



Responding to urgent and emergency care pressures

Croydon Health Scrutiny and Social Care Sub committee update

January 2023

Sustained and severe pressure

The vast majority of patients continue to be seen, treated and discharged without hospital stay...but without improved flow in, through and out of hospital, many patients are having to wait longer periods for hospital beds to become available.

Like other NHS Trusts, Croydon's urgent and emergency care services remain extremely challenged.

We have enacted our winter plans and continue to take additional measures to care for patients and support our staff.

Latest published data (Nov 2022)

- **ED performance:** 72% patients admitted, transferred or discharged within four hours, below the 95% standard.
 - **23 hours** – average total time patients waiting in ED care when admitted to a hospital bed if required.
 - **10.6% patients** waiting over 12 hours for hospital bed from arrival.
 - **Three days** higher average length of stay for emergency inpatients than pre-pandemic.
 - **Non-elective** hospital length of stay has increased from 7.4 pre-COVID to 10.42 (Nov 19 - Nov 22).
- **Increasing attendance:** 17,325 attendances across GP Hub, main ED and UTC
 - **9% higher** ED site attendances than in Nov 2019 (12,958 compared to 11,914)
 - **Ambulance handovers:** Like other trusts, we have incurred significant numbers of ambulances waiting longer than expected to handover patients
 - **211 patients** waiting over 60 mins for ambulance handover
 - This equates to 9.6% of ambulance arrivals, compared to 1.4% in Nov 2019
 - Impacting ambulance response times through delays in getting crews back on the road

Maintaining patient safety.

Croydon's ED is one of the busiest in south London, seeing up to 500 patients a day.

- Around 50 patients a day are waiting a significant length of time in ED for a hospital bed, due to the current pressures.
- This is the equivalent of almost two wards – increasing the risk to maintain patient safety across the emergency care pathway.

Infection control. We continue to face the challenge of COVID-19, albeit on a much smaller scale than in 2021

- Plus, increasing numbers of flu and norovirus limiting flexibility to keep patients safe from infection.

Industrial action. None of the trade union ballots met the threshold for industrial action at CHS, but we have been impacted by LAS strikes and await the junior doctors' ballot for strike action, which opened on 9 January.



Actions we're taking

We have introduced a number of new initiatives to get our most seriously ill and injured patients into hospital beds as quickly as possible during the busy winter period and reduce the number of patients waiting in our Emergency Department.

24/7 Operations Centre

In December, we stood-up our brand new Operations Centre to ensure informed and fast decision making by senior clinicians and managers throughout the winter period.

'Focus Weeks'

Trust-wide events throughout December and January where non-essential activity is paused to increase support for clinicians on the frontline and improve patient flow across care pathways.

Admissions and Discharge Lounge

Expanded 24/7 facility with 12 additional beds, as well as seated area. Helping to ensure patients awaiting admission or discharge are not treated in corridors and are cared for in a more comfortable area. Easing congestion in ED and allow emergency teams care for the more critically ill.

More GPs at the front door

Doubled the number of GPs in a new GP led Hub at the front of ED to care for patients not needing hospital treatment. Increasing our capacity to care for patients not needing a hospital stay, including children whose parents who were worried about recent outbreaks of Strep A or a rise in respiratory illnesses.

HALO (Hospital Ambulance Liaison Officer)

Dedicated LAS paramedic based in ED to support safe, effective and timely handover over patients from ambulance to hospital, including the cohorting of patients when required.

The aim of this role is to reduce the number of ambulance hours lost at the hospital, reducing the risk of avoidable harm to patients in the community awaiting an ambulance response.



Croydon was one of the first NHS trusts to return to more than 100% of pre-lockdown levels for routine elective care to tackle the COVID backlogs.

CUH currently has no backlog and now carries out 300 operations a week, an 11 per cent rise on the 270 before the pandemic.

Despite the wider pressures, we have not once stopped elective surgery since wave one, opening a 'hospital within a hospital' to separate elective and emergency care.

To support surgical flow, 12 'short stay' beds are now open to care for patients likely to be discharged within 48 hours. This includes surgical, urology, orthopaedic and gynaecology patients.

As far as possible, the CEC's elective ward is being retained. However, at times of extreme demand, we have had to flex our activity to keep elective and emergency care services safe.



