

Briefing on Covid-19 Response

8 June 2020

Current Covid-19 impact and our response

- We have seen a sustained levelling off of Covid-19 cases in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire over recent weeks, in line with the national and regional picture.
- Plans are being developed to manage any future localised outbreaks in the area. These are being led by Local Authorities as part of the NHS Test and Trace programme.
- We are currently in phase 2 of our incident response, Restoration, which involves returning critical NHS services back to operation.
- After restoration we will go through a longer-term process of Recovery, which will involve re-establishing the wider set of NHS services. We will look to retain some of the positive changes that have been made in response to the pandemic, such as the creation of a single hospital discharge process and better use of phone and video consultations.

Impact on local services

- We have seen some positive and proactive patient behaviour in response to Covid-19. For example, we are seeing less inappropriate attendances at A&E and greater use of community pharmacy and the 111 service.
- At the same time, we are concerned that we are not seeing patients in some care settings for genuine health concerns. This includes people not presenting at their GP and not accessing support for low to moderate mental health concerns.
- We are pushing the national 'help us, help you' campaign, which reassures the public that the NHS is open and should be accessed for health concerns.
- We are starting to see a rise in attendances at GP Practices and at A&E.
- We have made a number of temporary local service changes in response to national guidance. This includes changes that have been specifically mandated and changes we have made in response to local circumstances.
- We are currently working with NHSE/I and our partners to identify which of these changes need to be prioritised for immediate reversal. Where we have made changes that are in line with the NHS Long Term Plan ambitions, and deliver better health outcomes for local people, we will be initiating conversations with local stakeholders on the potential of making these permanent.

Current impact on care homes and support being provided

- We are supporting care homes with training, infection prevention and control and with advice to minimise overall cases and outbreaks.

- We are providing financial support and are communicating regularly with care homes across the area, providing opportunities for peer-to-peer support and providing webinars and regular newsletters.
- A toolkit has been developed, which care home and homecare staff can use as a reference guide to a range of key issues including correct use of PPE; infection prevention and control; medications and symptom management and more.
- A bank of Healthcare Assistants to support care homes has been established.

Testing of staff and the public

- We have established testing for residents and staff in all care homes, coordinated through our Testing Coordination Centre and 0300 number.
- If either a resident or staff member starts to display symptoms of coronavirus, then the whole home of residents and staff will be tested – whether they are showing symptoms or not.
- The Test and Trace programme has now been rolled out locally. Any person developing symptoms of Covid-19 can quickly be tested and their recent contact with other people recorded so that those who may have come into contact with someone who has had Covid-19 can be notified.
- We are currently working to roll out anti-body testing, which identifies if a person has had Covid-19, across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. Anti-body tests provide valuable information for monitoring the impact of Covid-19, but will not inform a person's clinical care.
- Anti-body tests require blood samples to be taken by trained professionals. We are therefore working to increase our phlebotomy capacity to manage the additional demand.
- We are currently prioritising testing of staff in all patient-facing acute hospital areas.

Restoration and recovery of NHS services

- Restoration is the second phase of our response to Covid-19. We have developed a restoration plan for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, which aims to re-establish NHS services in a safe way. This means ensuring that staff and patients are not at risk of infection from Covid-19 when using services and ensuring the public know that services are open and safe to access.
- Our hospitals have adopted stringent plans for infection control, for example creating Covid areas and non-Covid areas.
- PPE is also a major focus of restoration and we will continue to coordinate distribution to where it is needed most, keeping in place the logistics arrangements that were established to during phase 1 of our response.
- We are also working as a whole system to find ways to pool our workforce so that staff can be deployed to the areas where they are most needed.