

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee **Stratford-on-Avon Area Committee**

Date of Committee **27 July 2005**

Report Title **Options for the Future of the Minor Injuries Unit At Stratford Upon Avon Hospital**

Summary South Warwickshire General Hospital Trust is embarking on a consultation process that considers options for the future of the Minor Injuries Unit at Stratford upon Avon Hospital. The issue will be discussed by Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee at their meeting in July 2005. There will be further discussion at Health OSC's September meeting where there is an opportunity for this committee to report their findings on the above matter.

For further information please contact:

Martin Gibbins Area Manager - Stratford Tel: 01789 290784 martingibbins@warwickshire.gov.uk	Alwin McGibbon Health Scrutiny Officer Tel: 01926 412075 alwinmcgibbon@warwickshire.gov.uk
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Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework? No.

Background papers None

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:- Details to be specified

- Other Committees
- Local Member(s) Applies to all members
- Other Elected Members
- Cabinet Member
- Chief Executive David Carter as reporting officer
- Legal Sarah Duxbury - Principal Solicitor
- Finance
- Other Chief Officers

- District Councils
- Health Authority
- Police
- Other Bodies/Individuals

FINAL DECISION NO

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:

Details to be specified

- Further consideration by this Committee
- To Council
- To Cabinet
- To an O & S Committee Health
- To an Area Committee
- Further Consultation

Agenda No

Stratford-on-Avon Area Committee – 27th July 2005.

Options for the Future of the Minor Injuries Unit At Stratford Upon Avon Hospital

Report of the County Solicitor & Assistant Chief Executive

Recommendation

To note the options for the future of the Minor Injuries Unit at Stratford-upon-Avon and to give the views of the Area Committee to the Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Introduction

1. The South Warwickshire General Hospital Trust currently provides a Minor Injuries Unit at Stratford-Upon-Avon Hospital in Arden Street. This provides a facility for local people to have minor injuries treated, more serious cases are transferred to the Accident and Emergency Unit at Warwick Hospital.
2. The South Warwickshire General Hospital Trust are currently engaged in a consultation exercise that considers a number of options for the future of this facility ranging from do nothing to closure of the unit. The consultation period runs from 1 July to 30 September. A copy of the report setting out the options and the background to the consultation exercise is attached as Appendix A.
3. The views of the Area Committee are requested on this issue and will be considered by Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee at the meeting in September.

DAVID CARTER
County Solicitor & Assistant
Chief Executive

Shire Hall
Warwick

29 June 2005

19th June 2005.

Option Appraisal on Future of the Minor Injuries Unit, Stratford Hospital.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The provision for Emergency Care is currently provided by South Warwickshire General Hospitals NHS Trust at two locations, the main Accident and Emergency Department (A&E) at Warwick Hospital site and the Minor Injuries Unit at Stratford Hospital.
- 1.2 The Minor Injuries Unit currently sees approximately 7,865 patients a year, the service is operational from 9am to 5pm seven days a week. The team consist of a Staff Grade Doctor 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday providing 40 hrs of cover. 1 Emergency Nurse Practitioner 37.5 hours a week, 2 Staff Nurse's working total 61.5 hours a week and a Health Care Assistant/Receptionist providing 30 hours a week, X-ray facilities 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday with access to an on call Radiographer at weekends.
- 1.3 The Minor Injuries Unit also provides a base for the General Practitioner (GP) "Out of Hours" service for urgent/unplanned care for a 3 hour session on Saturday, Sundays and Bank Holidays.
- 1.4 The team only treat those patients who present with a minor injury/minor illness. For additional or complex treatment patients are directed, or an ambulance called, to take the patient to the main A&E.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Minor Injuries Unit provides care for those patients in the Stratford area requiring advice and treatment for minor ailments. Most services are centralised at Warwick Hospital A&E..
- 2.2 The Primary Care Trust anticipates that emergency activity will reduce by 7% over the next financial year.

2.3 Activity at the Minor Injuries Unit remains consistently low with attendances of 7,865 patients a year, averaging 21.5 patients a day.

2.4 Activity during the weekends is reduced even further to an average of 14 patients a day.

3.Activity

All patients who access the Minor Injuries Unit make their own way to the Unit. All 999 Emergency Calls are taken to A&E at Warwick Hospital.

Number of Attendances.

