

## Update on what the NHS in Norfolk and Waveney is doing to respond to coronavirus (22 April 2020)

### Testing people for coronavirus

- We are establishing a further community testing centre in King's Lynn this week, complementing the drive through community sites in Norwich and in Great Yarmouth and Waveney. In addition there is testing already in operation for patients and staff within hospitals. There are also now regional centres at Stansted and in Ipswich, but we do not expect health or care staff from Norfolk and Waveney to need to travel to those.
- There has been testing of care home staff 'on request' since last week. Care homes are now being written to with information on how to refer staff in for testing. This is not a 'turn up and be tested' service, it requires pre-booking.
- We are already testing residents in care homes where we have been asked to do so by Public Health England, and we are rapidly mobilising a proactive care home resident testing service for Norfolk and Waveney. In line with the government's announcement last week, we are testing all residents of care homes before they are discharged from hospital.

### Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for health and care professionals

- Our main NHS Trusts, including our hospitals, continue to report adequate stock of PPE. On Monday the CCG received another delivery of PPE from the national 'push' out of clinical-standard gloves and aprons which are approved for use in most primary care consultations. These will be sent to GP practices who need them. All GP practices have been asked to source supplies from their normal supply routes where possible. Locally sourced PPE that the CCG obtains will be used to top up practices, as required, on a regular basis.

### Extra beds for patients in the East of England are being created in Norfolk to help in the fight against coronavirus.

- The NHS in the East of England has designated the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital as a "Regional Surge Centre" so that, if needed, it can provide many more beds for the sickest patients with coronavirus in the region.
- Like all acute hospitals across the country, the NNUH already has its own plans in place to expand critical care capacity to meet potential surges in demand for local patients with coronavirus needing this level of care. The regional surge centre will create extra capacity on top of this, and will be able to take in patients from across the entire East of England region.
- Normally, the NNUH has 36 ventilated beds, which are used to treat the most critically ill patients. Along with all hospitals, it has plans in place to open further beds to meet local coronavirus needs – at the NNUH this is a further 60 beds. However, as part of its role as a regional surge centre, the Trust has put in place plans to open a further 170 beds on top of that, in phases, if the need arises. We hope these extra beds will not be needed, but we must take sensible steps to proactively plan for all eventualities and we hope this will be a reassurance to local people.
- If these extra beds are needed patients could be admitted from across the East of England, however it's important to note that they would be discharged either to their home or for further care in their local area. There is no expectation that other health or council services in Norfolk will need to provide additional support to patients coming into Norfolk from the rest of the region.
- This announcement comes at the same time as the CQC has recognised the sustained and significant improvements that NNUH staff have made to patient care. The CQC has recommended that the Trust is removed from special measures.

### Working with the Spire Norwich and BMI Sandringham hospitals to provide cancer care and other time-critical procedures

- 700 NHS patients have now been treated at Spire Healthcare's Norwich hospital to help ease pressure during the pandemic. These are a mix of cancer care, non-cancer procedures and outpatient appointments.

- Each week the hospital is now carrying out 35 to 40 urgent operations. Before the outbreak, Spire Norwich did not provide a chemotherapy service, but since the end of March has worked with staff at the NNUH to transfer its chemotherapy service to Spire – there are approximately 300 appointments each week.
- Alongside cancer, Spire Norwich will care for NHS patients who need cardiological treatment and spinal surgery, and a midwifery clinic is planned to begin in the next few weeks. Day case and outpatient procedures are already being undertaken within urology (lithotripsy) and dermatology (skin cancers).
- 60 patients have received cancer care at the BMI Sandringham since 30 March. The site is also being used for some post-operative care for patients who were treated at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and then transferred, however BMI are not undertaking any outpatient activity.
- These arrangements are part of a national agreement. Across the country, hospitals like the Spire Norwich and BMI Sandringham are being used for time-critical procedures, including cancer care, to take pressure off the NHS and free-up beds for coronavirus patients.

