4. Responses by area and key groups

4.1 Bridgnorth

12 people from Bridgnorth completed the consultation questionnaire. Across all the questions, 30 comments were made by patients and members of the public.

**Support for the proposals**

There were 11 comments (37%) that broadly supported the proposals. Some noted that the proposals were “sensible”, others supported the creation of a centre of excellence and felt that increased specialisation would improve service quality.

**Concerns about the proposals**

**Location of services**

7 people (23%) were concerned about the movement of services.

“*As a south Shropshire resident we have already had our services at Kidderminster removed! Its hard enough for us to access hospital facilities, you are making it even harder!*”

“The movement of other essential services to Shrewsbury.”

**Travel and transport**

3 people were concerned about the increased travelling distances and times, visiting and public transport.

“*Distance to either of these hospitals is a cause for concern for the elderly especially, as transport services are useless. Visiting loved ones is needed to help recovery and getting to visit can be a problem if no car is available and public transport is none existant [sic] in some rural areas.*”

**Other concerns**

Some people wondered whether options around Bridgnorth Community Hospital had been explored.

**Reassurance required**

People in Bridgnorth would like to know that they had been listened to and their views taken into account and they would like to be reassured that ambulance and emergency services will be well planned.
4.2 East of County

5 people from the East of the County responded to the consultation questionnaire: 3 indicated they were ‘Strongly against’ the overall proposals, 1 was ‘Against’ and 1 chose ‘Strongly support’.

Across all questions, 10 comments were made from members of the public and patients.

Support for the proposals

There was only one comment supporting the proposal however it noted that consolidation of services should only be an interim measure.

Concerns about the proposals

No changes

There were 3 comments about not changing or moving services of which one person suggested that “Keeping it as is location wise... maybe offering alternative clinincs [sic], 1 week Telford, 1 week Shrewsbury?”.

Travel and transport

5 comments related to transport and travel and concerns about additional travelling times and distances.

“Shrewsbury serves a huge area already, to the west as well as east. Telford is a quick commute away - if you're on far side of Telford can also make use of large hospitals in Walsall etc - if you're [sic] wet of Shrewsbury the next options are Wrexham or Aberystwyth..... this will compromise mother [sic]& baby health/lives, & cost the individuals FAR more in travel time & time off wor[sic] for appointments.”

Reassurances required

Not making changes to the services - “Keeping Shrewsbury as is...”
4.3 North Shropshire

72 people from North Shropshire completed the consultation questionnaire, and the graphs below summarise the total responses to the ratings questions from that area.

Chart 10: Overall proposals

Chart 11: Inpatient children’s proposals

Chart 12: Maternity proposals

Chart 13: Surgery proposals

235 comments were made by patients and members of the public across all the questions.

Support for the proposals

76 comments (32%) of all the comments were broadly supportive of the proposals.

21 of these were in connection with the proposed changes to inpatient children’s services – where people were pleased that the proposals took account of the changing population in the county and that it was a “sensible and cost effective” way to ensure good services and improved buildings and facilities. Others liked the idea of retaining a midwife led unit in Shrewsbury.

In connection with surgery, comments centred on the importance of developing centres of excellence to attract the right staff with the right levels of specialist skills.

Concerns about the proposals

Travel and transport
Several comments were concerned increased travelling times for residents of Powys &Wales and more generally there were comments about the impact of increased travel times.
There were a number of concerns expressed in regard to increased travel times generally for patients and visitors, for mothers in labour – particularly if a transfer from a home or MLU birth was needed.

Other comments were concerned with the increased costs associated with travel to Telford. Several comments were concerned about the speed at which patients would be able to access services – particularly maternity, paediatrics and stroke services in an emergency.

“Travel distance from more distant parts of the county, eg. the welsh border and Montgomeryshire, including places like Oswestry, Bishops Castle, Clun etc.”

“Taking them away from Shrewsbury would be devastating, women will have to travel too far to Telford when we have a good service here.”

“Distance, cost and difficult journey, almost impossible.”

“Cost! Taxis/buses/trains... Whatever are beyond affordability.” (Extract)

“Transport issues will be a problem - cannot expect local authority to take responsibility will need funding from NHS trust”

Other concerns

- That the current protests would stop plans going ahead.
- That acute surgery and paediatrics will be on separate sites – “putting very sick children's lives at risk.”
- Whether patients being transferred from one hospital to another would have their notes and records lost of misplaced.
- That the proposals go ahead and it is still difficult to recruit and retain specialist doctors and nurses.

Reassurance Required

- That issues surrounding public transport will be looked into and addressed.
- That the proposed changes (particularly to maternity and inpatient children’s services) do not go ahead
- Evidence of good communication with and training staff, GP’s clinicians about how transfers will happen and where the location of new services are.
- That there will be no reduction in care standards across any services.

“Working across Shropshire as I do, it is essential that the transport aspect is dealt with as an essential part of patient care and family support in view of the distances, existing infrastructure & public transport availability.”

“Reassurance that the only difference under these proposals is which hospital you go to and that there will not be any decrease in the current level of care.”
4.4 Oswestry

56 people from Oswestry completed the consultation questionnaire, and the graphs below summarise the total responses to the ratings questions from that area.

**Chart 14: Overall proposals**

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**Chart 15: Inpatient children’s proposals**

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**Chart 16: Maternity proposals**

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**Chart 17: Surgery proposals**

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Across all the questions, 219 comments were made by patients and members of the public from Oswestry.

**Support for the proposals**

19 comments (9%) were in favour of the proposals. The majority of these comments were connected with improvements in buildings and facilities. Others were pleased that a midwife led unit would be retained in Shrewsbury. 7 people were in favour of the proposals around surgery.

“Good idea to create one unit rather than two”

“It is good that the midwife led unit is being retained at Shrewsbury.”

“Providing maternity care in modern hospital environment with more and better equipped facilities.”
Concerns about the proposals

Travel and transport
44% of all the comments were connected with transport and travel.

People were concerned that additional travelling may place patients at risk, comments particularly identified people from rural communities as being at greater risk and more vulnerable to changes in traffic, weather and road conditions.

There were concerns about the transfer times for patients – particularly mothers in labour who had opted for a home birth, or to give birth in a midwife led unit, who subsequently needed specialist care, either for themselves or for their babies.

Some comments expressed concerns with public transport links and the ease of movement around the County by rail or bus in the evenings and weekends.

Some comments expressed concerns about visiting and that increased time, distance and costs may put off some visitors.

“While you say there is a greater number of statistically ‘at risk’ Children nearer to Telford you are making the journey time for Children located in the North East of your region significantly greater.”

“Too far to travel for those in rural areas”

“Those people having to transfer from Telford for emergency surgery.”

“The proposals would seriously disadvantage Oswestry residents. 20 miles is sufficient to travel for all medical services. 35 miles to Telford is unacceptable.”

Nothing to change
Just over a third of all comments (35%) were from people who didn’t want to see any changes made to existing services, or who stated that they liked nothing about the proposals. A few were concerned about the practical implications of the proposed changes for example - patients’ records and notes could be lost between sites. Others were concerned that these changes were part of a move to “abolish all local services.”
“The main services be kept at Shrewsbury, there seems little point in moving closer to the 'opposition' in Wolverhampton and Stafford for neonatal care, a commercial organisation certainly would believe this to be a bit of an own goal!”