2003/2004	7,185
2004/2005	7,258
2005/2006 projected	7,865

The Caseload comprises:

Treatment Type	Percentage of patients %
Other	4.8
None	1.79
Dressing	25.98
Bandage	0.75
Sutures (stitching)	1.5
Steristrips (butterfly strips)	5.22
Wound Glue	1.9
Wound Closure (other)	0.05
Plaster of Paris	2.43
Splint	5.04
Prescription	15.42
Removal of foreign body	2.55
Other physiotherapy	0.23
Reduction	0.17
Incision and drainage	0.05
Minor surgery	0.05
Observation	3.9
Written Guidance	1.27
Verbal Guidance	24.3
Local Anaesthetic	0.11
Nebuliser	0.17

4. Options

No Change

4.1 Minor Injuries Unit remains at current activity

Benefits

- Retains existing level of services for the Stratford population

Disadvantages:

- Patients who have a critical illness or injury have a further delay as they have to be transferred to Warwick Hospital this could be potentially life threatening.
- The Trust will continue to provide a service that is disproportionate in cost compared to A&E at Warwick Hospital which has full back up facilities.

4.2 Close Unit at Weekends.

Benefits

- Retains the service at Stratford Hospital during the times of greatest activity.
- Cost saving on staffing levels of £23,239
- Nursing staff will have improved family friendly working hours.
- Potential additional workload would be absorbed by A&E Department with no extra cost.
- At weekends the nursing staff are isolated from the main part of the hospital, which is a health and safety risk, this would be eliminated.
- Patients would be directed to Warwick Hospital with an enhanced range of services available.

Disadvantages:

- Relatively small cost saving
- Patients who have a critical illness or injury have a further delay as they have to be transferred to Warwick Hospital, this could be potentially life threatening.
- No Minor Injuries Unit service for users at weekend.
- There would increase travel for patients at weekends, and potential higher demand for ambulance service.

4.3 Provide a Nurse Led Service

Benefits

- Will maintain an effective service for patients with minor injury.
- Improved job satisfaction for nursing team.
- Nursing staff would require job evaluation as they would be working more autonomously therefore will achieve an enhanced salary.
- Cost Saving of Staff Grade Doctor £37,427 approx. (allowing provision for enhanced nurse salary)
- Potential more cost savings if Unit closes at weekend.

Disadvantages:

- Relatively low cost savings.
- No medical back up for Nursing Staff.
- Requirement to train other Nursing Staff to become Emergency Nurse Practitioners, initial outlay cost for training and supervision.
- Nursing staff would require job evaluation as they would be working more autonomously, therefore will be awarded higher banding which increases costs..
- Professional isolation, unless nursing team willing to rotate to main department.
- At weekends the Nursing Staff are isolated from the main part of the hospital, health and safety risk.
- Staff Grade position would not be required, this may effect recruitment and retention of existing Staff Grades, as it would not be such an attractive rota.

- Patients who have a critical illness or injury have a further delay as they have to be transferred to Warwick Hospital this could be potentially life threatening.

4.4 Closure of Unit

Benefits

- This is a practical solution and yields the most cost savings £178,000 (direct staff costs)
- Accident and Emergency Department will be able to absorb additional workload.
- The Accident and Emergency Department is currently reviewing patient flow within the department, single point of access for all emergency and urgent care, this will ensure that the patient/user will be directed and treated by the appropriate clinician and appropriate part of the service. i.e. primary care, emergency care, minor injury/illness.
- Prevents professional isolation allows for development of staff with appropriate support.
- Use of facilities that incorporate other health professionals, encourages a holistic approach to care.
- Caseload by treatment type section 3, majority of this caseload can be dealt with by other agencies, i.e. Practice Nurse at General Practitioner Surgery, NHS Direct for advice, Local Pharmacy or Accident and Emergency Department Warwick Hospital.

Disadvantages:

- Loss of any urgent care service at Stratford Hospital.
- Increased travel time and cost for some patients and staff. Potential increased demand on the ambulance service.
- Potential risk that A&E The Department cannot absorb additional capacity without additional staffing.

4.5 Provision of General Practitioners (GP) “Out of Hours” Service

The GP “Out of Hours” sessions will be unaffected by any proposal that is adopted.

5. Public Consultation

These proposals will be subject to formal public consultation. The consultation period will run from 1st July, 2005, to 30th September, 2005. A public meeting will take place at Stratford Town Hall on 13th July 2005 at 6.30 p.m. The meeting will be chaired by Stratford-upon-Avon Town Mayor, Councillor.W.Lowe.