### How we are working together to discharge people from hospital

- Local health and care organisations are working together to source further community capacity to help us create space in our hospitals. By Friday, 10 April, we had established 143 additional beds in the system. This is slightly less than the 154 reported previously reported. At this stage we have chosen not to open the extra 11 beds because it would require altering staffing ratios and we don't need to do this at the moment because there are beds available.
- This week it was announced that work is underway to bring forward new temporary social care beds in Cawston to support people discharged from hospital. Again, we hope we don't need to use them but we're taking sensible steps to make sure we have capacity if needed.
- The additional social care beds would provide a clear pathway to support people out of hospital when they are well enough to leave but need a little extra support before they can go back to their normal home, ensuring those who need to be in hospital can be admitted.
- While all people cared for at Cawston would be medically fit enough to be discharged from hospital, they may include some patients recovering from coronavirus whose symptoms are not severe. These patients would be cared for with compassion and strict standards of hygiene and safety, to ensure the wellbeing of other residents and staff.
- We are continuing to work to secure further beds within community hospitals, care homes and the hospitality sector ready to meet any increase in demand.

### How GP services and primary care are changing how they work to care patients

#### 'Hot sites' for patients with coronavirus (or coronavirus symptoms)

- As mentioned previously, new arrangements are being put in place for people with coronavirus (or coronavirus symptoms) who need to see a GP or practice nurse face-to-face. Six of our 'hot site' surgeries where only people with coronavirus will go are now operational. Seven more 'hot sites' are either ready to go if demand increases or are in development and will be operational soon. In some larger GP surgeries there are also 'zoned' areas to separate those with and without coronavirus.
- Most patients will travel to one of the hot sites, but if this is not possible we will support people on an individual basis so that they can get the care they need, for example via home visits.
- Many of the hot site surgeries are co-located of pharmacies and the CCG has worked closely with the Local Pharmaceutical Committee and the pharmacies involved. Entrances are kept separate and there is zoning of buildings and car parks to ensure no crossover, plus patients are advised they must not use the pharmacy. We are also working on the provision of common drugs in the hot sites so patients can leave their appointment with what they need.

#### Support for high-risk patients

- The CCG has now written to about 35,000 patients in Norfolk and Waveney who are at higher risk of developing complications from coronavirus, asking them to confirm every day that they are well and their conditions are under control.
- The letters have been sent to the 19,000 people in Norfolk and Waveney who were sent letters as part of a national NHS drive, advising them to shield themselves by staying at home for the next 12

weeks, plus a further group of people that local GPs would like to monitor more closely. This is happening across most GP practices in Norfolk and Waveney. The approach is unique to us and uses 'risk stratification' technology called ECLIPSE, which was developed in West Norfolk.

- The letters are being sent to patients in high risk groups, including those who have received an organ transplant, patients with severe chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or severe asthma who have been admitted to hospital in the last 12 months, and those taking immune suppressant medications.
- The letter explains that they have been identified as someone who is more likely to be unwell if they become infected with coronavirus. To help support their health and care, each patient has been allocated a unique 'Covid code' and is being asked to report their health and symptoms on a daily basis via the NHS portal [www.nhspatient.org](http://www.nhspatient.org). They are being asked if they or anyone in their family is currently experiencing any coronavirus symptoms. Along with the letter, the CCG is sending a guide to coronavirus for at risk patients – a copy of the guide is being sent out with this briefing.
- Patients without access to the internet are being asked to encourage a family member or friend to do this for them over the phone if they are not isolating with them. If patients are unable to do this, they are being contacted by one of the 80 CCG employees who have volunteered to call patients alongside their other work.

### **Using digital technology to care for patients**

- GP practices across Norfolk and Waveney are continuing to transform how they work and care for patients. 72 of our 105 GP practices are now offering video consultations. To support practices to work in new ways and to enable staff to work from home, including those self-isolating, the CCG has now delivered 400 laptops (with webcams), 500 standalone webcams, 500 headsets and 50 iPads to primary care. 79 GP practices are now offering online consultations which enable patients to contact their surgery securely via their website. Practices can then triage enquiries and respond appropriately.
- 64% of care homes in Norfolk and Waveney now have a secure NHS email address and the rest are in the process of being given one – this allows for the safe transfer of information from primary and secondary care. Work is also underway to enable GP practices, our acute hospitals and community trusts to be able to offer video consultations to care homes. Some homes already have the necessary infrastructure (wi-fi and equipment) to move forward quickly and others will need to install this.

