

## **HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **9 MAY 2022**

## **PATIENT FLOW**

---

### **Summary**

1. The Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) has requested a Report on Patient Flow following the November 2021 Scrutiny Task Group on Ambulance Hospital Handover Delays. In particular, the Committee is keen to have more understanding around the current challenges in relation to patient flow and the actions being taken to address these.
2. In healthcare, patient flow is the movement of patients as well as information or equipment between departments, staff groups or organisations as part of their care.
3. A representative from NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (HWCCG) has been invited to attend the meeting.

### **Challenges**

4. The current challenges related to patient flow and the impact on ambulance handover delays remain. System partners are working together to reduce the risk and impact on the core services, but also to support patients in the community to access urgent care.

### **Patients who are Medically Fit for Discharge (MFD)**

5. The main challenge relates to the number and profile of daily discharges across the two acute sites. This covers the range of simple discharges (where the patient can be discharged as soon as medically fit without any ongoing health or social care services), or via complex pathways (where health or social care services are required under discharge to assess principles).
6. Whilst the system performs very well in terms of 'length of stay' (currently the lowest in the region for length of stay in hospital over seven days), patient discharges are happening late in the day leading to pressure within the Emergency Departments and subsequently some ambulance delays.
7. The COVID-19 impact remains prevalent and impacts on the ability to easily discharge patients due to infection risks.
8. Capacity, in the form of beds and assessment spaces, requires enhancing on the Worcestershire Royal Hospital site, and a plan to develop a larger medical assessment unit and extra beds to support the Emergency Department will be in place in the next couple of months.

### **Same Day Emergency Care**

9. Another significant challenge is the need to mature and develop the range of same day emergency care that diverts patients away from the Emergency Departments into assessment areas.

### **System approach**

10. The system has recently reviewed its approach to the urgent care and patient flow system and has agreed to undertake a rapid improvement programme (called the Rapid Improvement Cell). Appendix 1 sets out the function and approach of the programme, which continues to develop and is being communicated across the entire system at all levels.

11. The impact on the workforce of the last few years has been significant and the Integrated Care System (ICS) People Board is taking a range of actions aiming to maintain the well-being of the workforce throughout this period.

### **Purpose of the Meeting**

12. The HOSC is asked to consider and comment on the information provided and agree:

- whether any further information or scrutiny is required at this time
- whether there are any comments to highlight to the relevant Health Partners or the Council's relevant Cabinet Member with Responsibility.

### **Supporting Information**

- Appendix 1 – Rapid Improvement Cell

### **Contact Points**

Emma James / Jo Weston, Overview and Scrutiny Officers Tel: 01905 844964 / 844965  
Email: [scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@worcestershire.gov.uk)

### **Background Papers**

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

Agenda and Minutes of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 9 March 2022

[All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.](#)