

Report to the North West London Joint Health Overview Scrutiny Committee

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| Report Title: | Inpatient Mental Health Bed Capacity across North West London | | |
| Purpose | | | |
| To provide a report on current adult inpatient mental health bed capacity across the North West London Integrated Care System. | | | |
| Detail | | | |
| <u>Background:</u> | | | |
| <p>The majority of inpatient mental health care for North West London residents is provided by Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust and West London NHS Trust, for those in need of support for severe mental health difficulties or a mental health crisis. Our aim across North West London ICS is, and always will be, to ensure that we provide the highest quality and most appropriate care for people who need it across our boroughs. This includes inpatient facilities that meet modern standards of acute mental health care, supporting patient dignity and privacy. We follow the principle that mental health care should be in the least restrictive setting and acute inpatient care should always be an absolute last resort.</p> | | | |
| <u>Current Capacity of Mental Health Beds in NW London:</u> | | | |
| <p>Since the pandemic, the bedded mental health offer in North West London has changed to focus more on patient flow and step down provision, whilst maintaining occupancy levels. These changes to bed provision mean that North West London ICS is in line with national and regional benchmarks for beds per 100,000 population and clinical thresholds have not changed during this time.</p> | | | |
| <p>The following table shows a breakdown of adult acute, older adult, psychiatric intensive care (PICU) and step-down beds provided by Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust and West London NHS Trust. The table compares the number of beds between the pre and post pandemic periods.</p> | | | |
| | Ward type | Pre-covid status | Current status |
| West London Trust | Acute MH | 154 | 141 |
| | Older people | 56 | 56 |
| | PICU | 12 | 12 |
| | Step-down | 17 | 41 |
| | WLT Total | 239 | 250 |
| Central North West London | Acute MH | 256 | 195 |
| | Older People | 72 | 66 |

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| | PICU | 47 | 45 |
| | Step-down | 0 | 40 |
| | Rehab | 167 | 167 + 8 triage beds |
| | Crisis | 0 | 15 |
| | CNWL Total | 542 | 536 |
| | NWL Total | 781 | 786 |
| | Acute bed total | 410 | 336 |
| | Step down bed total | 17 | 81 |

Both Trusts work to ensure that patients can be moved from an inpatient bed to appropriate care in their local communities as soon as it's clinically safe for them to do so. This has meant investing in partnership with our Local Authority partners in more 'step down' beds which provide care following discharge from the hospital and before people move back to their own communities.

To support the changes that have taken place both Trusts have an established approach to mental health bed management and improvement of patient flow, which includes innovations such as:

- Improved local relationships to benefit flow – at both A&E and discharge;
- Implementation of reablement teams to support early discharge planning;
- Borough level MADEs (multi-agency discharge events) particularly focused on rehab and long stay patients;
- Regular bed management calls across organisations and teams, and increased mutual aid; and
- Specific improvement work targeting 'red to green' wards and length of stay.

Changes to the bedded provision have taken place within a wider context of transformation in the community offer and bolstering of crisis alternative provision, as required by the NHS Long Term Plan. We have developed more community-based mental health services, enabling people to receive care in their home or a local clinic as much as possible. This means that the traditional pattern of long admissions to mental health hospitals has changed and with it, the number of inpatient beds needed.

This approach has been bolstered by major transformation in community teams and crisis alternative provision since 2019, which has changed the service landscape for mental health in North West London and shifted strategic focus toward patient flow. This transformation has focused on:

- Developing local solutions to improve mental health flow by working in partnership with urgent care delivery boards;
- Redesigned community crisis teams, including digital and productivity focused work;
- Launching VCSE-provided crisis alternatives;

- Launching 24/7 bed management to improve tracking of patient flow; and
- Testing and supporting community teams with caseload management and flow.

Challenges:

Suitability of some of our estate poses a challenge for mental health bed capacity in North West London. The physical environment of the wards where beds have been temporarily closed is not fit for delivering modern health services. The wards struggle to meet the equality, accessibility and quality standards to be able to provide safe and effective clinical care. Patients who use acute inpatient services generally stay 30 days+; poor estate with lack of natural light and open space, as well as lack of access to outside space inhibits recovery.

Both Trusts continue to focus on managing services so that people who need an inpatient bed have access to one within the boroughs that they service. For West London NHS Trust, this means there have been no inappropriate out of area placements, for over three years, even when wards are closed to admissions due to outbreaks of Covid-19.

Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust has faced some challenges with inappropriate out of area placements. However, since the end of 2022 these have reduced significantly and based on unvalidated data, North West London ICS has already achieved its commitment of eliminating inappropriate out of area placements by March 2023. As part of this and to support improved flow, both Trusts have embedded Flow Programmes to focus on reducing average length of stay.