“Why change something that's not broken.”

Other concerns
Several people wanted to see high quality Stroke services working from one centre of excellence, but locally accessible, likewise Urology services.

Reassurances required

- Not changing anything and leaving services in Shrewsbury.
- Knowing that clinical staff support the proposals.
- Proof that patient safety would not be compromised.

“Are all consultants/ surgeons and senior nursing staff in agreement with the suggested proposals. If not, then I am not in favour.”

“Proof that patient safety in emergency situations will not be compromised and that all medical practitioners support it.”

“To leave it where it is in Shrewsbury!”
4.5 Powys & Wales

105 people from Powys & Wales completed the consultation questionnaire, and the graphs below summarise the total responses to the ratings questions from that area.

Across all the questions 371 comments were made by patients and members of the public.

**Support for the proposals**

There were few comments supporting the proposals – around 6%. The majority of these were comments connected to retaining services in the County and to improvements in the fabric of buildings, facilities and services.

**Concerns about the proposals**

**No changes**

Almost half (47%) of the comments identified that people did not want services to be moved or for anything to change.
Travel and transport

Almost half (45%) of the comments were connected to travel and transport. Comments were concerned about the increased travelling times and distances for all patients, but there were more comments about this in connection to maternity and inpatient children’s services and there were particular concerns expressed for mothers who may experience complications in labour or babies who need specialist services.

People were concerned about how both their own and ambulance journey times may be affected by poor weather conditions and at peak travel times. A number of comments were particularly concerned with the provision of ambulance services and wanted to know what consideration had been given to the additional demands that may be placed on them if the proposed changes go ahead.

People were concerned about the risk to children that may arise from any increases in journey time.

Others were concerned about the increased costs associated with additional travel.

“Leave maternity services where they are – and besides, they are such a fantastic team there!!”

“Stroke services should remain in Shrewsbury due to the importance of “time” for thrombolysis eligible patients. Having experienced my mother suffering a severe stroke I was well aware that “time” is of great importance. (Extract)

“What is wrong with the service as it is at present?”

“Proposals are stupid and unsafe.”
Reassurance Required

- The majority of people were seeking reassurance that the services would not change.
- That there would be sufficient ambulance and air ambulance support to ensure no lives were put at risk.
- Access to services for people without their own transport.
- That the views of people in Powys & Wales were taken into consideration when making decisions about the proposed changes.

“More ambulances and air ambulances provided by the NHS and not charity. Better bus services (nil at present to Telford from mid Wales). More parking facilities.”

“This needs to be looked at seriously what about people who rely on public transport from mid Wales who would find it impossible to get to Telford it can be stressful enough to get to Shrewsbury but Telford would be even worse, it would also mean the use of ambulances more as people who have no transport would be calling the ambulance service as a way of getting their child seen.”
4.6 Shrewsbury & Atcham

236 people from Shrewsbury & Atcham completed the consultation questionnaire, and the graphs below summarise the total responses to the ratings questions from that area.

Chart 22: Overall proposals

Chart 23: Inpatient children’s proposals

Chart 24: Maternity proposals

Chart 25: Surgery proposals

761 comments were made across all the consultation questions by patients and members of the public, and of these just over 70% were made in connection with the questions on inpatient children’s and maternity services.

Support for the proposals

95 comments (12%) were broadly supportive of the proposals with people anticipating that the standard and quality of care would improve if services were unified onto one site and that RSH and PRH developed specialism’s. Other comments felt that the proposals reflected the changing population trends in the county, and other felt that the changes were necessary in order to keep services in the county.

Concerns about the proposals

No changes

Over half (56%) of all the concerns and negative comments were from people who wanted to see no change to the current services or felt that any consolidation of services and improvements to buildings and facilities should be done on the Shrewsbury site.
Travel and transport

188 comments (25%) expressed concerns that related to travel and transport. Of these well over three quarters (164) were made in connection with inpatient children’s and maternity services.

People expressed concerns about the additional travelling times and distances and how these would affect them and their families. Some people were extremely concerned that the additional journey time may be life threatening.

There were concerns about the transfer of women in labour, for babies needing neonatal care and for people experiencing stroke and many were apprehensive as to whether emergency services would cope with the additional pressure.

Non car owners and older people were particularly concerned about public transport and how they would either get to the hospital to get treatment or visit loved ones in hospital. Concerns were expressed that people from Powys & Wales and Oswestry would be most affected by these proposals.

“I am strongly against the loss of inpatient children’s services at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital.”

“Investing more in services at RSH due to its central location within the area it serves.”

“The urology service in RSH seems particularly effective, and as there are probably more old people in Shrewsbury than in Telford, the urology department should be located in Shrewsbury with regular diagnostic clinics in Telford.”

“We used to have 3 hospitals in Shrewsbury, we now have 1. Keep ALL services in Shrewsbury and run the hospital at full capacity. LIKE IT WAS BUILT TO BE RUN.”

“We should be encouraging growth at Shrewsbury. Any plans to modernise and make RSH better for the future are great.”

“Full services to remain in County town - thereby providing excellent service to all users.”
Other comments

There were mixed views about the sighting of stroke services, there were a number of comments about needing stroke services to be local and that any planning for stroke services needed to take into account where older people lived.

There was no clear view about the location of urology services and overall there were fewer specific comments about it. One person felt strongly that urology should be located with vascular surgery while another felt it should be located with abdominal surgery.

There were a number of strong concerns expressed about the proposed changes to inpatient paediatric services and how the removal of a 24 hour assessment from one site could potentially put children’s lives at risk.

Parents who would have to travel much further to reach inpatient services in Telford want to know what plans there are for overnight accommodation.

Reassurance Required

- The majority of people were looking for reassurances that the existing services would not be changed or felt that there was nothing that would offer them reassurance about the proposals.
- That Shrewsbury was the right location to have as the hub for services in the county.
- That there would be sufficient ambulance support to ensure that no lives were put at risk.
- Some people would like more information, particularly about clinicians views on the proposals and or about staff training and the staff retention.
- That adequate public transport links would be developed for people with no access to their own transport and that these would operate longer and more extensively than they do currently.
- That a shuttle bus service would be available between sites.
- Neonatal care to be available in both Shrewsbury and Telford.
- That proper consideration had been given to emergency services and how women in labour or people experiencing a stroke would be transferred or access emergency services. How would emergency services cope in poor weather or at peak traffic times.
- Some people could support the specialisation of surgery if it meant no change to maternity services.
- That campaigners’ voices have been heard and listened to.

“A commitment to keep the services in Shrewsbury—the right location for the people it is supposed to serve.”

“Revamp/Update the Shrewsbury Maternity Ward but leave it where it is.”

“Free shuttle bus between the hospitals, improved public transport network. Free car parking at both hospitals.”

