

# Improving healthcare services in Weston and the surrounding area



**A summary of our proposals for  
changing local healthcare services,  
including the services at Weston Hospital**

**Summary  
consultation document  
February 2019**

# Summary

## What this document is about

This document sets out a summary of our proposals to improve healthcare for everyone in Weston, Worle and the surrounding areas. A copy of the full consultation document is available at [www.bnssghealthiertogether.org.uk/healthyweston/](http://www.bnssghealthiertogether.org.uk/healthyweston/)

We are consulting on three key changes we want to make as soon as possible to improve the safety and quality of some services at Weston Hospital and to provide local people and staff with greater certainty about the future.

Looking further ahead, we have a clear ambition to better join up primary care, community-based care and hospital services. Different ways of working in the future will make sure we can support you and your family to stay well, and care for you in the best and most appropriate way when needed.

Local clinicians have developed these proposals and we have listened to the views of local people, staff and other partners. We have also considered clinical quality standards and national and international research on how to deliver the best healthcare system for this area. Together these insights have been used to build our vision for a healthier Weston.

Importantly, we have not made any decisions yet. First we want to hear what you think about our proposals. Please let us know what you think. We will publish a report detailing the feedback we receive and take the findings into account before making a decision about the future of services at Weston Hospital, which we aim to do by the end of the year.

The consultation is being led by Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (BNSSG CCG). We are responsible for planning and shaping healthcare in your area and across the wider region. We have also worked closely with Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group as many of the people using hospital services in Weston-super-Mare are residents of the north Sedgemoor area.

# Why we are proposing changes to services

We have to change the way our local healthcare services are organised and care is provided because we face four significant challenges:



1

## Changing health needs

Our population is growing and getting older, people are living with more long-term conditions and there are significant inequalities in health.



2

## Variations in care and in access to primary and community care

There are differences in the way care is currently provided, with some patients finding it harder than others to access the right care.



3

## Meeting national clinical quality standards

Some services at Weston Hospital don't see enough of certain cases to meet national quality standards and there is a shortage of specialist staff.



4

## Getting value for money

We have a duty to spend every pound for the greatest public benefit. We must live within our financial means and make sure we use our available resources effectively to meet local needs.

Our *Case for Change* document sets out further evidence, available at [www.bnssghealthiertogether.org.uk/healthyweston/](http://www.bnssghealthiertogether.org.uk/healthyweston/)

# Our vision for the future: high quality care that meets your needs

Our vision is for NHS services in Weston, Worle and the surrounding areas to be the very best they can be. We are committed to making sure services meet your individual health needs, help you to avoid ill health and stay well, and provide high quality care as close to home as possible, whenever you need it.

Alongside improvements in day-to-day care delivered by GPs and teams of health and care professionals in surgeries, health centres and our homes, our ambition is for Weston Hospital to be a vibrant and dynamic hospital at the heart of the community.

We want it to be an example of best practice healthcare, delivering services tailored to the changing needs of the local population, and making the most of the latest evidence and advances in technology.



# The key elements of our vision for services in the Weston area



# Our proposals for consultation

We are consulting on **three specific changes** to the way that services are delivered in Weston Hospital.

## 1 A&E and urgent care

Weston Hospital is currently commissioned to deliver a 24-hours a day, seven day a week A&E service. However, since July 2017, the A&E at Weston Hospital has been temporarily closed between 10pm and 8am on the grounds of patient safety due to staffing levels, following an inspection by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

The urgent and emergency care services provided at Weston Hospital need to be reformed as soon as possible, to ensure a safe and sustainable model of care that can be staffed reliably and delivers good value for money.



