Update  14th September 2015

Proposals for Future Services at Townlands Hospital, Henley-on-Thames

Thank you to everyone who took the time to give their feedback to our public consultation on the proposals for future services at Townlands, as part of the redevelopment of the site and the creation of new health facilities. More information on the consultation and the background to the proposals can be found on the CCG’s website  
www.oxfordshireccg.nhs.uk/about-us/work-programmes/townlands-hospital-consultation/

The purpose of this update is to let you know how work has progressed since the consultation closed in mid-June, to describe in more detail the clinical services that are being planned and explain the decision making process.

David Smith
Chief Officer, Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group

Plans for Townlands Rapid Access Care Unit given clinical support, but with conditions

Decisions about plans to improve and change services are taken by the CCG’s Governing Body. The members of the Governing Body are GPs, lay members, executive directors and representatives from public health, adult social care and external medical specialists.

On 30 July, the CCG’s Governing Body approved a recommendation to endorse the clinical model proposed for Townlands Hospital which includes the transfer of all existing services, an expansion of the number of services offered and implementation of a new ambulatory care service. It also asked for further assurances to be made before it is able to make a final decision.

The proposed new ambulatory care service will use a combination of assessment, treatment and rehabilitation both at Townlands and in patients’ own homes. A consultant/GP led Rapid Access Care Unit (RACU) at Townlands, will support the delivery of this type of progressive care for patients.
Patients that are suitable for ambulatory care do not require emergency admission to a hospital bed, but expert diagnostic assessment and/or timely treatment provided as an outpatient so that they can be assessed and treated on the same day. Patients suitable for ambulatory care may also require a short period of inpatient care in an intermediate care bed (step up) to enable the patient’s condition to stabilise before being discharged home.

The Governing Body decided that it would endorse the clinical model proposed and note the consultation responses. Having carefully considered the range of views expressed in the consultation, it asked the CCG to carry out further work on a number of areas before its next meeting on 24 September 2015. This included further development of the service transition plan, the proposals for the provision of beds at Townlands and the staffing arrangements.

The Governing Body also asked that the CCG took the opportunity for further engagement with stakeholders.


The members of the Governing Body will meet again on 24 September 2015 to receive and consider the further information it has requested so that it can make its final decision. Further details of this meeting can be found on the CCG’s website [www.oxfordshireccg.nhs.uk/get-involved/boardmeetings/](http://www.oxfordshireccg.nhs.uk/get-involved/board-meetings/).

**What is a Rapid Access Care Unit (RACU)?**

The proposed new Rapid Access Care Unit (RACU) at Townlands will assess and treat those patients who have become unwell or have a health condition that has deteriorated but does not need emergency treatment or urgent admission to an acute hospital (such as the Royal Berkshire Hospital NHS Foundation Trust or Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust). The unit will help people at an earlier stage with the aim of keeping them well and out of hospital for longer.

The service will be available to people living in Oxfordshire although we expect that the main users of the unit will be those patients registered within the five Oxfordshire GP practices in and around the Henley area (The Bell Surgery, Red Cross Road Surgery, The Hart Surgery, Sonning Common Health Centre and Nettlebed Surgery). The service will be for patients who are over the age of 18, although it is anticipated that the majority of people who are likely to need the support of the RACU will be over the age of 65.

It is proposed the unit will be open seven days a week, from 8am to 8pm, 365 days a year. It will be run by a consultant/GP who will run appointment clinics each morning, six days a week. They will be supported by a team of health and social care professionals with a range
of specialised skills and expertise, which includes community nurses, physiotherapy and occupational therapy practitioners, social care staff, hospital and mental health staff. All staff working at the RACU will be trained in dementia care.

The service will offer next day appointments, although the unit will be able to accommodate same day appointments if there is capacity and if the referral is clinically appropriate. Patients attending the RACU will be assessed and then, depending on their needs, receive diagnostic tests, for example x-ray, or treatments such as intravenous antibiotics all on the same day.