“There could not possibly be anything that would reassure me that this is a good idea. It, as usual, is an idea provided by managers who look at figures, and figures alone. There is absolutely no thought for the women who currently use or those who would in the future use this service.”
4.7 South Shropshire

32 people from South Shropshire completed the consultation questionnaire, and the graph below summarise the total responses to the ratings question about the overall proposals from that area.

Chart 26: Overall proposals

Across all the questions there were 138 comments from patients and members of the public from South Shropshire.

Support for the proposals

There were 24 comments (17%) that were broadly supportive of the proposals.

Several comments noted that concentrating the services and developing specialist units should both improve the service and support staff training and development. It should ensure that staff with the right level of skills and expertise are recruited and retained. Others felt that the creation of centres of excellence made best use of limited resources and that if this was what clinicians were suggesting then it was the right thing to do.

Concerns about the proposals

No changes

In over a third of all the comments (54) people expressed the view that services should either stay as there are, or be concentrated on the Shrewsbury site. Several people felt that moving the services would unfairly affect to rural communities.

“To remove consultant unit services from RSH would be a detrimental move for patients in the rural catchment area, historically Shrewsbury maternity has been a popular training school for midwives and G.P’s, the town is a popular choice for young professionals to move to and offers good school and housing for them.”

“I am concerned that sufficient attention must be given to the topography of the county and its demographics. There must be a strong element of future proofing built into the final proposal.”
Travel and transport

41 comments (30%) expressed concerns about the impact of the proposed changes on transport and travel.

People noted that increased distances and travel times would create additional strain for patients and their families at a time when they were already stressed. Concerns were raised about the affordability of petrol, taxis and public transport due to increased journey length.

Others were concerned about the provision of public transport – particularly at the evenings and weekends and public transport links for patients in the west and south of the County.

The state of the roads was a matter of concern, as was emergency travel in the weather, at peak times and across rural areas.

Transport to and from routine appointments was identified as a concern, particularly for mums with young families, non car owners and older people. Transfer arrangements between hospital sites for both the patient and their family was also highlighted.

“It’s a lot further on worse roads to travel from Ludlow to Telford for more complicated cases.”

“Do you fancy driving your wife in labour [sic] from Ludlow or Welshpool to Telford - I know I have done it.”

“Possible difficulties with major trauma patients moving between the two sites.”

Other concerns

- That services were being removed.
- The separation of consultant obstetrics and gynaecology from surgery.
- Stroke services are kept local.

Reassurances required

- That services will not change or be moved.
- That current services will be improved and maintained.
- That modern/cutting edge solutions will be sought to overcome the difficulties created by the proposals.
- Plans will be put in place around public transport.
- More localised services – particularly for stroke.
- That decisions about the proposed changes are made on the basis of clinical evidence.
4.8 Telford and Wrekin

535 people from Telford & Wrekin completed the consultation questionnaire, and the graphs below summarise the total responses to the ratings questions from that area.

Across all the questions, 1,189 comments were made by patients and members of the public from Telford & Wrekin.

Support for the proposals

441 (37%) of the comments were broadly in support of the proposals with people identifying the following as things they particularly liked:

- Proposals reflected the demographics of the county – particularly in relation to the proposals around inpatient children’s and maternity services.
- Comments noted that the proposals offered an opportunity for all residents in the county to access to high quality consistent care provided in modern up to date buildings. Several people also commented that as PRH was the newer hospital it was sensible to develop services there.
- The creation of centres of excellence particularly in regards to surgery. People commented that the proposals would help in attracting and retaining highly skilled clinicians and medical staff.
- Proposals ensure services will stay in the County.
Concerns about the proposals

Transport and Travel

20% (241) of all the comments from Telford & Wrekin were connected with travel and transport.

People were concerned about the risks to patient health in relation to increases in travelling times and distances for people living in Powys & Wales and to the west of the county. There were also concerns about emergency transfers between sites, particularly for women in labour.

Some people felt that public transport arrangements for people who don’t drive/have no access to a car, were currently not adequate to support the proposed changes.

“Access for patients and families in mid-Wales and the west of the county.”

“Distance for some families to travel to be with sick children and impact on their family members, childcare etc”

“How can you expect people from the west of the county to travel the extra miles to PRH when RSH is some 20 miles closer.”

“Good access to regular transport links are essential particularly in such a rural area like Shropshire”

No changes

159 people (13%) either commented that they liked nothing about the proposals or that they wanted nothing to change, or for things to stay the way they are.

Of these comments, almost a third related to question 5 where people were asked for their views on Stroke and Urology services. People noted that Stroke services needed to be kept local and provided on both hospital sites, other comments expressed concerns about travelling to Shrewsbury for Stroke services.
Other concerns

15 comments related to finances, sustainability and future proofing and 10 comments were made by people who were concerned about the effect the ‘no change campaign’ would have on decision making.

Reassurance required

- Transport and travel times would be taken into account when planning services, and that plans are in place to ensure that lives are not put at risk by increased journey times.
- That hospital transfer arrangements and emergency services work together to ensure patient safety.
- More information about communication and transfer of patient information and records between the hospitals.
- Proper plans are put in place for public transport connections to and between the hospitals.
- That the proposals are affordable, sustainable and take into account potential/ future need.
4.9 Young People – inpatient children’s services

32 young people (25 women and 7 men) aged 15 – 24 years responded to the rating question about inpatient children’s services.

Chart 31: Young People – Inpatient children’s proposals

39 comments relating to inpatient children’s services were made by people in the 15 -24 age group, 28 by young women and 11 by young men.

Support for the proposals

There were 10 comments from young people supporting the proposal, 9 from women and 1 from a man. A few of these were from people commenting that Telford was more convenient, or there was greater need there. 5 comments related to improving services by locating children’s services together so that specialist support is not spread too thinly.

“I feel that there will be more specialists at PRH, more children will get the treatment and correct support when needed”

“Maintains important children’s services and ensures that the expertise in this field is not too thinly spread.”

Concerns about the proposals

13 young people made comments about their concerns about inpatient children’s services. The majority of comments (8) identified two key concerns about the proposals:

Inconvenience of travel
Almost a third (4) of the comments raised concerns about the problems associated with travelling to Telford, in particular for families relying on public transport, for people living at a distance.

Risk of travel
As well as the inconvenience, a further third (4) of comments focused on the increased risk to children associated with longer travel times in an emergency.
“As someone who lives in Wales the extra 20 miles could be the difference between life and death.”

“Putting all services in Telford may make it more difficult for parents living further out to visit children, this is easy to overcome though.”

“Wrong due to the fact that some parents can’t drive and public transport is limited.”

Reassurance Required

- Half of the young people (6 out of 12) who made comments on this were seeking reassurance that the services would not change.
- That there would be good communication between the hospitals.
- That in an emergency children would be treated at the nearest hospital.
- That transport would be provided between the two hospitals.

“Leaving it as it is!!”

“Oncology children’s ward staying in RSH, we do not have a sufficient 24hr ambulance service in our area to cover the move to PRH.”

“That children in an emergency situation get treated in the nearest hospital”

“The shuttle bus already in place is good initial reassurance.”
4.10  Young People – maternity services

33 young people (26 women and 7 men) aged 15 – 24 years responded to the rating question about maternity services.