Croydon resident, Lillian, shared her care at the Trust with the Sun on Sunday (10 Dec 2022). More than 30,000 people have been cared for in the Croydon Elective Centre since July 2022.

Shared challenges

The challenges facing the NHS go far beyond the walls of one public service, which is why we are working together as One Croydon to help meet rising demand and changing expectations

Croydon was selected as one of six national frontrunners to take part in a pilot to free-up hospital beds by giving people care in the community.

£800,000 of government funding awarded to One Croydon to triple the number of residents who can continue treatment at home once they are well enough to leave hospital.

- **Increasing the number of fully residents** six weeks after discharge from 24% to 75%.
- **Reducing the length of stay** in hospital for a patient medically fit for discharge from 11 to 7 days.

Funding will also be utilised to expand existing services and develop a fully integrated team between acute and community, with a shared and secure IT system, leadership and oversight to improve the quality of client care and support seven days a week.

Further funding available: There has also been a social care discharge fund and further resources announced nationally which we are working on together across health and care to support flow.



Together with our partners in the borough, we are striving to provide more coordinated care, in the right care setting to meet the health needs of Croydon residents.

- **Home first:** helping people live independently at home for as long as possible
- **After hospital stays:** Providing care through One Croydon's LIFE team, which includes domiciliary care, reablement, therapy at home
- **Social care:** Working with Council to facilitate placements for residential and nursing homes

Intermediate care beds

12 beds are being commissioned across a number of care homes to support with the management of patients on Pathway 3 (requiring a Care Home placement).

This will ensure patients are in the most suitable setting for the care they require, and reduce the number of patients in an acute bed that no longer need hospital care. These beds will be used for patients requiring:

- Assessment for long-term bed-based care out of hospital;
- Step-down monitoring after a hospital stay;
- Temporary residence whilst awaiting ongoing care, for example housing placement/

Virtual wards

Caring for people in the comfort of their own home, freeing-up hospital beds to care for patients with more complex needs.

- Saving more than 1,000 days of care in six months (2022).
- Helping to keep people well at home and prevent avoidable hospital admissions.

Increasing access to primary care

General practice appointments have increased compared to the same month in previous years, including COVID-19.

Supporting primary care workforce

The number of reported GPs in Croydon has increased by 7.2% from Q4 2019/20 to Q2 2022/23. This is above the 5.5% average for SWL. However, given the scale of Croydon's population, there is under provision of GPs compared to the SWL average. Recruiting and retaining GPs, Practice Nurses and other practice staff remains a challenge across the region and the country.

Training Hub

Croydon has a Training Hub focused on primary care workforce, education and development, including:

- **'Here to Stay' sessions** - an opportunity to meet Croydon GPs to share learning, leadership and develop new roles;
- **Fellowship programme** - two-year programme for newly qualified GPs. So far, 8 applications have been received in Croydon.
- **Mentorship** – from experienced GPs and matched mentees in Croydon. Topics include leadership, specialist interests, and the new strategic landscape.

General Practice Nurses (GPNs)

Over the last 6 years, approximately 23 new general practice nurses have been recruited and retained in Croydon. However, the number of reported GPNs in Croydon has decreased by 17.3% in the period from Q4 2019/20 to Q2 2022/23. This is larger than the average for SWL (-9%) and for London (-14%).

- **Trainee Nursing Associates:** Currently 13 in post across Croydon Primary Care.
- **Health Care Assistants:** Around 40 being trained in essential core skills to support General Practice.

Additional Roles for Primary Care Networks

NHS England has made funding available for new roles to support general practice and this opportunity has been taken up by Croydon's Primary Care Networks. By the end of 23/24, Croydon's workforce will account for 34.6% of the SWL roles through this scheme. These roles include pharmacists, physios, community paramedics, social prescribers and health and wellbeing coaches.

SWL view

Over 750,000 appointments were delivered in October 2022. **Face-to-face consultations** in general practice are increasing:

- Up from 52% to 68% (Jan – Oct 2022)

Above the London average in SWL since April 2022.

