

Dear Colleagues

Sussex Orthopaedic Treatment Centre – assignment of lease

I am writing to update you regarding orthopaedic provision in Sussex.

NHS Sussex has agreed to assign the lease of the Sussex Orthopaedic Treatment Centre (SOTC) facility to Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust (BSUH) for a period of five years from 1st April 2012.

The Interim Contract with Care UK for the provision of elective orthopaedic activity at the SOTC will terminate on 31 March 2012. We are working with Care UK and BSUH to ensure smooth and effective handover of services to ensure continuity in patient care.

The Interim Contract was a temporary contracting arrangement following the cancellation of a procurement exercise last summer and the sole purpose of this contract was to ensure continuity of service while a clinically driven review of the musculo-skeletal (MSK) model was undertaken and a new contracting framework implemented.

Following a review of the available options regarding the premises, the award of the lease to BSUH was identified as the optimal solution in terms of safeguarding the interests of both patients and taxpayers.

In coming to this decision we considered the following issues:

- The building is located on land owned by BSUH on the site of the Princess Royal Hospital, Haywards Heath which is subject to a separate 20 year lease between BSUH and the PCT dated March 2005.
- The facility has always had medical, estates and facilities management links with BSUH and there are advantages in managing the service in a single organisation.
- The SOTC does not have outpatient facilities and the building is not designed for outpatient activity. This means that the facility cannot provide the entire elective orthopaedic pathway. The SOTC facility is critical to the delivery of NHS Sussex's operational and strategic goals relating to the provision of elective orthopaedic services clinically linked to wider trauma and orthopaedic provision.
- There is an interdependency between elective and non-elective activity in respect of clinical governance, sustainability and postgraduate education. NHS Sussex is clear that BSUH needs a reasonable elective orthopaedic flow to sustain high quality trauma services. The combination of routine orthopaedics along with complex work is crucial to maintaining the skills of the specialist surgeons.. 85% of major trauma cases require orthopaedic intervention and all other Major Trauma Centres (21 in England) receive routine orthopaedics along with complex work.

Patient choice

Across Sussex we have a vibrant market for routine elective orthopaedic services, including providers from statutory NHS, commercial and third sectors and there are relatively low barriers to entry. The award of the lease to BSUH does not impact on

the ability of patients to exercise choice. Patients will be able to choose treatment at the Sussex Orthopaedic Treatment Centre or treatment at other sites by other providers.

NHS Sussex has made a separate decision to contract for routine elective services, including orthopaedics, via the Any Qualified Provider (AQP) route – in future this may further increase the choice available to patients. A provider which can meet NHS service quality requirements, prices and other normal contract standards can apply to be added to the list of providers from which patients can make their choice.

A new Sussex musculo-skeletal (MSK) service model has been designed locally, and an implementation project has commenced to convert the design template into a new MSK service. Planning discussions are underway to assess how best to achieve this at a clinical commissioning group level. We currently have a variety of MSK provision across Sussex and the AQP contracting mechanism for elective orthopaedics provides flexibility to support local variations to the new model.

I hope this is a helpful update. We will be working with Care UK and BSUH to support the smooth transfer of the Sussex Orthopaedic Treatment Centre premises and to ensure elective orthopaedic capacity is maintained during the transition.

Kind regards
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