

Improving local cardiology and ophthalmology services

March 2021

Context for improving services

As part of a continuing drive for excellence, we are always looking for ways to improve local services. This is outlined in our East Sussex Long Term Plan that describes the ‘transformation priorities we need to deliver jointly as a health and social care system to meet the future health and care needs of our population... to deliver a “new service model for the 21st century” grounded in the needs of our local population’.

Within this context, we have been talking to people living in East Sussex about their experience of cardiology and ophthalmology services, in particular:

- Ophthalmology services (both adult and children’s) provided at The Conquest Hospital, Hastings; Bexhill Hospital; and Eastbourne District General Hospital.
- Acute cardiology services provided at The Conquest Hospital, Hastings and Eastbourne District General Hospital which includes emergency management of heart attacks and interventional cardiology

This is so that we can co-design a set of proposals for the future that improve services for local people, address some of the current challenges and make the most of future opportunities including:

- Being in a position to implement emerging clinical best practice in line with changing population health needs, in particular the ageing population in East Sussex including working together to address health inequalities, improve experiences and outcomes, and ensuring that future proposals support our collective management of Covid 19
- Responding to changing patterns of service delivery, for example specialisation of the workforce, technological advances, and maintain/improve recruitment and retention of staff
- Making the most of opportunities presented by developments in digital service delivery and ensuring that our estates and equipment support service improvements
- Making the best use of our resources

Update and plans for next steps

It is important that local people, patients and members of staff have a say in the development of proposals for improvement including how the service could be delivered in the future.

To ensure this and building on previous engagement (particularly in relation to cardiology), between 4 January and 14 February 2021 we have been talking with local people to understand their current experiences of these services and to find out what's important to them. We are now analysing the outputs of this engagement to understand key insights from local people that will inform discussions about future options.

A range of options development workshops are scheduled during March 2021 that will include clinicians, stakeholders and local people. These workshops will follow relevant Covid 19 rules on social distancing, consider how best to ensure inclusive participation including independent facilitation.

The options development workshops will then inform our proposals to improve these Cardiology and Ophthalmology services.

We intend to update HOSC in June with further details about our proposals, with a view to potential formal consultation with local people beginning in the summer/autumn of 2021, and final decision during winter/spring 2021/22.

We will also carry out a separate consultation with the HOSC should the Committee consider that the proposals constitute a significant variation to current services.