Type	Capacity increase	How to access
PCN additional capacity during core hours	All 9 PCNs have signed up to provide additional primary care capacity.	Expansion of routine and same day capacity in GP practices.
PCN Enhanced Access Service	There are approximately 1,730* enhanced access appointments available each week in Croydon delivered by the full multidisciplinary team during the Network Standard Hours: Mon-Fri 6.30-8pm, Sat 5-8pm with some PCNs also offering appointments outside of these hours in-line with patient need. Mixture of Face to face and remote appointments. <i>*The appointment value is based on 15 minutes appointment slots however, appointment slot length will vary depending on the type of service offered.</i>	Core GP services bookable via practices two weeks in advance. Unused slots available to NHS111 same day booking.
Borough-wide Wrap Around Service	The Croydon University Hospital Hub is providing over 290 appointments each month during the following hours: Sat 5-8pm, Sun 8am-8pm & bank holidays 8am-8pm.	Core GP services bookable via practices two weeks in advance. Unused slots available to NHS111 same day booking.
Borough-wide additional winter capacity	Capacity will be increased across the daytime GP hubs for urgent, same day appointments that can also be booked into by NHS111. The additional capacity will be offered by the existing GP hubs (East Croydon, Purley and New Addington), plus a new satellite hub at Croydon University Hospital, which will also be able to take redirections from A&E. The additional capacity will be in place from 1 st December 2022 to 31 st March 2023.	Accessed via NHS111 as per existing model. CUH presence accessed via redirection from ED.
Acute respiratory infection hubs	Two hubs planned in Croydon, one based at CUH (went live on 9/01/23) and one in New Addington (in progress). The service operate face-to-face appointments as follows: Mon-Fri 18.30-22.30, Sat-Sun 9.00-17.00. The inclusion criteria for ARI hubs are adults and children (all ages) with acute respiratory symptoms.	GP referrals, NHS111, ED following a remote assessment. Same day appointments.

To make it easier for Croydon residents to see a GP in the borough, the above actions have been taken.

Engaging with our communities

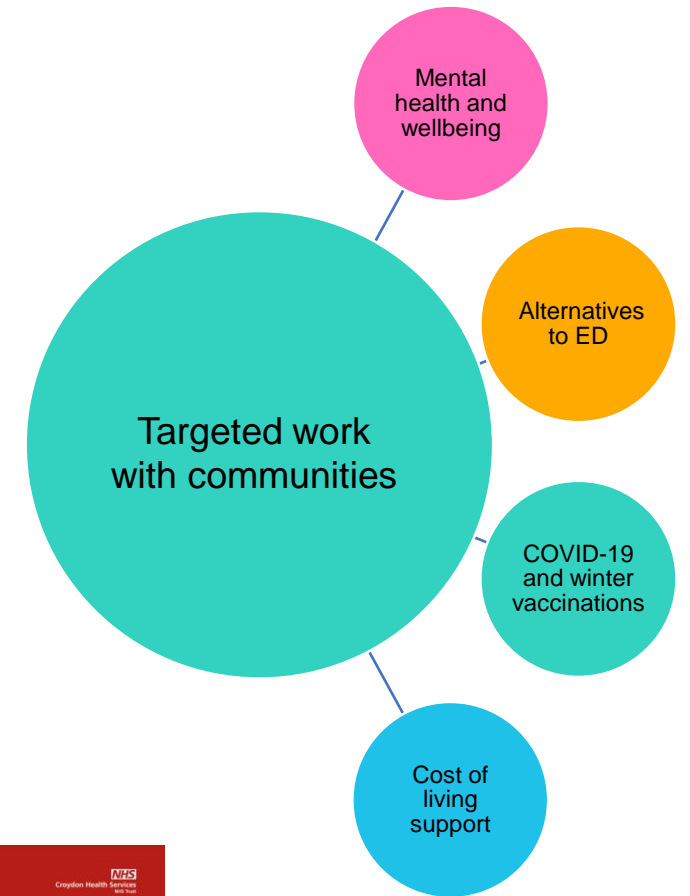
To support frontline teams, we are engaging with our local communities to help raise awareness of the support available, including pre-crisis mental health intervention and alternatives to A&E, to help people access the care they need in the right care setting.

We expect the current pressure to continue, at least towards the spring.