Chart 32: Young People – Maternity proposals

40 comments relating to maternity services were made by people in the 15 -24 age group, 30 by young women and 10 by young men.

Support for the proposals

There were 13 comments from young people supporting the proposal, 11 from women and 2 from men. Just over half of these (7) related to the facilities that would be available at the consultant-led unit at PRH. These comments fell into three categories:

- Existing facilities at RSH are unsatisfactory
- Positive experiences at Telford
- Support for being able to give birth on both sites

Other people commented on:

- Feeling reassured that there would be consultants on hand at Telford
- The proposals are economically viable
- Telford is convenient because it is close to where they live

“I feel that it will bring the maternity unit into the 21st century”

“i strongly support the proposals of Shrewsbury maternity ward as it is dirty, rotting and falling apart, Telford is more up to date and more closer to home.”

“The fact that women in Telford with more complicated birth plans will be able to give birth locally”
Concerns about the proposals

8 young people made comments about their concerns about maternity services. 7 of these comments related to increased travel times from parts of the region, and the associated risks for women in labour. The key concerns identified about the proposals were:

- Longer travel times from West Shropshire and Wales
- Increased risk for women travelling a long time when in labour
- Women having to be transferred if there were unforeseen complications
- Lack of a consultant unit at Shrewsbury

“For a mother having a difficult labour the extra time (which could be worse with traffic) could be the difference between the life or death of the baby.”

“Lack of consultant maternity services in Shrewsbury - worse situation for those living in West Shropshire.”

“I live in Oswestry and won’t be allowed to give birth in the orthopaedic so it’s a long way to travel and if Telford is full it would be even further, I worry about if things went wrong or I would have to be rushed and with relying on others for transport, I also worry that if someone did give birth in orthopaedic unit and there was problems it would be an awful long way to go even blue lighted there and again if full.”

Reassurance Required

- A third of the young people (4 out of 11) who made comments on this were seeking reassurance that the services would not change.
- That PRH would not get too full and have to turn people away
- That families would be able to visit and stay overnight
- That the maternity unit at Telford would improve

“Keep the services open in Shrewsbury”

“You would have to guarantee that the distance wouldn’t be an issue in an emergency, that the PRH wouldn’t get so full they’d turn people away and that it wouldn’t put added stress onto midwives leading to poor care and women being rushed out because of overcrowding. Doubt you can sorry.”

“Maternity unit to get better at Telford”
4.11 Over-45s: Urology and Stroke services

267 people (156 women and 111 men) in the over-45 age group responded to the question about Urology and Stroke services.

Of the people in this age group responding to this question, 22 said they had no comment to make about Urology and Stroke services. So in total 245 comments relating to Urology and Stroke services were made by people in the over-45 age group, 146 by women and 99 by men.

Support for the proposals

There were 12 comments from people supporting the proposal, 8 from women and 4 from men. There were also a number of comments either supporting the idea of a centre of excellence on one site (15), or saying that location was less important than excellent services (18). There were also 12 people who felt that Urology should be on one site.

“Stroke care should be of the highest standards and experts in many disciplines should be available, this may mean being on one site, probably justified for better outcomes. Good transport for visitors essential.”

“sensible approach.”

“One would hope that wherever in the county it is situated it would be a first class place to be treated.”

Concerns about the proposals

A large number of comments were expressing concerns about any possible concentration of Stroke services on one site. The main concern related to the importance of prompt action when people have a Stroke. 52 people made comments about this.

The other main concern was travel times, both in emergencies and for people who needed rehabilitation after Strokes, or dialysis (53 comments).

Another concern, expressed by 8 people, was that the proposals around Urology and Stroke services were too vague to be able to make an informed judgement.
“These services MUST be as local as possible, as recent TV advertising has stated, every second counts for someone who has had a stroke.”

“Emergency treatment should be available in either A & E. But follow up treatment and/or management could be in a specialist centre in either hospital.”

“Urology - no comment, as not usually requiring emergency response (there are exceptions). But am very concerned that the emergency response for stroke attacks may be delayed due to greater distance to a stroke centre. Especially with the aging population. This could cost lives.”

“How can one comment on proposals that are so vague. The county of Shropshire and Shrewsbury deserve services for the people.”

Reassurance Required

- The largest number of people who made comments on this (46) were seeking reassurance that the services would not change.
- That there would be local services at GPs surgeries and cottage hospitals for follow up care for stroke patients
- That the services would be where the need is greatest.

“It would be nice to see stroke services also in the community hospitals as most stroke patients are elderly and visiting is difficult for their spouses and family.”

“need greater support at local level eg the old cottage hospitals where OT and others can support people without need for transport of the patients”

“Think of democratics [sic] especially ages of population in relation to ages. What is the proportion and therefore likelihood of stroke victims in each area? Telford is heavily populated and population is increasingly aged.”
5. Stakeholder views

There is a diverse range of stakeholders with an interest in the proposed changes to hospital services in Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin, that have contributed to the consultation process by completing consultation questionnaires, attending meetings, writing letters or emails and making formal written responses.

This section presents a summary of the opinions expressed by different individuals, groups and organisations, pulling out the key themes of their collective responses, both positive and negative. A list of participating key individuals, groups and organisations can be seen at Appendix 5.

5.1 Formal stakeholders

It is expected that these organisations are invited to make a formal response to any consultations on proposed health service changes.

Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC)

The full formal response of the JHOSC to the consultation proposals can be seen at Appendix 6. In it, the Committee made the following statement in relation to the overall proposals:

“The Joint Committee believes that retaining the status quo is not an option if we are to maintain and protect valuable health services in Shropshire. It is essential that we secure the best possible Health Services for the County as a whole and give our support, subject to further reassurances that proposals put forward are safe, sustainable and affordable, as identified by both the Assurance Panel and in the Joint HOSC process.”

Support for proposals

The JHOSC welcomed the following aspects of the proposals:

- Consultants and other medical staff had been involved in drawing up the proposals and that there is a clinical evidence base.
- The opportunity for new facilities, particularly for women and children at PRH.
- Developing centres of surgical excellence on the 2 sites would attract highly skilled surgeons and help maintain services in the county.
- Demographic information has informed the proposals.

Concerns about proposals

The JHOSC expressed concerns about the following elements:

- Safety and outcomes for children with trauma presenting at the RSH out of hours.
- Additional travel time to the PRH for children from the north west and south of the county.
- The relocation of facilities (Rainbow Unit) that have been funded with community support and investment at the RSH.
- The removal of the clinical-led maternity unit at the RSH leading to extra travel time for emergencies from midwife-led units from the northwest, and south of the county.
- Service changes not meeting planned timescales putting patients at risk and impacting on the project as a whole.
- Vital that the hospital Trust and PCTs have robust plans for all aspects of the financial planning to ensure that the proposals are financially sustainable.
- The need to ensure that there is good transport to both hospital sites.