### **How mental health services are supporting patients and the wellbeing of our staff**

#### **NSFT's Staff Support Line now open to people working for other local NHS trusts**

- On Monday, 20 April, NSFT expanded its staff support line to other NHS trusts to enable people working in the NHS to have a place to talk about their concerns. NSFT psychological practitioners are available to give advice, talk through difficult shifts and discuss current working challenges.

#### **Support for people experiencing mental health difficulties**

- As a reminder, NSFT has launched a 24/7 helpline offering immediate support for people experiencing mental health difficulties during the coronavirus pandemic. The freephone service, called First Response, is staffed by mental health professionals from the Trust. It provides reassurance, self-help advice, support and signposting designed to avoid the need for people to attend hospital, except in the case of a medical emergency.
- The helpline is available to members of the public of any age, regardless of whether or not they are an existing NSFT service user. The line is also open to other healthcare professionals, such as GPs, ambulance and social care staff, who need to make referrals or seek advice when working with people undergoing mental health difficulties. First Response is available on 0808 196 3494.
- This week NSFT's Wellbeing service has also added to their webinar offer with the launch of a session on healthy relationships for couples during the coronavirus pandemic. The service already has webinars on sleep, isolation and being out of work.
- As previously mentioned, we have created one place where people can find out how to access mental health advice and support for 0-25's locally: [www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk/mentalhealth](http://www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk/mentalhealth). On the website people can find out how they can get advice and support without the need for a referral.

## Additional government funding for hospices

- The Government has announced additional funding of up to £200 million over the next three months to enable the NHS to purchase extra support from hospices to deliver additional inpatient beds and end of life community services.
- We are awaiting confirmation of how much our local hospices will receive. Hospice UK is in the process of allocating specific funding grants to each of the 200 hospices across England.
- Across England, hospices will immediately make available up to 80% of their bed capacity, totalling 6,800 beds per day and 60% of their community capacity, totalling 82,000 community contacts per day (based on three visits per day). These arrangements will be in place for at least three months, but capacity requirements will be reviewed on a monthly basis.
- Without this solution there is a risk that capacity would not be available when required, leading to additional pressures on acute and community hospitals.

## Advice for people who need to go to hospital

- Our three hospitals are advising people to pack a bag in advance if they need to go to hospital. This is particularly important at the moment because if you are admitted there is no visiting for most patients and so additional items cannot be brought in. They have produced a checklist of what to pack, which is attached to the end of this briefing – please share this and encourage people to think about what they might need if they were to go to hospital.

## People's experience of care

- Healthwatch in Norfolk and in Suffolk are asking for people to share their experience of accessing information, care and support during the coronavirus outbreak. People are being asked to complete a survey which can be found at [www.healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk/hwn-covid-19-survey](http://www.healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk/hwn-covid-19-survey), or <https://healthwatchesuffolk.co.uk/news/covidsurvey>.



## Pack a bag in advance, so you are prepared especially as there is no visiting at the hospital so additional items cannot be brought in.

Having these things with you will help to ensure you are prepared and have all you need to be comfortable, and improve your experience as a patient should you need to go to hospital. It is important that items are named to help prevent loss.

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|---|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Debit card for 'hands free' payments                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | Comfortable, easy-to-put-on clothes  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Toiletry bag with soap, toothbrush, comb, etc.          | <input type="checkbox"/> | Mobile telephone/ iPad, and charger, to help you and your loved ones stay in contact   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Comfortable shoes and socks                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | Thing(s) to make you feel comfortable: e.g. photo of family or pets, pillowcase, soft toy  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Nightclothes  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other important things:<br>e.g. glasses, hearing aid, mobility aid, medications list and two week supply of medication if possible, etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Underwear   | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |                          |
| Sanitary towels, incontinence pads, etc.                | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |                          |
| Contact details for close family should you be admitted | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |                          |

Please note that following the stay in hospital soiled items will be bagged and returned