Proposals for changes to mental health beds in North West London:

In March 2020, 31 beds in the Hope and Horizon wards (provided by West London NHS Trust) in 1831 buildings at St Bernard's Hospital were suspended to ensure safe staffing levels and rigorous Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) measures for patients and staff during the pandemic. Resources were diverted to open an 18-bed inpatient ward in Lakeside Mental Health Unit to provide dedicated care and all other revenue funds were reinvested into alternative crisis provision.

Stakeholder engagement has been taking place since January 2022 with service users, carers and voluntary and community organisations, to provide a comprehensive insight into the issues experienced by patients, staff and carers on the Hope and Horizon wards. Following guidance from NHS England, a further period of enhanced engagement was conducted commencing on 18 October.

The Trust launched a web page (<https://www.westlondon.nhs.uk/ealingmhbeds>), which includes links to a summary document, an information video, a slide presentation, a detailed full [case for change](#) and a full report on earlier stages of engagement conducted between January and April 2022.

During this period of enhanced engagement, individuals are invited to provide feedback to us in at face to face and online events, using an online survey, by post or by telephone.

The process continues to be advertised across a number of targeted physical and digital channels including:

- In GP surgeries
- Stakeholder newsletters across North West London with ICB support
- To our own staff, to patients visiting our wards and clinics
- Online using our website and social media channels.

In addition, the Trust wrote directly to our stakeholder list, as well as to a list of 998 patients who had used the affected wards in the three years before they were suspended (from all three boroughs, although the recipients were primarily made up of people from Ealing).

As of the end of November we had:

- reached over 7,650 people/ organisations
- held or attended 9 public events, in Ealing or online
- received 68 responses to the online survey
- received 3 written responses by post/email
- had 1,249 interactions with social media content (like/share/retweet/click link/view video)
- proactively contacted 42 organisations including Healthwatch in the three boroughs, Ealing and Hammersmith & Fulham Save our NHS, Homelessness services and VCSE organisations supporting BAME and LD communities.

We recognised concerns raised that the engagement activities have not yet or adequately reached communities in Hammersmith & Fulham, and Hounslow, and that further work was required to ensure that the voices of families from minority communities are sought.

As a result of this, we have:

1. Extended the period of engagement **by a further 8 weeks to end of February 2023** to ensure time was not lost to the Festive period, and to permit a series of additional activities to improve the engagement approach. This also ensured that Councillors in Hounslow have an opportunity to scrutinise the proposal during the engagement window (the item was reviewed at Scrutiny Panels in Ealing and Hammersmith during November 2022).
2. **Additional public meetings/ events** would be convened to take place in Hammersmith and Hounslow, as well as in Ealing. These have been advertised not only by the Trust, but in particular thanks to the efforts of local campaigners and elected representatives on their social media

channels, and in local news outlets including Ealing.News and Visit Southall.

3. We have commissioned additional work to improve residents' knowledge of the proposals and **improve reach into key communities** including BAME groups and are writing proactively to a wider cohort of inpatients **from all three boroughs** who have been admitted in any of our Mental Health Units.

The extended engagement window closed on 28 February 2023 and the Trust is now reviewing the feedback received.

Also in March 2020, 51 beds at the Gordon Hospital (provided by Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust) were temporarily closed to ensure safe staffing levels and rigorous Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) measures for patients and staff during the pandemic.

Since the temporary ward closures, Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust has remained committed to open dialogue across service users, carers, staff and partners.

The Trust partnered with Healthwatch in 2021 to coproduce a citizen's advisory panel called The Voice Exchange to advise on the future model of care for mental health provision. The recruitment of this panel was sought through direct communication with interested members from the Healthwatch database.

This robust process, built trust, effective communication and maintained enhanced levels of engagement throughout this work. Its purpose was to bring together a representative group of people with a variety of experiences of, and views on, the future model of care for mental health provision in Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea.

The Project carried out nineteen focus groups and virtual drop-ins with service users and staff. During this work they attended many stakeholder meetings, including the Trust's Patient Involvement Forum, the Westminster Partnerships Forum, the Kensington & Chelsea Partnerships Forum, Young Healthwatch meetings and the Trust's Carers Council. The panel also spoke to several third parties, including other NHS Trusts, voluntary organisations and the Metropolitan Police.

Feedback from these engagement events was then used to facilitate reflection sessions with 632 staff including senior management in February 2022, ahead of the finalised coproduced report. The report was launched in a local community venue involving both internal and external stakeholders. A summary of the report is exhibited in local community mental health venues with the full report available on the CNWL website.

The engagement process has included communication with the following stakeholders:

- A series of open virtual Q&A's for the public with Trust leadership.