**Reassurance required**

- Clear clinical pathways and transfer arrangements in place to mitigate risks to those having to travel the further distance to the PRH and for those requiring emergency treatment and arriving out of hours at the RSH (inpatient children’s services).
- Reassurance from the WM Ambulance Service that they are able to reach, stabilise and transport safely children with trauma and women needing a consultant-led delivery from the north west and south of the county.
- That the excellent paediatric oncology unit at the RSH is acknowledged and those involved in raising funds to build the Rainbow Unit will be invited to be involved in the development of the new unit at PRH.
- Continued transparency in the financial arrangements and estates planning for implementation of changed services.
- Definite arrangements for staff, patients and visitors to move between sites as soon as services are relocated. Arrangements to ensure adequate parking at both hospital sites.

**GP commissioners**

Written responses to the consultation were received from the North East Locality Commissioning Board, the Shrewsbury Commissioning Group and the Montgomery Medical Practice. The proposals were also discussed at meetings of the Local Medical Committee (LMC) for Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin, Shropshire NHS PCT Professional Executive Committee and Telford & Wrekin PCT Professional Executive Committee. Full written responses can be seen at Appendix 7.

GPs views on the overall proposals were:

- GPs at the LMC all accepted that the proposals are the best pragmatic solution in the absence of being able to fund the ideal solution of one hospital site.
- Both commissioning groups agreed that they could not support the commissioning of unsafe services and, therefore, understand the need to support the proposed changes.
- Shrewsbury Commissioning Group would like to encourage appropriate utilisation of community hospital beds and outpatient facilities within the community hospital and larger primary care centres.
- Montgomery Medical Practice does not support the move of women and children’s services to PRH.
3 participating GP groups support the development of a new Shropshire Hospital, in the medium to long term.

**Support for proposals**

GPds understand that some specialist services will need to be maintained on one site in order to be viable within the County. They welcome the development of centres of excellence and hope this will encourage good quality junior medical staff to take up teaching rotations in the area.

**Concerns about proposals**

- The risks for maternity and paediatric patients, currently experienced in Telford, could be transferred to Shrewsbury and the west of the county.
- Montgomery Medical Practice is concerned that the move of women and children’s services to PRH is “not in the interest of the people of Powys”.
- Removal of services could lead to the downgrading of the Shrewsbury site.

**Reassurance required**

The North East Board would encourage work with the Local Authority to provide better transport systems into the Princess Royal Hospital site, particularly as there are currently no direct transport links from the north of the county to Telford.

Both commissioning groups would encourage a very thorough and robust risk assessment of any proposed change to maternity and paediatric services.

**Patient representative organisations**

Formal written responses to the consultation proposals were received from Telford & Wrekin LINk and Montgomeryshire Community Health Council (CHC) and these can be seen in full at Appendix 7.

The views presented by T&W LINk have been gathered by them through a series of activities including presentations to 14 local organisations ranging from patient groups and disability organisations to parish councils and managers of care homes, attendance at public meetings, an online survey and online discussion forum.

Overall comments on the proposals were:

- The CHC does not agree that the movement of obstetric and paediatric services to Telford is in the interest of Mid Wales patients.
- The CHC is not convinced that the proposals will strengthen the case to retain services in Shropshire as more specialist services require a greater the catchment area.
- T&W LINk report that most people consider that although not a perfect solution, what is being proposed appears to be logical, reasonable and fair.
- T&W LINk report that although people they have heard from would probably prefer a single site in the centre of the county, there is an urgent is to find a way forward that will ensure that services are safe and sustainable.
T&W LINk considers that the reality of financial constraints and the importance of ensuring that hospital care remains in the county, have persuaded most people that no further prevarication should be allowed to delay the implementation of the changes outlined.

**Support for proposals**

The CHC is pleased that clinical implications have been considered and propose that a better outcome should be available by creating single units.

T&W LINk report that the proposals to site the Maternity and Children’s Services at PRH and Acute/Emergency Surgery at RSH have been largely accepted as a ‘sensible’ way forward by the people they represent.

**Concerns about proposals**

The CHC is concerned that extending access, distance and time could be fatal and that the maternity pathway, while appearing to offer better outcomes for a greater number of the population, fails to address potentially worse outcomes for others, particularly from mid-Wales.

The CHC is concerned that there has been no whole system approach to the financial costings for proposals and also has concern about the demands that will be made on the ambulance services in Wales particularly in relation to situations that require rapid transfer due to an unforeseen emergency.

T&W LINk is keen to know what is being done to manage the existing risks to patient safety posed by the inadequate maternity unit facilities at RSH and it considers urgent action is required to address the shortcomings in stroke services and regrets a lack of tangible proposals in the consultation.

**Reassurance required**

- The CHC would like evidence of how equitable access to services will be managed for the catchment area as a whole, taking account of the road network and travel times.
- The CHC would like reassurance that the consultation is not a ‘done deal’, with no room for movement.
- T&W LINk would like reassurance that risk assessments are in place in relation to the existing maternity building and the constraint of a single operating theatre at RSH.
- T&W LINk would like a clinical service review of stroke services.
- T&W LINk would like reassurance that further engagement of patients and carers is undertaken before any changes are made to the current urology service.

**Health Organisations**

Written responses were received from Powys Teaching Health Board (Powys tHB) and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCU HB) and West Midlands Ambulance Service, who are working with Shrewsbury and Telford Hospitals NHS Trust to address some of the concerns raised in this report.
Should the proposals progress, BCU HB would seek to agree a planned way forward to address cross-border implications, and formal arrangements to ensure the Health Board would be in a position to meet any additional demand from residents of the current catchment area of the Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin areas.

Powys tHB does not fully support the proposals at this stage as it considers there are a number of concerns to be resolved. It does, however agree that:

> “Doing nothing is not an acceptable option and that change in a number of areas is necessary.”

**Support for proposals**

BCU HB acknowledges that the centralisation of vascular services is increasingly recognised as appropriate for delivery of a safe and high quality service with good outcomes for patients.

Powys tHB supports the moves proposed for surgery as they do not disadvantage Powys patients and “would be consistent with ensuring sustainable position in Shrewsbury.”

**Concerns about proposals**

Powys tHB considers that increased travel distance will have a disproportionate impact on young families and their relatives and BCU HB is concerned about the impact of additional travel time, if services are moved to PRH, particularly for high risk deliveries.

Powys tHB is concerned about the impact on Powys Ambulance Service and BCU HB considers that additional ambulance services would be required to mitigate risk caused by longer travel time in an emergency.

Powys tHB is concerned that its midwives would be spending longer out of their catchment area, which has resource implications, and that the change in site will disrupt established, effective relationships between the consultant-led RHS team and Powys midwives.

BCU HB is also concerned about the impact on patient flows – if for example surgical services were consolidated at Shrewsbury, would there be a potential risk of a patient travelling from Telford to Shrewsbury for care, and needing to travel back past Telford if more specialised care were needed?

West Midlands Ambulance Service is not able to support the proposed use of the air ambulance service as it is sometimes affected by adverse weather and does not operate at night.

**Reassurance required**

Powys tHB would like reassurance that there is a majority of clinical support for proposals, particularly for inpatient children’s services.
BCU HB seek assurance that there would be no unplanned detrimental impact on the services of the Health Board and consequently on its ability to respond effectively to the health needs of its population.