## Our plans for change

- There would continue to be urgent and emergency care provided locally 24-hours a day, seven days a week, but the services would be organised in a different way.
- Our proposal is to keep A&E at Weston Hospital open from 8am to 10pm, seven days a week, making the current temporary change to A&E opening hours permanent.
- We want GPs to join the A&E team at Weston Hospital to work alongside hospital specialists. The GPs would assess and treat those patients needing urgent care. Those needing specialist care would be seen by an A&E consultant.
- We also want to improve the process for GPs (and potentially paramedics) to be able to directly admit more patients into a hospital bed 24-hours a day, when they need urgent hospital-based care.
- As now, patients with the most serious and life-threatening conditions would be treated at specialist centres at neighbouring hospitals in Bristol and Taunton, where people have better outcomes. There would be even closer teamwork with these hospitals. For very serious and life-threatening conditions people should continue to dial 999 any time of day or night, as now.
- You and your family would continue to be able to access urgent care and advice overnight through NHS 111 and out-of-hours GP services.

## Our proposal for consultation

**We are consulting on making the temporary overnight closure of A&E permanent.** The A&E at Weston Hospital would continue to be open 8am to 10pm, seven days a week.

## 2 Critical care

Weston Hospital currently provides up to Level 3 critical care (also known as an Intensive Care Unit or ICU) for a small number of the sickest patients.

Whilst there are currently adequate numbers of medical and nursing staff to support this need, the unit is too small to provide specialist support services that are recommended to provide the best long-term outcomes for patients. These support services include, for example, around the clock nutritionists, pharmacists and physiotherapists.

Hospitals in Bristol and Taunton have much larger critical care units that are better able to sustainably deliver the most complex critical care to the sickest patients.

### Our plans for change

- We want people who live or stay in the Weston area and need Level 3 critical care to have access to the best services possible, even if this means travelling by ambulance to a larger hospital.
- This would mean around 100 more patients a year would need to be treated at larger neighbouring hospitals compared to now.
- Level 1 and Level 2 critical care would continue to be available on a high dependency unit at Weston Hospital. This would include detailed observations, support for a single failing organ, or post-operative care.
- Patients needing higher levels of critical care could be escalated up to Level 3 for 12 hours, with the ability to extend on a case by case basis at Weston Hospital, but would then be transferred and treated at other hospitals if they continued to need intensive care. As patients improve they would be transferred back to Weston Hospital for the remainder of their care, as appropriate.
- The changes we are proposing to emergency surgery (see page 10) mean that there would be even less need for Level 3 care at Weston Hospital.



## Our proposal for consultation

**We are consulting on Weston Hospital providing care in the future for patients needing Level 2 or Level 1 critical care.**

Level 3 critical care would be available for up to 12 hours, with the ability to extend on a case by case basis, prior to transfer to other hospitals.

### 3 Emergency surgery

Emergency surgery is currently available at Weston Hospital day and night. This surgery commonly covers a wide range of conditions, often focussing on the digestive system (from the oesophagus to the lower intestine and bowel).

Typically, people do not require complex emergency surgery very often and the evidence shows that there are better outcomes when these types of operations are done at larger more specialist centres because they see and treat more people with the same condition. This allows staff to maintain and build their skills and expertise.

#### Our plans for change

We want people who live in the Weston area to have access to the best possible specialist care, even if this means travelling further to be seen at a larger hospital. We expect this would mean around 560 patients each year (around 47 each month) with more serious or complex needs would be operated on at neighbouring hospitals in Bristol or Taunton compared to now.

As is currently the case, patients who need emergency surgery on veins or arteries, or care for major trauma such as fractured pelvis and/or multiple broken bones or suspected damage to multiple organs/chest/major arteries, would be transferred or taken directly by ambulance to specialist units.

Patients would be transferred back to Weston Hospital for the remainder of their stay in hospital wherever appropriate.

Under our proposals there would be consultant surgeon cover at Weston Hospital during the day time only. Additional on-call support and advice would be available if needed from specialists in larger hospitals in Bristol and Taunton.