- Nine updates to Westminster Overview & Scrutiny Committee Meetings.
- Two presentations to the North West London wide Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committees.
- Three site visits with local Cllrs to closed Gordon wards and St Charles. One site visit with Senior Leadership in the ICS.
- Councillor Roundtable with Trust Executive Leadership.
- Updates and engagement with North West London ICB and ICS and relevant forums.
- A series of internal Q&As for staff and updates at relevant staff meetings.
- Discussions with local teams including Borough AMHPs to understand the needs for local service provision.
- Ongoing feedback via fortnightly forums with Local Authority Partners including the local borough social care leads.
- Bespoke meetings with the Local Authority Commissioner for supported housing.
- Engagement with Black/ African/ Caribbean patients detained under the Mental Health Act (MHA) and presenting in crisis care pathways to hear their experiences. Trust report available for reference.

The feedback from engagement work to date has indicated the need to reduce reliance on the most restrictive interventions and work collaboratively and flexibly in the community, further improve patient flow across acute inpatient wards, care that advances Health Equality, joined up partnership working and greater reach into the Westminster, Kensington & Chelsea and Brent communities.

As a result of this we have:

1. Opened the Mental Health Crisis Assessment Centre (MHCAS) in November 2022 that supports improved patient flow.
2. Commissioned a data led project looking at the impact of detention under the MHA and length of stay that will include BAME, Older Adults, Learning Disability and Autism patients.
3. Collaborative Partnership Forums planned for March 2023.
4. Senior Community Partnerships and Engagement Lead postholder will further reach into all communities to ensure all voices are included in this consultation process.

These engagement activities continue to inform the work to develop a pre-consultation business case in relation to the temporary closed beds at the Gordon Hospital. Ahead of the launch of a formal consultation, Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust remains committed to open dialogue including this body, service users, carers, staff, and other partners.

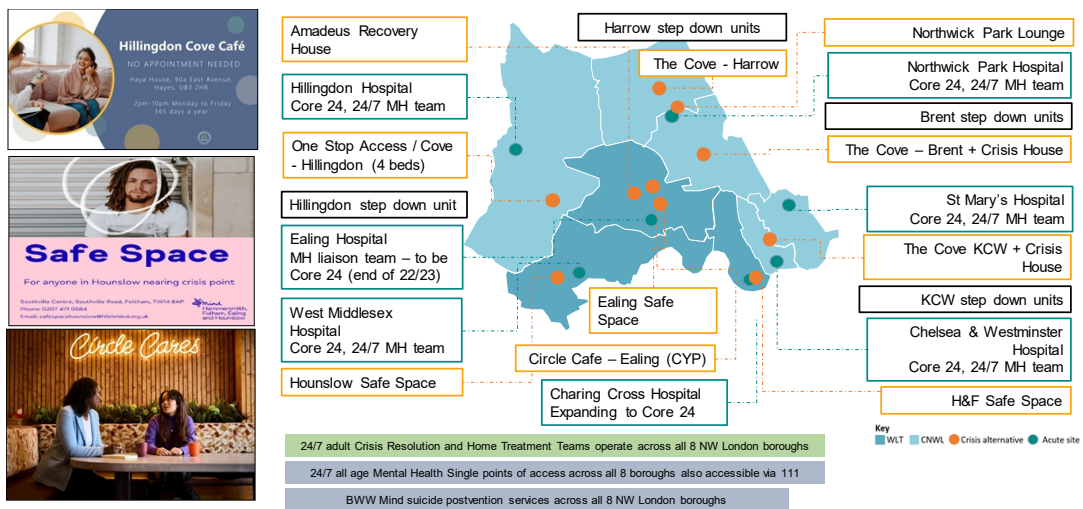
Implications on service provision:

The enhanced engagement on the Hope and Horizon wards and the work underway to develop the pre-consultation business case for service change in light of the temporary closure of the adult acute inpatient beds at the Gordon Hospital considers the potential impacts that any service change will have on mental health care and treatment for affected residents. Full equality impact assessments will be completed.

As part of this, North West London ICS is committed to eliminating inappropriate adult acute out of area placements; based on unvalidated data, this has been achieved ahead of trajectory over recent months.

Mitigations

In early 2019, North West London ICS embarked on a journey to significantly transform community mental health services in order to respond to local needs and deliver the requirements of the NHS Long Term Plan. This included ensuring appropriate community-based crisis care (clinical and non-clinical alternatives) alongside a therapeutic inpatient offer. Over 2019 and 2020, as an early implementer site, North West London ICS launched a new model of community mental health care. In addition to this, crisis teams were expanded to provide 24/7 assessments within the community, and a range of community based crisis alternatives to attendance at A&E and admission to inpatient care were developed, providing non-clinical alternatives.



Next Steps:

As part of our developing ICP strategy, North West London ICS is committed to providing the people who use our services with high-quality care as close to home as possible by strengthening alternatives to admission and shifting provision to a more community-based offer in line with national priorities. This includes expanding existing and developing new provision available within the community to ensure that care, support, and interventions are available and accessible locally. If there is a need for a hospital bed, we will make sure it is for as little time and as close to the patient’s home as possible.