

## **Report for Children, Adults, Health and Wellbeing Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel – Monday 16 December 2024**

### **Update on the new Sulis Elective Orthopaedic Centre**

Sulis Hospital is a partner of the Royal United Hospital Bath. The hospital is currently building the Sulis Elective Orthopaedic Centre (SEOC) on its site just outside of Bath, and it is now entering the final build stages with the team now readying the new wing for a December launch.

The new SEOC wing will create capacity for 3,750 non-emergency, orthopaedic operations for NHS patients across Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire, as well as the wider South West region each year, allowing people to have the surgery they need. NHS patients will see reduced waiting times and waiting lists with increased capacity to offset delays.

SEOC is the most environmentally friendly building developed at Sulis Hospital, and aligns with a commitment to reducing environmental impact through energy efficiency and sustainable materials. Solar panels and ground source heat pumps have been installed.

The last stages of preparation will include further sustainability plans such as a sustainable travel plan activated across the site.

### **Sustainable travel plan**

Launched in November, a new travel initiative encourages healthy and sustainable travel habits that benefit everyone. The initiative includes making e-bikes available to all staff for long-term hire, with charging available at Sulis Hospital.

There will also be charging points for electric vehicles, a comprehensive overview of bus travel, including WESTlink bus routes, and an extension of the Sulis Hospital car sharing scheme.

Lucy Travis, Senior Shared Travel Plan Officer for Bath and North East Somerset Council, worked with the RUH and Sulis on sustainable travel initiatives.

### **Recruitment**

The SEOC is also bringing around 100 new jobs to the area, both clinical and non-clinical.

This recruitment is in progress and going well. Following a successful open day in July, which attracted more than 110 visitors, Sulis received approximately 700 expressions of interest for all role types. Throughout November and December, Sulis will be inducting more 30 new starters.

### **Almost half a million vaccinations given so far this autumn**

Since the launch of this winter's campaign to protect people against flu, Covid-19 and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), more than 450,000 vaccinations have been delivered to eligible people living locally.

In October, it was announced that NHS staff had delivered more than 10 million Covid-19 and flu vaccinations nationally, as the effort to avoid a tripledemic this winter ramped up.

Covid-19 jabs were rolled out to those eligible on 3 October, while flu jabs have been available for pregnant women and children aged between two and three-years-old since 1 September.

In BSW, vaccinations have been delivered in walk-in clinics, GP surgeries, pharmacies and community settings, with the initial phase focussing on reaching those unable to leave their home without assistance, such as housebound patients and care home staff and residents.

Dr Barry Coakley, Deputy Chief Medical Officer, said: "It's been a good start to this year's winter vaccination programme, which means many of our most vulnerable people are already protected as we move towards the colder months."

### **Physiotherapy performance in Bath and North East Somerset**

At a previous meeting, committee members had requested further information regarding the performance of community-based physiotherapy in Bath and North East Somerset.

The ICB has since worked in collaboration with colleagues at HCRG Care Group, which provides community-based physiotherapy care in the BaNES area, to produce a detailed overview of how the service is currently performing. The full report is attached as Appendix A.

### **Pharmacy provision in Bath and North East Somerset**

Data from the most recent Community Pharmacy Workforce Survey is now available and provides a snapshot of staffing inside community pharmacies as of autumn 2023.

As it stands, this data is currently the only source of metrics on the community pharmacy workforce.

The ICB is in the process of analysing the data, while simultaneously reviewing the impacts of local initiatives to tackle the workforce challenges that have been seen in the region.

Some of the initial results can be seen below:

- The number of full-time equivalent pharmacists in BSW has increased from 212 in 2022 to 222 in 2023
- The ICB has increased the number of trainee pharmacists from six in 2022 to 20 in 2023
- The pharmacist vacancy rate in BSW has fallen from 28 per cent in 2022 to 22 per cent in 2023
- The number of independent prescribers within pharmacies has increased from 19 in 2022 to 28 in 2023

Pharmacy opening hours are part of pharmacies' Terms of Service for providing NHS pharmaceutical services. Most must open for 40 core contractual hours.

Some pharmacies must open between 72 and 100 core contractual hours, called 100-hour pharmacies. As of May 2023, 100 hour pharmacies can apply to reduce their hours to no less than 72 hours per week. Provided the pharmacy met the criteria set out in the regulations, the commissioner cannot prevent that reduction.

One of the conditions is that the pharmacy must maintain any opening hours between 5pm and 9pm, Monday to Saturday. So, even where a 100 hour pharmacy may have had hours after 9pm, the ICB is not able to prevent them from removing those later hours.

In Bath and North East Somerset, a number of pharmacies are currently available after 5pm. The Southgate branch of Boots in Bath city centre is open until 7pm, as is Swiftcare Pharmacy in Midsomer Norton.

In addition, Keynsham Pharmacy is currently open until 8pm, while Midsomer Pharmacy in Radstock is open until 9pm.

### **New initiatives to support children and young people**

The ICB uses the national [CYPCore20PLUS5](#) framework to underpin all work carried out to support children and young people, with progress measured against the following five clinical areas:

- Children and young people's mental health
- Asthma
- Epilepsy
- Oral health
- Diabetes

Recently, as part of ongoing efforts to increase focus on mental health, the ICB has launched the BSW Youth Worker Pilot, which involves having a dedicated youth worker in each of the region's acute hospital emergency department, including the Royal United Hospital in Bath. This is provided by our third sector partners and the service in B&NES is provided by Off the Record.

The youth workers will be on hand to provide a person-centred, trauma-informed intervention for any child or young person aged between 11 and 25-years-old who attends hospital due to mental health or as a result of a long-term condition, such as diabetes and epilepsy.

This new initiative not only aims to reduce emergency department attendances and hospital admissions, but also to enhance overall wellbeing of children and young people.

The ICB has launched an epilepsy specialist nurse pilot at the Royal United Hospital in Bath, which offers additional care for any young people admitted as a result of their epilepsy. The new role also has links into the community, which helps to offer improved clinical outcomes and enables staff to embed new ways of working across Bath and North East Somerset.

In May 2024, the ICB launched the BSW [Asthma Friendly Schools](#) accreditation. Working in partnership with Bath and North East Somerset Council, schools can access resources to become accredited as asthma-friendly, which has been shown to improve outcomes for children living with the condition.

To improve diabetes outcomes, the ICB has focused on prevention of obesity by expanding its local complications for excessive weight (CEW) clinics. In addition, teams are working to adopt the latest guidance from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) around managing blood glucose levels in patients with type 1 diabetes, with an emphasis on ensuring children and young people are prioritised.

As part of our current and future ambition, the ICB aims to embed paediatric expertise within all areas of community and primary care.