



# WESTON GENERAL HOSPITAL AT THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY

*Let your voice be heard on future services*

9 February 2017 to 6 April 2017



**This work brings together local health and social care organisations and Healthwatch North Somerset, 'The North Somerset Sustainability Board'.**

Members include representation from:

North Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) | Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group | Weston Area Health NHS Trust | Bristol Clinical Commissioning Group | Healthwatch North Somerset | North Bristol NHS Trust | NHS England | NHS Improvement | North Somerset Community Partnership | North Somerset Council | One Care Consortium | South Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group | South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust | Taunton and Somerset NHS Trust | University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust

North Somerset CCG and Somerset CCG are the consulting authorities for this work, with North Somerset CCG taking responsibility for the overall co-ordination.

# CONTENTS

## 1

### OUR VISION



## 2

### INTRODUCTION



## 3

### SOME OF THE CHALLENGES



## 4

### OPPORTUNITIES



## 5

### OUR IDEAS



## 6

### HAVE YOUR SAY



# OUR VISION

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To keep Weston General Hospital at the heart of the community providing the best possible health and care services for patients, carers, their families, and staff for decades to come.

## OUR PRIORITIES:

- **Empowerment** - Involving local people and using their views and experiences to help design future services.
- **Equity** - Reduce health inequalities and bring care closer to where people live.
- **Balance** - Make the most efficient and effective use of our scarce NHS resources by bringing partners together to integrate patient care across the wider area.
- **Partnership** - Build a strong future for Weston General Hospital ensuring it is a vibrant and satisfying place to work for staff to deliver NHS care with pride.



# INTRODUCTION

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Weston General Hospital is a crucial part of the local NHS in the south west. It is in the heart of the main community it serves, has excellent resources and caring staff.

However, being part of the smallest acute Trust in England, the hospital has struggled with increasing demand for services, the long-term recruitment of doctors in some specialties and delivering services within the money available. Many of these issues have been ongoing for years despite intense efforts locally and regionally to resolve them.

Local health and care partners from across North Somerset, Bristol, Somerset and South Gloucestershire have come together to find a solution that strengthens Weston General as an important local hospital, which provides the services local people need and the best possible care.

As with any hospital, the services provided are part of a wider system of care and all partners are committed to making Weston General Hospital a success and a permanent part of the local health system.

We have some initial ideas that have been developed by local doctors and nurses and we are confident that these ideas can help solve the problem, but they are not fixed plans and we want to know what you think of them.

There is no doubt that things need to change because some services are not sustainable in their current form and all the services needed to support a growing population cannot be provided from one relatively small hospital.

We need a solution that makes the best use of the hospital facilities, with the best mix of staff that gets the best outcomes for patients.



# SOME OF THE CHALLENGES

## AN AGEING AND DIVERSE POPULATION

Older people make up 23.8% of North Somerset's population (19.5% nationally). Older patients often have more complex needs.



Levels of deprivation in North Somerset and the gap between the most and least deprived areas are among the highest in England.



Predictions anticipate 40% growth in population by 2033 and 36,000 new houses are being planned in the next ten years.



## WESTON GENERAL HOSPITAL HAS DIFFICULTY RECRUITING SPECIALIST DOCTORS IN SOME AREAS

Some vacancies for specialist medical staff result in a dependency on agency staff and locums.



Higher than average long-term senior consultant vacancies in some specialties has led to difficulties with medical training and support for junior doctors.



A hospital the size of Weston General would be unlikely to recruit all the doctors it needs to run services as they are currently set up.



## THERE IS NOT ENOUGH MONEY TO DELIVER SERVICES THE WAY THEY ARE NOW

The hospital has a significant deficit which will continue to grow year on year unless changes are made to services.



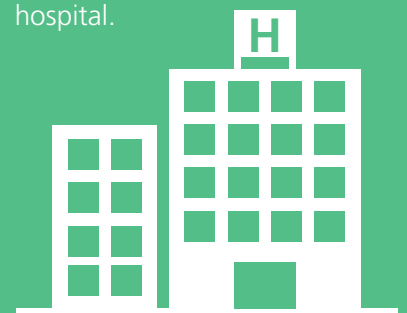
The commissioners who pay for these services are also in deficit and spending more money than is available.



Reliance on locum and agency staff is making the financial position worse.



A small hospital cannot run as efficiently on its own as a large hospital.



