

Cllr Andrew Pope
Health scrutiny panel
Southampton City Council
Civic Centre
Southampton
SO14 7LY

Chief operating officer
Trust Management Offices
Southampton General Hospital
Tremona Road
Southampton
SO16 6YD

13 June 2012

Dear Councillor Pope,

We are writing to inform you about a change we are planning to make to the medicine for older people service provided at Southampton General Hospital (SGH). This change is urgently needed to increase bed capacity at the hospital.

Over the last three years and more notably in the last 12 months we have experienced a sustained increase in demand for emergency and urgent care which has made it increasingly difficult to treat patients coming to the hospital for planned surgery. As you know we share the commitment made in the NHS Constitution to treat all patients within 18 weeks of their referral by a GP. Despite taking a number of steps to increase capacity by reducing the length of hospital admissions and improving efficiency, we still do not have enough beds available to meet the present demand.

In order to maintain good access to our services for all patients we need to create additional space to treat people needing planned surgery. Having considered a number of options we are proposing to move 24 elderly care beds from ward G8 at SGH to the Royal South Hants (RSH) hospital which is managed by Solent NHS Trust. The vacated space at SGH will be used to open 24 surgical beds to treat patients who need to be admitted for planned procedures.

This physical relocation of the ward will not affect the type or level of care that patients receive. We plan to take our existing clinical staff (medical, nursing and therapies) to the RSH to care for the patients in the same way as they are currently cared for at SGH. This move has been discussed with our lead commissioner and other healthcare providers. It enables us to develop further opportunities for clinical integration with community services for the benefit of patients.

We have begun a process of consultation with up to 50 staff involved and hope to move the ward during July 2012. We will be transferring some existing patients to the RSH using ambulance transport and will be admitting further patients there as appropriate. The ward will not be taking direct admissions and all patients will have been admitted to SGH initially.

We would welcome further discussion with you about how we could involve you in this proposal and would wish to understand your views or any concerns you have about it.

Yours sincerely



Steve McManus



Sarah Austin

Solent 

NHS Trust

Chief operating officer

University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust

University Hospital Southampton



NHS Foundation Trust

Director of Strategy

Solent NHS Trust