



REPORT TO MERTON HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES AND HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Report Title	Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust: Update on performance, investment and the estate
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This briefing provides the Merton Healthier Communities and Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel with an update on Epsom and St Helier hospitals. The briefing covers:

- Finance and performance update
 - 1.1 Performance update
 - 1.2 Finance update
- Other updates
 - 2.1 Our hospital estate and Building Your Future Hospitals (BYFH)
 - 2.2 Maternity services

1. Finance and performance update

1.1 Performance update

Included in this report is the link to June's [Integrated Quality and Performance Update](#) for St George's, Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals and Health Group. Key points to highlight, relating to Epsom and St Helier, are below:

ESTH performance

We have been performing above the national four-hour performance standard in our Emergency Departments for June and this is despite a slight increase in attendances. However, challenges remain around waiting times with continued high numbers of unplaced patients, including mental health patients remaining in our Emergency Department for prolonged periods. Some key figures are outlined below.

Elective care

We are planning to have mostly eliminated waits of over 65 weeks for treatment by the end of September 2024. The majority of our residual long waits are in community paediatrics (in particular waits for autism diagnosis) and gynaecology, where the Trust saw a 30% increase in referrals following Covid.

Non-elective care

We delivered 77.9% performance against the 4-hour ED standard in June 2024 exceeding trajectory and demonstrating a continued improvement month on month compared with April and May 2024 where ESTH delivered 76.4% and 77.5% performance, respectively.

- On average across June there were 451 daily attendances compared to a daily average of 438 attendances during April.
- We reported 1344 12 hour breaches in June, averaging 44 breaches per day, this compares to 1343 in May (43 per day) and 1378 (45 per day) in April.

Cancer

- All cancer performance standards were achieved in May 2024: 28 day Faster Diagnosis (86.4%), 31 day first treatment (98.9%) and GP 62 day first treatment (85.4%).

1.2 Finance update

Together with system partners, we continue to work through plans to tackle our budget deficit and balance our financial plans in order to deliver our services within a highly constrained financial environment. The Trust wrote to the Chair of the Committee in recent months with further details on the financial position of the Trust and hospital group.

As has been widely report, the NHS is facing significant financial challenges and hospitals across the country must find ways to live within its means, while protecting patient care. Rising costs, growth in our workforce, less productivity following the pandemic and not making enough savings means the NHS is currently spending more than it can afford.

This is no different at Epsom and St Helier, where we must keep our patients safe and balance this with meeting expected performance standards, reducing our deficit and supporting our workforce. Like all trusts, we need to reduce our spending by more than 5% this year. We know that our configuration, with two EDs, acute medical services, intensive care teams, inpatient maternity services and inpatient children's care, makes our financial position extremely challenging, because the size of the Trust and its associated income from the government would typically only support one of each of these services.

The urgent actions we have been undertaking include:

- not always filling posts when they become vacant, where it is safe to do so;
- increasing our productivity to treat 5% more patients needing planned care;
- looking again at our processes to see where we can be more streamlined and ensure everything we do adds value to our patients.

The Trust is expecting to report a deficit of £51.7m at year end.

2. Other updates

2.1 Investing in Epsom and St Helier hospitals and update on our Building Your Future Hospitals programme

Investment in Epsom and St Helier hospitals

We previously reported to the Committee the level of investment into Epsom and St Helier hospitals over the last three years. We are continuing to invest in our current estate and make much needed improvements across our hospitals. Over this financial year, this will include:

- Refurbishing the second of our three intensive treatment units (ITU) at St Helier so that it meets modern standard to care for our more seriously ill patients;
- Creating a new children's play area at St Helier to aid with recovery;
- Upgrading theatres at St Helier Hospital to provide improved air flow throughout them;
- Investing in new state of the art equipment to help us care for patients, including replacing our x-ray cameras to provide better x-ray images;
- Carrying out additional roof and lift repairs at St Helier hospital, and replace outdated and broken signage.

Building Your Future Hospitals programme update

- On Monday 29 July, the Chancellor announced that there would be a review of the New Hospitals Programme with a "thorough, realistic and costed timetable for delivery". Our plans for a new Specialist Emergency Care Hospital in Sutton and upgrades to Epsom and St Helier Hospitals are part of the programme.
- While we continue to make progress on our plans, the pace of this may be guided by the government's review of the New Hospitals Programme.
- A number of pre-application meetings have taken place with Sutton Council and we are now planning our pre-application public engagement on our evolved hospital design (evolved to respond to feedback from the previous engagement we began on it in 2021 and bring it in line with Hospital 2.0) as part of the planning application process.
- We continue to work in tandem with the Royal Marsden Hospital, the Institute for Cancer Research and the developers of the London Cancer Hub to develop a whole-campus plan for the Sutton site on which we will share resources and amenities.
- We are aware that Socius/Aviva are also planning to undertake some public engagement on plans for the London Cancer Hub in the Autumn and are working closely with them to ensure that community engagement activities are aligned and complimentary.

2.2 Maternity services

Last year our staff delivered around 3,700 babies at Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals.

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspected our services in August 2023 and published a report in February 2024. This was part of a national assessment of maternity units to rate how safe and well-led services are. How effective, caring and responsive services were, was not included in this inspection.

As outlined in our previous update to the committee in [March](#), the overall rating for maternity services at both our Epsom and St Helier hospitals was lowered from 'Good' to 'Requires Improvement.' With our services at Epsom Hospital changed from 'Good' to 'Requires improvement under safe and well-led. And at St Helier Hospital how safe our maternity services are rated was changed from 'Good' to 'Inadequate'.

Our leadership team is dedicated to supporting our maternity colleagues to continue to deliver the best possible care to all those using our services. Our focus now is on implementing and sustaining the improvements in our maternity services.

We took these CQC findings extremely seriously and appreciate the concerns the report may have raised.

The following actions have been undertaken to address safety and standards, including in relation to the patient experience:

- Ensuring 90 per cent of women are now triaged within 15 minutes of arrival to improve risk assessments, with a new dedicated helpline for women to talk directly with midwives;
- Fast-tracking estates work with new doors and blinds fitted to improve privacy and dignity;
- Strengthening oversight to ensure mandatory training and care records are kept consistently up to date;
- Improved guidance for staff around Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) standards.
- Reviewed and reconfigured the configuration of the maternity workforce to ensure staffing needs are met.

We are keen to make sure that lessons are learned across our hospital group, ensuring that patient satisfaction are improved and our teams provide the highest standards of care. Progress updates are being regularly provided to the CQC during engagement meetings with the Trust and Group leads.

We also previously highlighted that maternity services met 10 out of the 10 safety actions required nationally as part of the year 5 Clinical Negligence Scheme for Trusts (CNST), and we pride ourselves in providing very safe care to women and their families. We are progressing with the requirements for year 6 of CNST. Our maternity care at Epsom and St Helier was also scored number one in London – and within the top ten nationally – in the annual [CQC patient experience survey](#) for the care our teams give to women and their babies. We want to work with our patients to ensure that we listen to their concerns and take prompt action to resolve any concerns.

The Trust works closely with users in the Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnerships (MNVP) and a 'Whose Shoes Event' with MNVP, users of our maternity service, ICB and Trust leads was held earlier this year to further understand what more can be done to improve the care and experience of women, birthing people and their families. Our staff and all the families that we have supported will also be the best champions of the service to new mothers and birthing people.