# WHAT THE HOSPITAL DOES WELL – OPPORTUNITIES

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Weston General Hospital has a great deal to offer the community it serves, but it can't provide every single service that the NHS offers, particularly for a growing population.

We think we need to focus on solutions that play to Weston General Hospital's strengths and focus on the core services that local people are most likely to need.

We can start by looking at what the hospital does well and doing more of it.

## Planned care (elective) and non-complex surgery

- Good track record in delivering planned surgery
- Strong team in place with the capacity to deliver the work
- Newly refurbished theatre suite with the space to carry out more operations
- Meeting patients' needs locally.

## Recruiting nursing staff

- Good track record of recruiting nurses and other health care professionals
- Opportunity to invest in training and development to support doctors.

## Sharing clinical services

- Weston General Hospital is well positioned between three large neighbouring hospitals in Bristol and Taunton, which all have specialist teams
- Weston General Hospital is already working in partnership with these hospitals to deliver major trauma, stroke, heart and paediatric services
- There's great potential to develop these clinical partnerships further as all three hospitals are committed to stronger partnership working to improve services and outcomes for patients.

## Recruiting specialist medical staff

- There are good levels of staffing from Monday to Friday during the day at the hospital (in/hours model)
- The hospital is good at recruiting some specialists, such as orthopaedic surgeons and paediatricians (children's doctors) and has strong teams in place.

# OUR IDEAS

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Working with local doctors and nurses we have developed the following ideas based on Weston General Hospital's strengths and looking at national best practice for a modern day NHS.

**There are four main ideas that we would like to hear your views on:**

## 1. CHANGE THE URGENT AND EMERGENCY CARE SERVICE MODEL OVERNIGHT FROM 10PM – 8AM

A 24/7 urgent and emergency care service will continue to operate from Weston General Hospital. A small number of patients who need specialist care overnight would need to be treated at larger hospitals nearby.

In Weston General Hospital's case this already happens for stroke and heart attack patients, major trauma (e.g. severe injury from a car crash) and seriously ill children.

### *Why?*

- A 24/7 urgent and emergency care service at Weston General Hospital is recognised by other hospitals and the regional NHS as being crucial to the health care system
- The majority of patients use the department between the hours of 8am and 10pm
- A different staffing model which made more use of nurses and paramedics would only impact a minority of overnight patients.

### *What would it mean?*

During the hours of 10pm and 8am any patient turning up at the hospital following a fall, with suspected broken bones, medical problems or needing stitches or an x-ray would still be seen and treated on-site.

If the illness or injury was assessed as being more serious, the patient would be transferred to a larger hospital nearby to be seen by a specialist team.

From our knowledge of attendances at our urgent and emergency care department this would mean that the majority of people who require the services during the night would still be treated at Weston General Hospital.

Anyone needing emergency, intensive medical support would be treated by a nearby hospital; there are three in close proximity to Weston, where they would be seen by specialist medical teams.





## 2. BRING DAY TO DAY NON-COMPLEX PLANNED OPERATIONS BACK TO WESTON GENERAL HOSPITAL

### Why:

- Weston General Hospital is good at delivering planned non-complex operations (and some more complex procedures)
- Weston General Hospital has theatre capacity to do more planned surgery which would support greater patient choice, and ensure the hospital receives a bigger share of NHS funding
- Evidence shows that patients who are treated closer to home, for less serious conditions, are more likely to have a better recovery and can go home, more quickly.

### What would it mean?

We would be making best use of the hospital and its potential to treat more patients and make it easier for local residents to access services closer to where they live. We think that patient experience would improve as a result of these changes.

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## 3. TRANSFER SOME EMERGENCY SURGERY TO OTHER HOSPITALS

### Why:

- Only a small number of patients need emergency surgery – particularly overnight – we know it's better for them to be treated in a hospital by specialist teams
- For the last ten years patients requiring treatment for major trauma, stroke or heart attack, as well as children needing emergency care, are treated by specialist teams at Southmead Hospital, Musgrove Park Hospital, Bristol Royal Infirmary and the Bristol Children's Hospital during the night
- Evidence is clear that for certain rare and complex problems, patients get better care being seen by a specialist team, this is in-line with the national health planning.

### What would it mean?

Patients in North Somerset who need emergency surgery overnight would be seen by a skilled team of specialists at a larger hospital close by.

Ambulances would take a patient requiring emergency surgery to the closest specialist team so they receive care quickly. This is the way all heart attacks, strokes and major trauma, as well as children's emergency care, is already dealt with in North Somerset overnight.

