



You may have seen in the news recently about the proposed changes to our children's services, in particular around the Children's Assessment Unit at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital (RSH). I understand that any change to our local health services can be worrying for people, especially when it involves the care of our children. I want to reassure everyone that providing safe and secure services for children is vital to us and this is central to the changes we are proposing.

We have produced this special edition of **Looking to the Future** to outline the facts about the changes to children's services, clarify the points that have been raised in the newspapers and answer some of your questions.

We hope you will find this useful, but if you have any further questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact the Trust at consultation@sath.nhs.uk



- The Facts -

- **The majority of children who use hospital services will continue to go to the same hospital as now.**
- This includes outpatient appointments to see hospital specialists at both hospitals, an A&E department at both sites and children's assessment units at both sites (although the opening hours will be different).
- However, from 2014, there will no longer be two separate children's inpatient services at RSH and the Princess Royal Hospital (PRH). (The inpatient service is when children are admitted into hospital and stay overnight).
- **There will be a single merged children's inpatient service at PRH.**
- The consultant obstetric maternity service and the neonatal intensive care unit (which cares for newborn babies) will also be based at PRH. The neonatal intensive care unit needs to be based alongside the consultant obstetric unit.
- The children's cancer and haematology services will also move to a new centre at PRH to be alongside children's inpatient services. All patients will continue to have a personalised plan of care at PRH.
- The main reason for this change is that our children's doctors (paediatricians) believe that creating a single children's inpatient unit is the only way we can continue to provide our full range of services in future within the county.
- Another reason is that we cannot continue to provide children's services from the maternity building at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital (RSH) as it is in a poor state and does not have a long-term future for clinical care.
- As mentioned above, the majority of children who use hospital services will continue to go to the same hospital as now. This includes those children who already have to go out of the county for specialist care at Birmingham Children's Hospital or Liverpool's Alder Hey Hospital.
- **There will be a Children's Assessment Unit at both hospitals - open 24 hours at PRH and approximately 13 hours at RSH**
- The Children's Assessment Unit at RSH will assess and treat children who do not require overnight stay. It will be located alongside the 24-hour A&E department.
- We estimate that the Children's Assessment Unit (PAU) at RSH will be open for 13 hours during the day. This is because very few children attend overnight who need this type of care.
- We will continue to work with clinicians and parents to develop this service. You can find out more on how you can get involved on the back of this newsletter.
- The Children's Assessment Unit at PRH will be located alongside the children's inpatient ward and will be open 24 hours.
- **There will still be a 24 hour A&E department at RSH. No child will be turned away from A&E.** Children will still be able to be assessed at A&E and either treated and discharged, or treated and safely transferred to PRH if they need to stay in hospital overnight.
- The Trust has recently appointed two Paediatric Nurse Practitioners and are currently recruiting two more. They will undertake specialist training to become Advanced Paediatric Nurse Practitioners whose role will be to provide advanced care and treatment for children at the PAU at RSH alongside Associate Specialist doctors, on-call consultants and the doctors and nurses from the A&E department.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Turn over for:

- Answers to your questions on the PAU
- How you can get involved

PAU - Children's Consultant Dr Frank Hinde answers your questions...

What is a PAU?

PAU stands for Paediatric Assessment Unit (or Children's Assessment Unit). It is a special unit where children can be quickly assessed and treated.

When does a child go to the PAU?

Unless it is an emergency situation, children who are brought to the Accident and Emergency department are directed to the PAU during opening hours to be assessed and treated.

Why won't the PAU at RSH be open 24 hours?

A special group of clinicians and other hospital staff has been set up to discuss the opening hours of the PAU. They have looked at a wide range of factors such as the numbers of children who attend hospital at night. Due to the very low numbers of children seen at night, the group has decided that we should not aim to keep the PAU open 24 hours a day at RSH.

The current thinking is that the PAU will be open for 13 hours each day. This will mean that the PAU is open during the hours when nearly all children needing the type of care provided by a PAU attend hospital. We are still developing these plans and welcome feedback.

When the PAU is not open there will still be a 24-hour Accident and Emergency Department at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital. Working with GPs, Shropdoc, ambulance services and other health services we will make sure that there is a clear plan to bring children quickly to the best place to provide the treatment that they need.

What will happen when the PAU is closed?

If you call an ambulance for your child during the night when the PAU at RSH is closed, in the vast majority of cases they will be taken straight to PRH. In rare and extreme cases when ambulance paramedics believe that the child cannot get to PRH safely (airway obstruction for example), then they will be taken to the nearest hospital.

But remember – NO CHILD WILL EVER BE TURNED AWAY FROM A&E AT SHREWSBURY

Any child who is brought to RSH during the night will be quickly seen and assessed by doctors and nurses in Accident and Emergency. If the child needs to stay in hospital overnight, then, only when it is safe to do so, they will be quickly transported to PRH or, as now, to a regional specialist hospital if they need care that cannot be provided in Shrewsbury or Telford.

Get Involved

We have already met with several patient and carer groups about the changes to children's services to get their views and involve them in help to shape the future of our children's services. This includes parents/ carers whose children use our cancer and haematology service, and of children with diabetes, mental health issues or learning disabilities.

These changes are being put into place over the next three years so there is plenty of time to get involved – why not take part in one of our focus groups looking at children's services, maternity services, surgery or gynaecology services. If you are interested then please call Cath McComb on 01952 641222 ext 4808 or email cath.mccomb@sath.nhs.uk

Our briefing sessions are another great way to hear all the latest news about the changes from our Chief Executive and ask him questions. The next sessions are:

- 6pm on Tuesday 8 November in Seminar Room 5, Shropshire Education and Conference Centre (SECC), Royal Shrewsbury Hospital
- 6pm on Thursday 10 November in the Lecture Theatre, Education Centre, Princess Royal Hospital

If you would like to attend a session, please register your interest with our Foundation Trust Office on 01743 261473 or email members@sath.nhs.uk



www.ournhsinshropshireandtelford.nhs.uk

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Securing the future of hospital services in Shrewsbury and Telford