BCU HB would welcome reassurance that the ambulance services would have the capacity to ensure a safe response to the proposed new configuration and further discussion to ensure that patients arriving at either A&E department would receive a safe level of care. It would like to clarify that there is confidence that the proposed on-call arrangements would provide sufficient safe surgical cover for patients admitted as surgery emergencies.

5.2 Other key stakeholders

A range of other groups and individuals have made written responses to the proposals in the consultation. Their views have been collated and summarised against key themes.

Political representatives

Written responses were received from:
Daniel Kawczynski MP for Shrewsbury & Atcham
David Wright MP for Telford
Nicholas Bourne AM for Mid & West Wales
Mick Bates AM for Montgomeryshire
Kirsty Williams AC/AM Leader of Welsh Liberal Democrats
Wyn Williams AC Montgomeryshire Liberal Democrats
Newport Liberal Democrats
Cllr David Roberts of Shropshire Council

Support for proposals

The Newport Liberal Democrats supported the proposals as the best compromise in sharing services across the two sites.

David Wright MP welcomes that people will still be able to access most services at both sites and that A&E will be remain on both sites. He supports the move of some maternity services and inpatient paediatrics to PRH, to offer a centre of specialist services for the County. He broadly supports the proposals for surgery and considers, overall, that the proposals demonstrate ‘give and take’ across both sites and will make the best use of staff, equipment and buildings.

Daniel Kawczynski MP understands the need for re-configuration to maintain high standards of service.

Wyn Williams AC and Mick Bates AM both support the idea of a dedicated women and children’s unit as an excellent facility for the County, but they do not agree with the proposed location.
**Concerns about proposals**

Daniel Kawczynski MP, Mick Bates AM, Nicholas Bourne AM, Kirsty Williams AC/AM and Wyn Williams AC all oppose the proposal to move consultant-led maternity services and inpatient children’s services to the PRH, they would like them retained at RSH. Cllr Roberts is also opposed to the proposals to move consultant-led maternity services from RSH.

Concerns include increased journey times, increased risk to women, children and babies particularly from rural Shropshire and mid-Wales, increased pressure on the Welsh Ambulance Service, poor public transport and relocation or loss of the Rainbow Unit which Kirsty Williams AC/AM notes has been supported with locally raised funds to serve Shropshire and North Powys.

More than one respondent felt unable to support a change in services that they felt would lead to a poorer service for their constituents than the existing service. Nicholas Bourne AM and Kirsty Williams AC/AM both felt it would be detrimental to patients from North Powys and mid-Wales to move some women and children’s services to PRH, Wyn Williams felt it would create huge disadvantages for patients from South Shropshire, North Shropshire and mid-Wales, and Mick Bates reported that there is no support for those proposals from his constituents in Montgomeryshire.

Daniel Kawczynski MP was also concerned that the hospital Trust might lose skilled staff if they are asked to move to another site and that the removal of some maternity and inpatient children’s services from RSH would result in the Shrewsbury site being downgraded in future.

Cllr Roberts is concerned that the costings for an alternative, new maternity and neonatal unit at RSH may not have been fully ‘worked up’.

**Reassurance required**

Mick Bates AM and Wyn Williams AC would like to see proposals subject to rural-proofing and Daniel Kawczynski MP would like to be reassured that skilled staff will be retained.

**Local councils**

Written responses to the consultation were received from:

- Shropshire Council
- Telford & Wrekin Council
- Shrewsbury Town Council
- Oswestry Town Council
- Llanidloes Town Council
- Kerry Community Council
- Hadley & Leegomery Parish Council
- Tong Parish Council

There are a range of differing views from local councils on the proposed service changes.
Shropshire Council offers overall support for the proposals, subject to reassurances, however in the longer term would like one hospital, on one site, plus more community-based diagnostic services and treatments.

Telford & Wrekin Council passed the following motion with the support of all political groups:

“Subject to guarantees on safety and sustainability given by the Chief Executives of both the Shropshire and Telford PCTs, the Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust and the Royal College of Surgeon, Telford & Wrekin Council supports the proposals set out in the Public Consultation Document, “Keeping hospital services in Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin”. This will reconfigure services so that the two acute hospitals will continue to operate on existing sites in both Telford and Shrewsbury, providing safe, high quality care, each with 24 hour accident & emergency cover and an equitable division of other services on both sites.”

Llanidloes Town Council opposes the proposals to move services further away from their area, it considers them unsafe and unsustainable.

Oswestry Town Council considers services must be centrally located and take account of the lack of public transport facilities for people from North Shropshire and mid-Wales. It is also concerned that services might be lost to the County if reconfiguration does not go ahead.

Shrewsbury Town Council reiterates that Shrewsbury is the service ‘hub’ for the County and, together with Shropshire council, agrees that ‘doing nothing’ is no longer an option.

Hadley & Leegomery Parish Council supports proposals and considers they appear to have been well thought out and have a sound basis.

**Support for proposals**

Oswestry and Shrewsbury Town Councils accept the level of service needs to improve and support the need to secure hospital services in both Shrewsbury and Telford. They also support proposals for surgery and the development of a centre of excellence for the County and welcome the Midwife Led Unit at RSH supported by specialist ‘flying squad’. They both support the consolidation of inpatient children’s services on one site but would like that to be RSH and they would prefer urology and stroke services to be located at RSH.

Hadley & Leegomery Parish Council strongly supports a full children’s inpatient service at PRH.

**Concerns about proposals**

Kerry Community Council has the following concerns:

- Increase in travelling time for Maternity and Children’s Services unacceptable, in
particular for anyone without their own transport.

- The impact of taking services further away from patients, would have greatest effect on those least able to afford it.
- Already stretched Ambulance service facing greater turnaround time, leaving patients vulnerable.

Llanidloes Town Council, Oswestry Town Council and Shrewsbury Town Council are all concerned that increased distance and journey time is putting patients at risk, especially with poor roads and lack of public transport. Llanidloes Town Council believes the proposals disadvantage people in mid-Wales and that services should be accessible at RSH.

Oswestry and Shrewsbury Town Councils are concerned that proposals are financially driven instead of needs led, they are opposed to moving inpatient children’s services to PRH and concerned about financial robustness of the plans. They are also opposed to proposals to move consultant-led maternity services to PRH, with travel times the main concern and they are concerned about the potential loss of facilities supported by the voluntary sector (Rainbow Unit).

**Reassurance required**

Shropshire Council, Oswestry Town Council and Shrewsbury Town Council would like reassurance that 24/7 paediatric assessment will continue at RSH.

Oswestry and Shrewsbury Town Councils want reassurance that Ambulance services will be improved to guarantee safe transfer times, especially for patients from North Shropshire and mid-Wales. Shropshire Council wants reassurance that potential risks to women requiring emergency access to obstetric care from across the County will be mitigated.

Telford & Wrekin Council would like to be assured that there will be sufficiency of trained specialist surgeons longer term, to ensure the sustainability of the proposed services and that proposed transport measures to address expressed concerns are sustainable.

**Voluntary organisations**

34 members of voluntary and community organisations1 (VCOs) from across the County have completed and returned a feedback form to share their views on the proposals. 7 additional meetings have been held with specific voluntary organisations, on request, and the Telford & Wrekin Senior Citizens Forum has submitted a written response to the consultation.