This would free up beds to enable Weston General Hospital to carry out more planned surgery, meeting the needs of the local population.



#### 4. INCREASE THE NUMBER OF BEDS IN THE CRITICAL CARE UNIT ON THE WESTON GENERAL HOSPITAL SITE

##### *Why:*

- This would bring patients who needed the most care together in one place
- The existing unit only has five beds which is smaller than experts advise to run an efficient service.

##### *What would it mean?*

There are two types of beds in a critical care unit; High Dependency Unit (HDU) or Intensive Therapy Unit (ITU). Patients needing these beds have severe and often life threatening illnesses and injuries. They may need multiple organ support and very high levels of medical and nursing care.

While HDU offers a greater level of support, ITU requires the most intensive care and treatment for critically ill and highly dependent patients. The doctors and nurses that work in these centres have specialist training and need access to specialist equipment.

One idea would be to have a bigger, more diverse unit with a mix of ITU beds with extra HDU beds to enable Weston General Hospital to deliver a more efficient critical care unit making best use of staff and resources. An alternative idea is to have more HDU beds and have ITU provided at larger, more specialist units in neighbouring hospitals.



# ENABLING STRATEGIES

**Two initiatives that will help services work together more effectively and are currently being explored are:**

## I. INTEGRATED WORKING WITHIN ACUTE CARE

The Acute Care Collaboration consists of the three local hospitals (Weston Area Health NHS Trust, University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust and North Bristol NHS Trust) as well as community partners. Four objectives have been agreed:

- To ensure the best use of capacity and resources across the three hospitals (staff, facilities etc)
- To develop strong effective clinical pathways (the patient's journey through all necessary health services)
- To develop and support specialist services
- To secure sustainable services at Weston General Hospital.

The three hospitals are committed to closer working and partnership in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our services for the benefit of improved patient outcomes.

**Why:**  
Sharing doctors and nurses would support Weston General Hospital's ongoing challenges in recruiting to senior posts.

The benefit for staff would be an increase in job satisfaction, together with developing expert clinical practice in treating a high level of patients with similar conditions, which would get the best results for patients.

Making best use of staff across the area would ensure the best outcomes for patients and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our local NHS services.

### **What would it mean?**

We can make better use of doctors who have rare skills and ensure their expertise is shared across the whole area.

Residents would be able to get more of the routine planned care that they are likely to need delivered at their local hospital in Weston.

## II. WORKING MORE CLOSELY WITH SERVICES IN THE COMMUNITY

- Why:**
- North Somerset has a growing frail and elderly population. Sometimes patients get admitted to hospital when actually their care could be better provided in the community
  - When frail elderly people spend time in hospital they can experience a state called "deconditioning" where they lose their strength and mobility. Deconditioning is one of the reasons why it is so important that elderly patients do not go into or stay in hospital for any longer than is absolutely necessary
  - Evidence shows us that frail patients recover more quickly if they are treated in the community and physiotherapy when provided in the home gets better outcomes for patients
  - Ensuring adequate resourcing of social care will be an important part of this solution.

### **What would it mean?**

Local partners would work with Weston General Hospital to develop better ways to manage patients being admitted and being discharged (patient flow) from hospital, working closely with community partners and social care.

Working together to improve patient flow would also help free up beds for more planned care.

# TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

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**We are inviting you to get involved and tell us what you think – we want everyone’s views – members of staff, patients and the public.**

This is the start of a conversation with you, your feedback on these ideas is important to help us shape and develop them so we can make Weston General work as a local hospital.

Your views will be used to develop some options/proposals which reflect your feedback. Should these involve any significant change to services we will start a 12 week consultation process with you.

## **ONLINE:**

- Visit [www.northsomersetccg.nhs.uk/wgh-engagement](http://www.northsomersetccg.nhs.uk/wgh-engagement) and fill in our survey
- Follow us on Twitter and Facebook for regular updates @NSomersetccg or Facebook Page: North Somerset CCG
- Send us your views via email: [wgh.engagement@nhs.net](mailto:wgh.engagement@nhs.net)

## **IN PERSON:**

- Attend an event to find out more and speak to us in person, details are on the website
- Invite us to your next community group or a meeting, contact us via the number below.

**BY POST:** North Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group, Castlewood, Clevedon, BS21 6FW

**BY PHONE:** 01275 546721

*If you would like this information in another format, please contact us via any of the ways above.*