

Renal Reconfiguration JHOSC Informal Meeting Thursday 27th January 2022, Microsoft Teams

Members of the Joint Health Overview Scrutiny Committee met with delegates from the Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust to discuss the proposed changes to cardiology inpatients services and renal dialysis.

Laura Graham, Centre Manager Medicine (Renal, Respiratory, Dermatology, Diabetes & Endocrine) outlined that the proposed change would see the Renal Dialysis Unit currently located at Princess Royal Hospital (PRH) relocated to an offsite Satellite Unit in Stafford Park. The purpose of this move was to improve dialysis facilities for patients in Telford. Members heard that the current PRH Unit did not provide the space required, particularly when accommodating COVID social distancing and increasing patient numbers. The move to Holinswood House, Stafford Park had been designed to future proof the provision of dialysis to meet the growing patient need over the next 10 years, based on the Hospital Transformation Team's modelling. In addition to the dialysis the building also provided housing for a planned Community Diagnostic Hub and an additional 20 bed ward when required. There was also capacity for Doctors to run small clinics from the premises.

During the debate Member's asked a number of questions:

Given current recruitment challenges will there be enough staff to run the unit effectively?

The Head of Nursing advised that in the first instance all current staff were to be moved with the unit and that any plans to expand the unit were to be deliver in conjunction with a recruitment strategy, however, in comparison to other areas of speciality nursing, Renal is well staffed and had historically been easier to recruit for.

Dr Nicholas elaborated that as patient numbers increased all Renal units in the UK needed to grow, which modelling indicated would include Royal Shrewsbury, Princess Royal and Ludlow Hospitals. The new building accommodated for the next 10 years and allowed for further growth.

Often those who access the services are vulnerable and need to be accompanied. Was there an area in the new unit for family members to go?

There is a large waiting area but no café. However it was placed in a central location with a Greggs nearby. They were also looking to install vending machines.

Parking at Royal Shrewsbury Hospital had been free, would this be the case at the new site?

Parking will remain free. The site allowed for extensive onsite parking with sufficient space for drop off and collection. It was also noted that the hospital transport provider had been consulted to ensure continuity.

Were there any adverse clinical effects of the move?

Dr Nicholas explained that the patients attending the satellite unit would be those who were stable enough to travel. Those who are more severe would continue to receive care as Royal Shrewsbury Hospital. It was highlighted that 18 patients with a Telford postcode were currently being treated at RSH, meaning that this move would directly benefit them by reducing travel times before and after long dialysis procedures. It was confirmed that at present no patients based in Shrewsbury would be required to travel to Telford as a result of the new proposed site.

Was the aging population contributing to the need for growth?

The average age for patients receiving dialysis was 70 years old. There had been focus on intervention which prevented people reaching that stage with the help of primary care and diabetes identification. Results also indicated that those on dialysis were now living longer than they had previously. However, it was correct that it was inevitable that chronic dialysis programmes would need to increase as the population aged, especially as older people were often considered too high risk to go down the transplant pathway.

Where would North Shropshire residents go to receive dialysis treatment?

Dependent on how stable a patients was they would be treated at either RSH or Ludlow Community Hospital. There were further links in place with Hereford, Wolverhampton and Birmingham Hospitals. Members heard that when considering the location of the new satellite site they did look at Bridgenorth and other rural locations, but it was concluded that it would not service enough patients to be viable given the costs.

Julia Clarke, Director of Public Participation then provided the Committee with an overview of the engagement that had been undertaken throughout the consultation. In the initial stages they had made contact with;

- Local MP's
- Scrutiny Committees
- Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Health & Wellbeing Boards
- Healthwatch
- Community Health Council
- Patient Groups
- Shropshire Kidney Patient Association
- GP's
- Town & Parish Councils

- Local press and BBC Radio Shropshire.

They had also provided paper copies of a survey to all patients receiving treatment, with nurse's assistance if required. In addition all patients were invited to ask questions at the stakeholder event, or have those questions asked by a doctor who attended on their behalf. Resulting feedback from staff and patients indicated that the current services were too cramped and that they would welcome further spacing between chairs and a bed option. The Director of Public Participation did highlight to Members that 85% of all respondents did rate their experience of dialysis as good or excellent. It was also noted that the Engagement Report and surveys were all available to the public via the website.

The Director of Public Participation informed that Committee that if the proposal was approved by the Board on Thursday, 10 February then they hoped to have completed all required work by the end of year in order for the move to take place in 2022. The continued involvement of patient focus groups throughout the remainder of the process was stressed. It was asked that the Joint Health Overview Scrutiny endorse the proposed move.

Members thanked all participants for their time and commended them on a thorough consultation and great example of best practice.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Joint Chairs of the Joint Health Overview Scrutiny Committee move that the Committee approve the proposed relocation of renal dialysis at the next formal meeting.