A common view across voluntary organisations is that a system must in place for people travelling or transferring in an emergency before changes happen.

Telford & Wrekin Older People’s Forum accepts the need to rationalise services between the two hospital sites, as their preferred option of a new hospital is not feasible.

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1 Where people identified as both ‘patient’ and ‘voluntary organisation’ on the consultation questionnaire, their responses have been collated as ‘patient’.
Support for proposals

Voluntary organisations support the following elements of the proposals:
- Retaining Services in the county
- Proposals reflect population trends
- Improvements to buildings and services for children’s and maternity services
- Urology & Stroke proposals offer the best care from available resources

Telford & Wrekin Older People’s Forum generally supports the proposals, subject to transport considerations, especially for people in the west of the County and Powys.

Concerns about proposals

Voluntary organisations have the following concerns:
- Travelling times and distances for sick children
- How the changes may affect families both in terms of caring for and visiting their sick child and the impact this may have on other children in the family
- How road conditions, weather and public & emergency transport may affect journeys and journey times
- Increased travel times for women in labour
- Moves services away from Shrewsbury
- Travel and distance for people in Wales and South Shropshire
- Surgery, Stroke and Urology services need to be accessible for older people

Reassurance required

Voluntary organisations would like proposals linked to a clear transport plan that includes clear Ambulance response times and regular, accessible and affordable transport arrangements between the two sites to support relatives, friends and staff. They would also like better public transport and for people to access support with transport.

Voluntary organisations would like consideration of more services being delivered locally, for instance Stroke services or providing additional surgical services at Bridgnorth Community Hospital. They would like specialist support offered to GP practices.
Some organisations mentioned the importance of having Urology services near to the older population and Telford & Wrekin Older People’s Forum would like reassurance there will be sufficient car parking at both sites to cope with increased capacity.

**Disabled groups**

Shropshire Parent and Carer Council, who support parents and carers of disabled children and those with special needs, have submitted a written response to the consultation and meetings were held with disabled groups Listen Not Label and Taking Part.

PACC members are ‘Strongly against’ the proposed move of inpatients children’s services to PRH but acknowledge that facilities at RSH need to be improved.

**Support for proposals**

In general, Listen Not Label members are comfortable about the proposed changes but uncomfortable about communication between health and social care.

One PACC member considered a specialist unit would provide better resources and equipment.

**Concerns about proposals**

There was a concern at the Taking Part that moving services to a different hospital could impact on learning disabled patients’ ability to communicate. The feeling was that the local hospital is more likely to be somewhere familiar for a learning disabled person, where they might be known, which helps with communication.

There were general concerns about transport, additional distance and travel times and the impact in terms of the risk to recovery, financial cost and the lack of availability of public transport to make the journey. Concern was also expressed at the Taking Part meeting about emergency maternity transfers from North Shropshire, when low risk births becomes high risk and what impact the longer distance might have on outcomes.

At the Listen Not Label meeting, there was also a concern from carers about systems and services. If people in Telford & Wrekin are accessing social services e.g. if they have learning disabilities, but then they have to go to hospital in Shrewsbury, what impact will this have on their care?

The issue was raised that communication can be difficult if people have a hearing disability and Listen Not Label members wanted to know if tele-care would be in different formats.

PACC members were concerned about the separation of acute paediatrics and acute surgery, they consider they should be on the same site, and they were also concerned about the relocation or loss of the Rainbow Unit, feeling local people would be less inclined to support another unit. Members are also concerned about the fragmentation of services and the lack of specialist paediatric support for A&E, particularly during the night.
**NHS staff**

111 members of NHS staff\(^2\) have completed and returned a feedback form to share their views on the proposals, there have been some consultation meetings with staff and a written response to the consultation was received from Powys tHB Supervisors of Midwives.

Chart 34: Overall proposals

![Chart showing distribution of responses: Strongly against (39), Against (17), No opinion (2), Support (25), Strongly support (28)]

**Support for proposals**

The following points summarise comments from NHS staff across all services in the consultation:

- Moving inpatient children’s services and consultant-led maternity to Telford is in line with population trends and need
- Proposals will result in more qualified doctors, better facilities and improved services including centres of clinical excellence for the County offering best practice
- Urology & Stroke offered on one site will provide the best care from available resources.

**Concerns about proposals**

NHS staff expressed the following concerns about the proposals:

- Impact on safety due to extra travel time and distance for patients including high risk women/complicated labour, especially from rural areas and mid-Wales, and transfers from RSH to PR. Also, Powys midwives and ambulance crews will be out of County for longer periods.
- Removal of inpatient paediatrics from RSH and paediatric cover in A&E
- Removal of children’s oncology ward from RSH
- The separation of paediatrics from acute surgery services
- Powys supervisors of midwives are opposed to the development of an obstetric flying squad as they consider it is likely to lead to a delay in emergency treatment while waiting for the flying squad to arrive in Powys.

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\(^2\) Where people identified as both ‘patient’ or ‘member of the public’ and ‘NHS staff’ on the consultation questionnaire, their responses have been collated as ‘NHS staff’.
Reassurance required

NHS staff would like to be reassured that the quality of service will not be compromised by the proposed changes. Many would like existing children’s and maternity services to be retained at Shrewsbury.

Staff would like to see a more detailed plan for transition between sites and for the public transport issue to be addressed.

Some would like more on-call surgeons and some would like to see Stroke / CVA care in community hospitals – the Hub & Spoke model – and Urology services delivered close to older people.

5.3 Other public responses

Public Meetings & Question Time events

Across the County 8 public meetings and question time events were held, these meetings were attended by at least 632 people. See Appendix 3 for a list of public meetings. The following points summarise comments from public meetings.

Support for the proposals

People who supported the proposals felt that overall they were fair and designed to keep services in the County, and that the proposals for inpatient children’s and maternity services reflected the demography of the County.

Concerns about the proposals

The following concerns were raised in public meetings:

- The impact of additional travel times and distances generally on patients and more specifically for unplanned/ emergency admissions for children and women in labour, (both to reach a service, or, if an emergency transfer is needed).
- Journey times are likely to be longer if there are poor weather or road conditions.
- Will people choose to go out of the County for treatment e.g. Wrexham or Hereford rather than cope with additional travelling times?
- Shrewsbury is in middle of County and easier for rural and Welsh communities to get to.
- Do the additional travelling distances make giving birth in a midwife led unit a safe option for women (who would face a longer journey to the consultant led unit) should any unexpected complications arise.
- Additional travelling will cost more and may not be affordable.
- Parking and parking charges.
- The risks associated with separating the children’s unit from acute surgery.
- The loss of public investment in the children’s oncology unit.

3 For some of the meetings attendance numbers were not recorded.
- Paediatricians not supporting the proposals.
- No surgical cover for A&E at both hospital sites.