## Our proposal for consultation

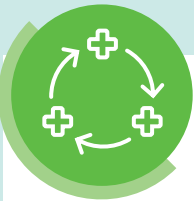
**We are consulting on Weston Hospital providing emergency surgery during the day only for patients with a wide range of conditions who can be safely treated within 24-hours of being assessed, and who may need up to and including Level 2 critical care following surgery.**

## More planned care at Weston Hospital

We want to increase planned surgery at Weston Hospital and provide more common operations such as hip and knee replacements or cataract surgery. We also want to increase other types of planned care, such as complex chemotherapy services, so that patients who need to have regular non-surgical treatment can receive it closer to where they live.

# Current improvements to services

In addition to the proposals we are consulting on, we are also interested in feedback on other important improvements to local NHS services. This will help us meet the needs of our growing local population and, in particular, the needs of frail and older people, children and people with mental health problems. These changes will also help reduce the demand on emergency and unplanned hospital services. These improvements will enable us to better deliver our vision for a vibrant and dynamic Weston Hospital.



## Care for frail and older people

Our population is getting older and that means there will be many more people living with frailty and long-term conditions.

We need to ensure that good quality care is in place to support people to stay as well and as independent as possible. We want to avoid lengthy, unplanned hospital admissions.

## Our plans for change

- We want Weston Hospital to become a centre of excellence for frailty and offer a 'one-stop shop' of services for frail and older people.
- A team of healthcare professionals, such as doctors, nurses and social workers, will work together at Weston Hospital and in the community. They will help to keep people well and act quickly to provide support and care as required to avoid unplanned hospital stays. If people do have to be admitted to hospital they will coordinate getting them home as soon as possible with the right support in place.



## Children's urgent care

Children's urgent care is currently provided at Weston Hospital by specialist children's health professionals 9am to 8pm, Monday to Friday. Yet children often need care at the weekends or later in the evening.

## Our plans for change

- The new children's urgent care service will be available seven days a week, instead of five. We will have specialist health professionals available from 8am to 10pm every day of the week to treat children with a sudden illness or minor accident, minor burns or infections requiring antibiotics via a drip. This is 43 hours more support each week than is available now.
- It will provide more local care for children when families need it and avoid the need for as many children to travel to a neighbouring hospital.
- If a child needed to stay overnight or for more than eight hours of observation and/or be admitted to hospital they would be stabilised and transferred to a larger neighbouring hospital, as happens now.



## Mental health care

Around 10,000 patients each year in North Somerset receive mental health support, and we expect to see significant increases over the coming years.

Currently at Weston Hospital, mental health support in the A&E is available during day time hours only. It can be difficult to access children and adolescent mental health services.

## Our plans for change

- A new mental health crisis and recovery centre will be opened in the centre of Weston, supporting those with urgent and ongoing mental health needs at evenings and weekends.
- Additional mental health specialists will be available as part of the A&E team. This will help patients experiencing mental ill-health, and those with severe drug and alcohol related problems, to be quickly assessed and cared for by the right service, ensuring that both their physical and mental health needs are met.
- More money is being invested in child and adolescent mental health services.



## GP and primary care services

There are good local GP services but some people find it difficult to get an appointment and want more continuity of care. It is also challenging to attract and retain enough GPs and other primary care staff to work in our area with the way our GP and primary care services are currently set up.

## Our plans for change

- GP practices will continue to work more closely together so they can offer greater access to a wider range of appointments and services, such as physiotherapy and counselling.
- A new, single, digital booking system has been introduced to some practices and is being rolled out to all Weston practices in 2019.
- Care home residents will get a more consistent, high-quality service from GPs working in a more coordinated way together and will therefore have a reduced risk of being admitted to hospital in an emergency or for unplanned care.
- Around £3.2 million is being invested to provide a new primary care building in the centre of Weston.
- We expect that, by improving the way GPs work together, there will be greater and more varied career opportunities. We believe this will help attract new GPs and other primary care staff to work in the area.




# Our vision for the longer-term future

Our proposals for consultation, and the improvements we are already making to local services, will go some way to helping us tackle the four key challenges we face and improve the quality and safety of care. However, these proposed changes don't go far enough in solving the long-term sustainability issues around things like staffing and funding. We need to think about how in the longer-term we can work differently to deliver even better services using the resources we have.

