

WINTER PLAN

SOUTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST

2023 OVERVIEW

The Plan is based around three regional high impact areas:

- Maximising ambulance capacity
- Reducing time spent by patients in emergency departments awaiting clinical decision and next stage of care
- Timely hospital discharge for patients who are medically fit for discharge.

Maximise ambulance capacity

Regional High Impact areas

- Explore the potential for Clinical Mental Health expertise input into the ambulance control room.
- Provide alternative 'Front Door' service options to the Emergency Departments (ED).
- Support the GPs to deliver the NI Local Enhanced Services for GP Proactive Care for Nursing and Residential Homes.
- Endeavour to protect Ambulance Handover Areas in our acute hospitals to support NIAS (HALO).
- Provide a range of Acute Respiratory same day assessments.
- Support the management of the frail elderly to avoid hospital admissions.

Key Priorities

- Direct GP and Care Home Placement referrals to Emergency Department via the Acute Care at Home Team between the hours of 9.00a.m. until 5.00p.m.
- Prioritise and enhance Frailty, Respiratory and Cardiology same day assessment and develop ambulatory pathways with direct access for GPs.
- Establish a community Respiratory Virtual Ward.
- Provide Northern Ireland Ambulance Service (NIAS) direct access to Phone First

Reduce time spent in ED

Regional High Impact areas

- Redirect patients to the appropriate service.
- Provide prompt support to the Emergency Department by specialty including mental health liaison/crisis response services.

Key Priorities

- Establish a new front door triage before access to the Emergency Department.
- Integration of Phone First/Urgent Care Centre (UCC) and GP Out of Hours to provide 24/7 urgent care.
- Open a new Urgent Care Centre on the Daisy Hill Hospital site and provide direct GP referral to the Urgent Care Centres.
- Develop and enhance a range of alternative care pathways to admission.
- Provide earlier specialty assessment and review of Decisions to Admit.
- Flex paediatric support to the Emergency Department.
- Consistent use of frailty identification at Hospital presentation.
- Maximise flow out of the Emergency Department via three additional beds per ward.
- Provide NIAS with on-going Mental Health Home Treatment/Crisis Response phone triage.
- Continue to provide 24/7 mental health liaison services to the Emergency Department

Timely hospital discharge

Regional High Impact areas

- Improve the management of simple and complex discharges.
- Increase and maximise domiciliary care, increase bed capacity in care homes and increase and maximise core community beds.

Key Priorities

- Establish a Single Discharge Team.
- Promote patient choice and manage the escalation process when the patients first option is not available.
- Pilot a Single Handed Care Approach within domiciliary care.
- Maximise use of statutory residential care homes.
- Increase the volume of beds held within the independent sector.
- Increase domiciliary care provision through recruitment.
- Establish Early Review Team for domiciliary care.
- Focus to increase patient discharges at the weekend.
- Continue to promote and enhance Trust discharge initiatives.
- Ensure the patient discharge lounges on both hospital sites are effectively utilised to support timely discharge and improve hospital flow.
- Enhance pharmacy early discharge planning on the wards.
- Patients deemed medically fit for discharge subject to diagnostics will receive priority testing and assessment.
- Continue to provide British Red Cross Hospital to Home.

Protecting elective care

Focus on Service Delivery Plan target activity and associated recovery plans via our Elective Services Improvement Project

Ensure elective theatre capacity is maximised.

KEY ENABLERS

Protecting and promoting staff health

Trust wellbeing programme 'U Matter'.
 Planning staff leave/staff breaks.
 Flu and vaccination programmes for staff.
 Occupational Health targeted sickness absence work.

Leadership

Trust Surge and Business Continuity Plans
 Manage and ensure appropriate staffing levels for the safe delivery of service.

Preparation for Industrial Action

Industrial Action Working Group / Incident Management Response function and identified control room co-ordination hub in place.
 Business Continuity Plans and Action Cards reviewed to include industrial action impact assessment and contingency
 Engagement with Unions on exclusion arrangements.

Monitoring and reporting

Enhanced command and control arrangements supporting appropriate implementation of escalation process and continuity plans
 Implementation of agreed protocols - Escalate nurse staffing protocols, non-designated beds protocol