



Community Engagement Update

August 2020

Hello

My first few months at Medway have flown by and I have really enjoyed meeting with the many community groups and organisations providing vital support for our communities in Medway and Swale. The range of services offered is vast, from much needed foodbanks and befriending services to help with training and support. The resulting community spirit is most welcome during these uncertain times and I would like to especially thank the groups and representatives that I have met with so far:

Action for Pulmonary Fibrosis, Carers First, Diversity House (Swale), Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Medway African and Caribbean Association, Medway Community Faith Forum, Medway Community Network, Medway Council and Youth Council representatives, Medway Dementia Action Alliance, Medway Home Improvement Agency, Medway Neurological Network, Medway Parent and Carers Forum, Medway Voluntary Action, Motor Neurone Disease Association, Swale Community Empowerment Network, Swale Patient Liaison Group

Examples of questions raised at meetings include:

Why were face masks not in place in April?

Government guidance stated that all staff in hospitals in England were to be provided with surgical masks to wear from 15 June and all visitors and outpatients must wear face coverings at all times.

What is the guidance for wearing face coverings in the hospital?

[This link](#) explains that there are groups that do not need to wear a face covering if they have breathing difficulties, experiences severe discomfort or distress e.g. severe claustrophobia, has anatomical difficulties that would make wearing a face covering impossible or painful e.g. facial injuries and children under the age of three.

Is there a liaison service for patients with Motor Neurone Disease (MND) in the hospital?

There is not a specific MND liaison within the hospital. As there are various specialised clinics (respiratory, neurology, dietitian, endoscopy etc.) anyone requiring support would need to go through to their clinician directly.

Please can you let us know what is happening with the dermatology service?

An update from the NHS Kent and Medway CCG website on [dermatology](#) was provided.

What funding is offered for public Governors?

Our Constitution states under Council of Governors – travel expenses: Governors shall not receive remuneration for acting as Governors but may receive expenses as provided for in this paragraph. The Trust may pay travelling and other expenses to Governors at rates determined by the Trust from time to time.

Can you please attend our meeting with a clinician paediatrician?

A Paediatric Emergency Medicine Registrar has agreed to deliver a future session around Covid-19 and the impact it has on children with the Medway and Parent Carers Forum.

What support is offered in hospital for over 18's with autism and challenging behaviour?

Our learning disability team offers support for those with autism. The Trust is expected to make reasonable adjustments and help those who need support in a person centred approach and our Learning Disability Nurses not only train staff, but also help by acting as a liaison between the patient,

family or carer and healthcare staff as a patient advocate. This includes supporting anyone that has been admitted and you can contact the Learning Disability Nurses on 01634 830000.

Does the Trust support the Parkinson's UK 'Get it on Time' campaign?

We confirmed that the lead Parkinson's Nurse is actively supporting the campaign and working hard to ensure wards are supported, aware and reminded to give patients their medication on time. There is also an improved process in place for neurological prescriptions to be offered electronically.

Please can the 'Behind the Scenes Tour' and 'Teddy Bear Clinic' be filmed and made available online?

These requests have been raised and we hope to be able to provide this in the near future.

Can carers or family members who support the patient, attend appointments at the hospital?

[This link](#) explains that the Trust asks you please attend alone for your appointment unless you are a parent/guardian bringing your child to an appointment, a carer or require an escort.

Is there going to be a temperature check at the entrance for patients?

Please see Trust News update below.

Trust News:

We are pleased to have reinstated patient visiting on some wards, with conditions, from Monday 17 August. To ensure the smooth and safe transition of visitors back to site, we have introduced the following **guidelines for visitors**:

- One visitor (close family member or loved one) per patient will be allowed. Please note that this must be the same visitor for the duration of the patient's stay in hospital. Two visitors from the same household or bubble may be allowed in exceptional circumstances, such as patients receiving end of life care or where the visitor needs assistance. This must be arranged with the nurse in charge of the ward in advance by telephone.
- All visitors must be symptom free and not under any self-isolation conditions.
- Social distancing stewards will be at the main entrance to greet and verify visitors.
- Visitors will have their temperature checked on arrival and contact details taken for track and trace purposes.
- Visitors must wear masks during their visit and practice good hand hygiene at all times.
- Visiting times will be for one hour only, with staggered sessions for each ward (see below for ward details).
- Bed curtains will be drawn around beds in bays to maintain a physical distance between visitors.