Looking further ahead we believe we will need to make additional changes to services, which could include:

- Providing access to urgent care at Weston Hospital from 8am-10pm, seven days a week via a medically-led team of health professionals, with more 24/7 direct admissions to hospital wards for urgent cases.
- Having very sick patients who are likely to need a long unplanned stay in hospital treated elsewhere, although we would like to have beds available in Weston Hospital for frail and older people who need to stay in hospital for longer periods of care.
- Continuing to expand and improve care out of hospital for frail and older people.
- Providing daytime emergency surgery in Weston Hospital for people who are otherwise fit and well, with patients who need Level 2 or 3 critical care being stabilised and transferred to other larger neighbouring hospitals.
- Providing more types of planned surgery at Weston Hospital for people who are otherwise fit and well and who are likely to need only ward-based Level 1 critical care.
- Providing more types of planned care at Weston Hospital, for example other types of cancer treatments.



A photograph of two NHS staff members in blue scrubs. The woman on the right is looking towards the woman on the left, who is seen from the back. The woman on the right has a watch and a pen clipped to her scrubs. The background is a bright, modern hospital interior.

Our longer-term vision is designed to enable Weston Hospital to provide the type of care and treatments our growing local population need most commonly and frequently.

When local people need to have very specialist or complex treatment, or are seriously unwell, they would receive the care they need at larger specialist hospitals in Bristol and Taunton.

# Giving your views

We want to know what you think about our proposals before we make decisions about the future of services at Weston Hospital. Our consultation runs from Wednesday 13 February 2019 to midday on Friday 24 May 2019. We look forward to receiving your views.

## Come and talk to us

We have organised a series of public discussion meetings and roadshow events to provide a drop-in environment where you can learn more, speak to our local clinical leaders and let us know what you think. Visit us online at [www.bnssghealthiertogether.org.uk/healthyweston/](http://www.bnssghealthiertogether.org.uk/healthyweston/) to see our full programme of consultation events and meetings or contact us by phone, email or post for further details.

## Invite us to speak with your group

We will be getting out and about talking to local communities as much as possible and would be delighted to attend any interested community groups such as support groups, patient reference groups or disability alliance meetings. Please get in touch so that this can be arranged, using the contact details shown here.

This document is a summary of our proposals for improving healthcare services in Weston and the surrounding area. Our main consultation document provides more detail and is available at [www.bnssghealthiertogether.org.uk/healthyweston/](http://www.bnssghealthiertogether.org.uk/healthyweston/)

It sets out the benefits and improvements, as well as the potential risks or disadvantages, we believe our proposals would bring. Patient stories are also provided to help illustrate what the changes would mean to local people.

**Please read the main document and let us know your views.**



## Send us your feedback

- Online survey – you can complete the online survey at [www.bnssghealthiertogether.org.uk/healthyweston/](http://www.bnssghealthiertogether.org.uk/healthyweston/)
- Printed survey – if you prefer to complete the survey on paper please contact us to request a copy. Once completed it can be sent back to our Freepost address. You do not need to use a stamp.
- Email – send your views by email to us at [bnssg.healthyweston.enquiries@nhs.net](mailto:bnssg.healthyweston.enquiries@nhs.net)
- Post – write to us at Freepost HEALTHY WESTON.
- Phone – call us on 0117 900 2655.
- If you would like this document in another language or format, then please contact us.

**When the consultation closes on Friday 24 May 2019, all the feedback will be analysed by an external organisation. A report will be produced to be considered fully by the Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group.**

We will publish this report on our website and make sure that people know when it is available and how the CCG intends to address the views, comments, ideas and concerns that people raise. The CCG will meet in public to report back on the consultation, consider all the evidence in full and make a decision about the future of services at Weston Hospital. It is anticipated this will be by the end of the year. You can sign up for our newsletter to be kept informed about progress as soon as further details are made available at [www.bnssghealthiertogether.org.uk/healthyweston/](http://www.bnssghealthiertogether.org.uk/healthyweston/)



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