**Your Care, Your Future – Future hospital care**

Currently there are many people being treated in hospitals across West Hertfordshire who could be cared for in the community, closer to where people live.

In the future, more health and care services will be provided locally, meaning some services that are currently provided at a local district general hospital will be available to patients locally. As a result we need to make some changes to how our hospitals work, to help us:

- Improve the quality and safety of care
- Achieve better clinical results
- Recruit and retain the right staff with the right skills
- Afford care for years to come – for example, West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust has a deficit

This paper provides information about potential options for acute hospital care covering:

- Options that have been considered
- Information about the criteria and scoring process we have used to test each option
- The main pros and cons for the highest scoring options

*Your Care, Your Future* has looked carefully at a number of viable options for providing acute care in the future, and a robust scoring process is underway to determine the most beneficial options for patients and local residents.

To help us understand the advantages and disadvantages of each option, they have been measured against five criteria:

Would the option:

- ensure treatment for patients is safe and the care provided is high quality?
- provide a high level of satisfaction and improved patient experience?
- be deliverable? To what extent is it feasible and would it command support?
- ensure facilities are accessible to the public in terms of journey times and opening times?
- be affordable?

Eight viable options for acute hospital care have been identified:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option 1</th>
<th>Option 2</th>
<th>Option 3</th>
<th>Option 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consolidate all services at another site</td>
<td>Consolidate all acute services at Watford</td>
<td>Acute, emergency and specialised services at Watford. Day case surgery and complex diagnostics at St. Albans.</td>
<td>Acute, emergency and specialised services at Watford. Day case surgery and complex diagnostic services at Hemel Hempstead.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option 5</th>
<th>Option 6</th>
<th>Option 7</th>
<th>Option 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acute, emergency and specialised services at Watford with day case surgery and complex</td>
<td>Acute, emergency and specialised services at “another site” with day case surgery and</td>
<td>Acute, emergency and specialised services at “another site” with day case</td>
<td>Acute, emergency and specialised services at “another site” with day case surgery and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We welcome your feedback on all the options and any other potential scenarios you would like us to consider.

During September 2015 we published information about the options and held several meetings with stakeholders. We asked people to help us identify the pros and cons for each option. We held meetings with:

- Patient representatives, carers and other stakeholders
- GPs, Medical Directors and other clinicians to test clinical and safety issues
- Finance directors to test the affordability of each option
- Senior leaders within the County Council and NHS organisations

This work has enabled us to shortlist three potential options. In recent months we have been hearing about and assessing additional options that have been submitted to us. Following careful consideration a variation of one option has been shortlisted. Others were considered and have been found to be clinically unsustainable.

We will continue to test options and we will carry out further detailed analysis in 2016. We will keep an open mind about the best solution.

There are pros and cons to each option, and all three will be analysed in greater detail.

**Option 1: centralise acute care at a new hospital in a central location**

The care provided would include emergency services, comprehensive women’s and maternity care, day surgery, cancer care, an outpatients department, diagnostics, children's services and specialised care. The location for this option remains under discussion. It is assumed that transport links (including public transport) would need to be in place for this option to be viable.

**Advantages**

- A new facility would be purpose built to meet the acute care needs of the local population
- While all options are considered safe, this provides greater flexibility for clinicians as additional clinical back up, such as intensive care, is provided on the same site
- Centralisation avoids spreading staff too thinly across multiple sites and it may be easier to attract and retain staff to a brand new facility

**Drawbacks**

- Building a brand new hospital is the most expensive option
- The largest single population catchment is in Watford so a disproportionate number of people would need to travel further to the hospital than do so currently
- Existing staff may not be happy to relocate

**Option 2: centralise acute care at Watford**
This option means that all acute care would be provided at Watford. The care provided would include emergency services, comprehensive women’s and maternity care, day surgery, cancer care, an outpatients department, diagnostics, children’s services and specialised care. The buildings at Watford would be refurbished and existing services such as day case surgery would be moved from St Albans and Hemel Hempstead to the Watford site.

**Advantages**

- While all options are considered safe, this provides greater flexibility for clinicians as additional clinical back up, such as intensive care, is provided on the same site
- Centralisation avoids spreading staff too thinly across multiple sites
- It’s slightly cheaper to provide services at one existing site than two or more

**Drawbacks**

- People in some localities may have to travel further for some treatment. Older and disabled people, some of whom do not drive or have access to private transport, are adversely affected
- Considerable building work would need to be carried out to ensure facilities are fit for purpose

**Option 3: locating acute care at Watford and St Albans. This option provides the least amount of change**

Under this option, day surgery, complex diagnostics, cancer care and an outpatients department would be provided at St Albans. Services at Watford would include emergency services, comprehensive women’s and maternity care, an outpatients department, diagnostics, children’s services and specialised care.

**Advantages**

- Maintains services in a relatively heavily populated area. For people living in St Albans & Harpenden there is no need to travel to Watford for day surgery
- It’s easier and quicker than the other options to implement because there is the least amount to change

**Drawbacks**

- There may be some inefficiencies with provision over more than one site although some people dispute this
- This option reduces services in one locality (Dacorum) although other options reduce services in two localities

**A similar option that provides services at Hemel Hempstead rather than in St Albans has been considered. There are a number of reasons why the St Albans site is preferred:**

- Many of the services already exist at St Albans
- The site in Hemel is very hilly and therefore more complex and expensive to build on
- There are plans for significant investment for health and care services in Hemel Hempstead, where a new health and care hub will be available in a central location for Dacorum residents.

You can find out more information on how the options have been analysed, scored and shortlisted in the strategic outline case, available here.

*Your Care, Your Future* has also conducted an Equality and Health Inequalities analysis report. This Report has been conducted so that decision makers can take account of any potential impact that decisions may have on people from all equality characteristic groups. The full report is available here.