Unfortunately we cannot allow visiting on wards where vulnerable patients are being cared for. On these wards, we will continue our process of enabling patients and family members to keep in touch via email, phone and video calling where appropriate. Please click [this link](#) for the visiting arrangements for each ward.

Our **election of the Council of Governors** opened on [Wednesday 19 August 2020](#) for the Medway Public Governor seats and the election will close on Monday 14 September at 5pm. If you are a member of the Trust and live in Medway, you should have received voting papers – let us know if you haven't. The Returning Officer for these elections is Richard Jones, Civica Election Services, The Election Centre, 33 Clarendon Road, London N8 0NW. Further elections will take place in 2021. If you are interested in standing for future elections do [contact us](#).

The Trust Board approved [Our Medway Improvement Plan](#) and we would like to thank everyone who took the time to provide feedback on the draft plan either at our member event or directly to us. Now is the time for us to deliver this plan and the care that the people of Medway and Swale deserve. We look forward to sharing the plan at an official launch in September.

At the beginning of May, we began plans to **restart our routine surgeries, outpatients and diagnostic services safely**, while continuing to manage the COVID-19 challenge. We restarted our non-emergency surgery service on 29 June and we are now in the position to be able to offer surgery dates for patients who unfortunately had their procedures cancelled.

During this time, we continued to treat patients who required urgent care and patients receiving cancer treatment, and we were able to offer many outpatient appointments via telephone or video call. Unfortunately, we had to postpone planned surgeries and were unable to accept many routine referrals for diagnostic tests.

We have also been able to increase the number of face to face outpatient appointments on site to 70 per cent of our pre-pandemic capacity. The reduced capacity is due to rules around social distancing, and the remaining 30 per cent of patients continue to be offered virtual appointments, which worked successfully during the peak of the pandemic.



Going forward patients may be offered a face to face outpatient appointment or the option of a virtual appointment by phone or video if appropriate. We are continuing to work with our colleagues in the community and GP practices to ensure the option of a virtual appointment can be offered. We are also now able to accept referrals from GPs for diagnostic tests such as X-ray, ECG and audiology.

We know how upsetting it is to have operations and appointments cancelled, especially for those who are worried or in pain and we would like to thank our local community for their patience during this time. We are working hard to bring all our services back to full capacity, as far as the current situation allows, and to ensure that those waiting for an appointment or surgery are seen as quickly as possible.

Join us at our future events:

2020 Annual Members' Meeting

You are all invited to attend the Annual Members' Meeting of Medway NHS Foundation Trust which will take place at 6pm on Thursday 17 September. You will hear from our Chair and Chief Executive as well as other updates on improvements at the Trust.

Due to the current pandemic, this will be a virtual meeting on MS Teams only. To book your place, please visit <https://medwayamm.eventbrite.co.uk>

If you require any further information, please email met-tr.members-medway@nhs.net

Organ Donation Week (7 to 13 September)

Our Trust Organ and Tissue Donation Committee are planning a web chat which will start with a short presentation that will cover the law change, recent events and the impact of COVID-19, and most importantly the message of making your wishes known to your loved ones. We will then open for questions and answers. There is no need to book and you can join the meeting via MS Teams using this link: [Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)

[Become a member of Medway NHS Foundation Trust](#) (it's free) so you are kept up to date with the latest news and events.

Please do let me know if your organisation has any upcoming meetings (in person or virtually). We would be happy to consider how we can provide a further update.

Thank you all once again, for the amazing support you give to our community and hospital.

Bobbie Walkem-Smith
Community Engagement Officer
Mobile: 07852 714 954
Email: bobbie.walkem-smith@nhs.net