover is overcrowding in the ED either having no space or no staff to treat the patient. This is mainly an issue for Worcester. Patients in ambulances are continually cared for by the ambulance crew with a check every 15 minutes performed by an experienced ED nurse. Patients are then admitted based off clinical priority instead of arrival time. This can lead to walk in patients being seen before a patient in an ambulance where their clinical need is greater.

The ED department still see patients who should have seen their GP or called 111. Better messaging is needed to help the public know where to go for medical attention so that the ED is only used when necessary. This would have a significant impact on waiting times.

We have an advanced primary care offer in Worcester and Redditch and the Trust is working with primary care networks to help share best practice. A big issue for primary care is work force. We have more GP's being trained up than before, but more are leaving the practice, and more are going to other countries to practice.

To improve patient flow in Worcester the Trust are building a new ED which will have a larger capacity and be better situated to move patients on to the relevant specialities required. We had the opportunity to tour the new ED department which was very impressive. It will be opening for patients in October 23.

The Trust has undergone multiple reviews including external, internal, and national. They have received 14 recommendations and are formulating a plan to deliver on the 9 priorities which refer directly to the Trust. This will include better planning for an increase in an elderly population long term.

There will be an aim on prevention and keeping people well at home with the backlog of Occupational Therapy recommendations being prioritised to help with home adaptations and therefore discharge of patients back to their homes. The Trust noted that the County Council were extremely good at getting people with social care plans discharged into appropriate settings in a timely manner.

The work to help councils spend their Disabilities Support Grants is a big programme of work. The back log caused by Covid has reduced from 1400 patients to 700. The OT team are prioritising urgent cases which can lead to longer waits for others. The aim is to reduce the waiting list and remove the backlog completely. It is extremely important to get elderly patients discharged quickly as they deteriorate rapidly in the hospital environment.

People with mental health crisis are increasingly appearing in the ED, this is believed to be due to West Mercia Police changing their practice to not attend mental health call outs. The new ED department will have specialist rooms specifically for mental health concerns.

The ED department is well over 100% capacity every day even during the off-peak months. One of the aims is to improve discharge rates concentrating on discharging earlier on in the day as discharges post 4pm lead to considerable blockages.

This was Matthew Hopkins last meeting with the Health Overview and Scrutiny panel. The July meeting has had to be cancelled so the next meeting now will be in September.

## Ambulance update:

The amount of time crews are spending waiting to hand over at hospital has continued to improve with April showing the lowest total since May 2021. However, work is still ongoing to get back to 2019 levels.

Despite taking over 120,000 999 calls during April, the Trust was able to answer all of them within two minutes with an average time to answer of just 2 seconds! It's the first time for over a year that there have been no over two-minute calls and the Trust was the only ambulance service in the country to be able to do so.

Once more, the level of gratitude shown by the public to the work of staff during April has been phenomenal. In total, the Trust received 183 compliments, all of which will be passed to the individual staff members involved.

Almost 170 graduates from universities across the region descended on Sandwell Hub last month for an engagement event organised by the recruitment team. The day was designed to give paramedic science students who are due to graduate soon, the opportunity to find out more about the Trust and speak to various members of staff to assist them with the recruitment process. Visiting students, who attended from Wolverhampton, Staffordshire, Coventry, Worcester, and Birmingham City Universities, had the chance to try out equipment they will be using on the fitness tests, talk to Senior Operations Managers, find out about the Trust's Health and Wellbeing process and see what the Hazardous Area Response Team has to offer, with all of the specialist equipment on show in the garage.

## Integrated Care Strategy:

You can read an update to the Integrated Cre Strategy here:

<https://sway.office.com/ofig2JrqzVebcG8U?ref=email>

The 10-year strategy aims to Improve population health outcomes.

- Reduce inequalities in outcomes, access, and experience.
- Improve value for money.
- Contribute to wider social and economic wellbeing for the population.

The Worcestershire NHS trust is now working on their 5-year joint forward plan which will be published at the end of June.

Last month celebrated the official launch of the Herefordshire and Worcestershire ICS Academy. It is unique among other healthcare systems in that it provides staff with a 'one stop shop' for a vast array of training, development, and career opportunities - all of which are available to everyone across ICS partner organisations.

NHS England recently published their [delivery plan for recovering access to primary care](#).

As part of this plan, by next winter patients will be able to get medication for earache, sore throat and urinary tract infections straight from the pharmacist without needing a GP appointment. The plan also seeks to support recovery by focusing on:

- Empowering patients to manage their own health.
- Tackle the 8am rush, provide rapid assessment and response.
- Build capacity.
- Cut bureaucracy and reduce workload.

The Stroke Board are now considering the findings of a recently held stroke engagement project.

On 1<sup>st</sup> April 23 NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire became responsible for the commissioning of pharmaceutical, ophthalmic, and dental functions which were previously commissioned and managed by NHS England in the Midlands.

NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire has introduced a project to look at how GP surgeries can ensure they are more receptive to the sensory needs of autistic people, as well as helping to raise awareness of autism and what reasonable adjustments staff can make to support improving health outcomes of autistic people.