It is important to note that this is not an emergency service. A number of health problems are best dealt with by patients going directly to a main hospital – these include suspected strokes, seizures, cardiac chest pain or significant head injuries.

As well as receiving same day assessment and treatment, if it is needed, patients who are discharged will receive follow up care at home or come back to the unit for follow up appointments.

If it is felt that a patient needs a little more time under the care of the RACU before they can be discharged, they will be admitted to what is known as an intermediate care bed. Intermediate care beds will be available in the Orders of St John Care Trust (OSJCT) home, which will also be part of the Townlands health campus. Anyone who is admitted to one of these beds will be looked after by appropriately trained nurses and have in-reach support from the RACU team. The beds would be situated in individual rooms located within the care home.

In addition to admission from the ambulatory RACU unit, these beds will be available for patients who no longer need care on an acute hospital ward, but who would benefit from bed based care and support to further their recovery and maximise their independence before going home.

Our aim is for patients who are being discharged from hospital but need some further support to have this provided to them in their own homes. This is because clinical evidence has shown that people recover and gain their independence more quickly under this model of care.

We expect that we will need to have up to eight beds available at the Orders of St John Care Trust home with the ability to increase that number to 14 beds as demand requires.

**What other services will be available at Townlands?**

There will also be a range of other services delivered at Townlands when the new building opens towards the end of 2015 – including a mixture of those services currently being provided plus new services and an expansion of existing ones.
There will be an expansion of outpatient clinics giving patients the choice of being seen locally, rather than having to travel further afield to the Royal Berkshire Hospital and there will be an increase in capacity of the diagnostic services. Patients will also be able to access the full range of services currently provided by the minor injuries unit and the out-of-hours GP service.

The following services will also continue to be provided as part of the health campus: X-Ray and ultrasound services, podiatry, physiotherapy, speech and language services and general dental services which are commissioned by NHS England including; specialist care dentistry, dental access for urgent care, sedation and oral surgery and services complementary to high street dentistry.

What further engagement has there been following the Governing Body's meeting at the end of July?

In accordance with the Governing Body's request for the CCG to further engage with stakeholders, it has been working with John Howell MP for Henley and a number of organisations and individuals, including:

- The Henley Townlands Steering Group
- Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust
- Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust
- Henley GPs (Bell and Hart surgeries)
- South Central Ambulance Service
- Oxfordshire County Council
- Order of St John Care Trust

The CCG has twice met with John Howell MP and members of the Townlands Steering Group to discuss a number of the group’s concerns with a further meeting scheduled 15th September. As well as these two meetings, the CCG has participated in several smaller working groups with the Steering Group and answered a number of questions submitted by representatives of the group.

The CCG has made a number of concessions and improvements to the model reflecting the feedback received, including the rapid care access unit being open longer than originally planned. It also confirmed that the number of intermediate care beds in the care home could be up to 14, should they be needed.

During the transition period, between the RACU opening at Townlands towards the end of this year and the OSJCT home opening in the summer of next year, it is proposed intermediate care beds will be provided at Wallingford community hospital. Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust has also committed to providing transport for friends and family unable to travel to Wallingford on their own during the during the transition period from Henley to Wallingford.

The CCG will continue to engage with stakeholders to ensure there is an ongoing dialogue to address issues and concerns.
What are the next steps?

The CCG’s Governing Body will meet in public on Thursday 24th September between 2pm and 5pm at Jubilee House, 5510 John Smith Drive, Cowley, Oxford, OX4 2LH.

Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting to listen to the discussion.

For those who are unable to make it to the meeting itself, a video of the Governing Body’s consideration of the further work on Townlands will be uploaded to the CCG’s website.

A copy of the CCG’s Townlands paper and supporting information will be available on the CCG’s website a week before the Governing Body meeting. All information about these proposals can be found online at www.oxfordshireccg.nhs.uk/about-us/work-programmes/townlands-hospital-consultation/