Reassurance Required

Attendees at public meetings identified the following areas:

- The children’s oncology unit will be continue (even if moved to Telford) with no reduction/change in standards of care.
- Public transport links will be improved both to and between hospitals so that people without a car can access services.
- That the potential to offer outpatients appointments in the wider community is explored.
- That a full risk assessment is undertaken with the ambulance service on both capacity and travel/transfer times and that any additional investment in ambulance services/air ambulances is made.

Additional Meetings

In addition to the public meetings, 24 additional meetings were held to discuss the proposals. These meetings were attended by 160 people/members of the public, 54 medical practitioners and 66 elected members/parish councillors. See Appendix 3 for a full list of meetings.

The following points summarise the comments from these meetings.

Support for the proposals

People who supported the proposals felt they were balanced; were the most appropriate solution to the issues identified and as such should deliver high standards of care. People felt that doing nothing was not an option, and that the proposals matched population trends and need across the County.

Concerns about the proposals

- How additional travel times would affect patients from across the County. What would happen to women who need emergency transfer during labour? If air ambulances were going to be used to overcome some of the difficulties created by additional distance what would happen if weather conditions prevented flying?
- General concerns about parking at both hospital sites.
- Whether the proposals were still viable with the move to GP commissioning.
- Will post-op outpatients clinics be held as now or will Mid Wales patients have to go to Telford for some clinics?

For some meetings numbers attending were not recorded.
Reassurance Required

- A shuttle bus operating between hospital sites
- Information on what PFI and funding issues have been pursued.
- Whether it would be possible to develop a volunteer driver scheme.
- Will the proposals result in more home births rather than hospital births?
- Will people be able to choose give birth Wrexham rather than Telford?
- Are there sufficient trained midwives to cover all of the County?
- Faster turn round times for ambulances.

Letters and emails

44 letters and emails have been received from a range of people including patients, members of the public, current and retired NHS staff, Parish Councils, UNITE, voluntary and community organisations.

Support for the proposals

In general, people in support of the proposals made quite short comments, just stating that they supported the proposals or that they seem sensible, cogent, are a good compromise and/or the best option in the current financial climate. Some supporters think the proposals will strengthen hospital services and help to keep them in the County.

Concerns about the proposals

Many of the letters and comments opposing the proposals are long and detailed, making a series of points. Some of them include long descriptions of personal experiences especially around maternity and paediatric services.

The key concerns expressed are:
- Additional travelling time and distance, particularly from rural areas and mid-Wales, to access inpatient children’s and maternity services at PRH, and especially in emergencies, putting lives at risk.
- Concern about the lack of public transport routes to Telford from some areas.
- The relocation of children’s oncology ward would make the Rainbow Unit, supported by public fundraising activities, redundant.
- Shrewsbury being seen as the ‘hub’ of the County and perceived by many people of as the central location for services.

Reassurance required

- That the potential to add an additional storey onto the existing buildings been fully explored.
- Developing a new hospital on a new site would be a better option.
- Will volunteer driver/community car schemes be put in place.
- Improved public transport links to both hospital sites, with a shuttle bus operating between sites.
- Clear communication to GPs and ambulance services about where to go for services to avoid unnecessary delays.
6. Relating consultation findings to assessment criteria

It was the role of the Assurance Panel to assess the proposals for change that are the subject of this consultation against the 4 criteria known as the ‘Lansley Test’ and the 3 additional local criteria. The Panel, which included hospital consultants, GPs, other health professionals and patient representatives, reviewed the evidence against the criteria to test the proposals.

This report provides direct evidence for the first 2 Lansley Test criteria and indirect evidence for some of the other criteria, although the consultation process was not specifically designed to capture people’s views on these themes. However, NHS staff, including clinicians, and GPs have responded to the consultation and where there have been comments related to the assessment criteria, they have been summarised in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Lansley Test</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Strengthened Patient and Public Engagement</td>
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<tr>
<td>There have been 3 main elements of Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) in the consultation on the proposals to re-organise hospital services in Shropshire, Telford &amp; Wrekin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) This report provides detailed evidence from the responses of patients, the general public, voluntary organisations, NHS staff and other stakeholders to the proposals in the consultation document. It includes information to show the proportion of respondents to the population as a whole across the county and mid-Wales. It records the range of opportunities people have had to express their views about the proposals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) The work of the Engagement and Consultation Governance Group also demonstrates PPI in the planning and implementation of the consultation process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) The third element is the additional consultative work undertaken by The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust, with patients and groups, to respond to concerns expressed during the consultation period and develop the proposals further, which is being presented separately.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Support of GP commissioners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPs have been engaged throughout the process to develop the proposals, at clinical workshops, and to assess them at the Assurance Panel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written responses to the consultation were received from the North East Locality Commissioning Board, the Shrewsbury Commissioning Group and the Montgomery Medical Practice. The proposals were also discussed at meetings of the Local Medical Committee (LMC) for Shropshire, Telford &amp; Wrekin, Shropshire NHS PCT Professional Executive Committee and Telford &amp; Wrekin PCT Professional Executive Committee.</td>
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</table>
3. Clarity on the clinical evidence base

The consultation questionnaire did not ask people for views about clinical evidence, however a few people, including 1 from a voluntary organisation and a staff member, specifically said that the decisions to re-organise hospital services should be clinically led. The fact that proposals were developed based on clinical evidence was welcomed by the JHOSC in its formal response to the consultation.

4. Consistency with current and prospective patient choice

The consultation questionnaire did not ask people for views about patient choice but a key theme relating to choice, mentioned by members of the public and some political representatives, was the feeling that Telford residents already have more choice than, for example people in South Shropshire or Wales, because they can access Wolverhampton, Birmingham or Stafford hospitals relatively easily, and that the proposals reduced the choice of people in rural areas and Powys & Wales. In contrast, some people were aware they could choose to go elsewhere to give birth or for surgery.

Local criteria

5. Clinical safety

Although this was not a specific question in the consultation questionnaire, there were 50+ comments from patients, members of the general public and voluntary organisations about clinical safety related to concerns about transfers to hospitals or from one site to another in emergencies. Some NHS staff members who responded to the consultation document identified the same concerns, particularly for patients from rural areas and mid-Wales. This issue was also raised at 4 public meetings, 1 meeting with an interest group and 1 meeting of Powys County Council. Some people felt clinical safety was important in the decision-making process.

6. Robustness and sustainability

The JHOSC, Montgomeryshire CHC, Telford & Wrekin Council and Shropshire Council all reiterated the importance of the proposals being sustainable, or their concerns that services may not be sustainable, in their formal responses to the consultation.

7. Financial viability

This was not a specific theme of the consultation but the issue of financial viability was raised at 3 meetings with interest groups who asked if the proposals would still be economically viable, or go ahead, with the move to GP Consortia commissioning. Formal respondents who required reassurance of financial viability or that funding would be in place for workforce development and other costs, as well as capital works, included the JHOSC, Montgomeryshire CHC and Shropshire Council.
7. Conclusion

This independently produced report presents the findings from the consultation and as such it includes a representative selection of the comments and opinions expressed during the public consultation on the proposed changes to hospital services in Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin, together with the views of other stakeholders. It does not speculate upon the reasons for the views given, other than those stated by respondents, it simply presents a balanced summary of the responses received.

Merida associates

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