- To help residents now and bolster our services for the future, we are continuing to engage with our local communities.
- Using community networks and mapped relationships to disseminate information and inform behaviour.
- Outreach events, on street engagement and visiting existing community groups in most affected areas and communities.
- Commissioning community and voluntary sector organisations to engage on our behalf, where appropriate.
- Translated leaflets and WhatsApp voice notes in different languages, targeting hard-to-reach groups.
- Using media, social media and websites to involve and inform local people.

What we want to achieve:

- Encouraging people to access the most appropriate service for their healthcare need – be that a pharmacy, urgent care centre, or NHS 111
- Encouraging the public to stay safe and well, including getting vaccinated against flu and COVID-19 (if eligible)
- Demonstrating how the system is prepared and responding to the pressures
- Highlighting the phenomenal efforts of staff working hard to meet the demand to lift staff morale
- Boosting recruiting and retention of staff.



In November 2022, the South West London ICS held a Primary Care workshop to inform development of a primary care strategy. Croydon was very well represented, with over 20 people attending from a variety of settings, including local GPs. The strategy, which is expected to be complete by this Spring, will focus on three key strands of work: anticipatory care, access and prevention.

How can community leaders help?

We are asking MPs, councillors, voluntary organisations, Healthwatch, GP leads and other key stakeholders to help disseminate their own networks and channels to involve people in our community.

Know where to go if you need medical advice, but it's not an emergency.

Pharmacy
Your local pharmacy is a first port-of-call for minor health concerns. Pharmacists are experts in medicines and can help with lots of illnesses, from skin rashes to coughs and flu. Many pharmacies open late and offer private consultations, no appointment needed.

Your GP
Call your GP practice or visit their website to make an appointment for an illness or injury that won't go away, or access your GP's out of hours service.

NHS 111 (24/7)
Call NHS 111 FREE for urgent medical advice, or access the service online at 111.nhs.uk. If NHS 111 advise that you attend the Emergency Department, ask them if they can book you an appointment.

GP Hubs
(Bookable appointments 8am-8pm, every day)
There are three 'GP Hubs' in Croydon which treat both minor injuries and minor illnesses requiring same day care – for both children and adults. They are located in Central Croydon, Purley and Parkway (near Addington).
To book an appointment, people should call NHS 111 first to discuss their symptoms. You will be offered a telephone consultation with a GP or practice nurse who can also book you to attend for a face to face appointment where appropriate.

111.nhs.uk
SCAN ME

Help us care for you

If you feel unwell, it's important that you continue to come forward for NHS care. There are plenty of local services available to help you if you need medical advice, but it is not an emergency, including 24/7 mental health support. See our 'know where to go' leaflet for more.

Supporting our staff

One in three CHS staff overstretched in 2021, in line with the national average. The results of the latest annual NHS Staff Survey are expected very soon.

The current pressures have undoubtedly taken their toll.

- Increased staff sickness levels, showing the early impact of flu season and other winter viruses
- On top of existing vacancies and national recruitment challenges
- Staff sickness rate:
Up 1 percentage point to 5.5% (Nov 19 to Nov 22), above target of 3.5%)
- Vacancy rate:
15.2% Oct 22 (above target of 14%)

To combat this, we are continuing to increase the support available

- **Culture change** – embarking on a Trust-wide change programme to improve equality and civility in the workplace.
- **Leadership visibility** – to ensure staff feel appreciated, heard and listened to
- **‘Thirst Responders’** – sometimes smallest gestures can make the biggest difference, including weekly refreshments served by leadership team
- **Employee Assistant Programme (EAP)** for free and confidential advice without referral from your manager for concerns about work or home
- **24/7 Mental Health Crisis Line** team if staff feel overwhelmed
- **Winter Wellbeing booklet**, includes cost of living support



**Joseph Foster,
Charge Nurse, ED**

“I’m very proud to be part of the ED team, from our porters and domestics through to senior management, who are constantly battling against insurmountable odds.

“We are constantly making the best of a bad situation and the way our team have continued to keep the department safe in the last 3-4 weeks is a tremendous achievement, something only possible with the great effort from our team.”



Upcoming NHS Staff Survey

The 2022 NHS Staff Survey, which seeks to understand the experiences of staff working across the Trust, closed in late November having received feedback from almost 2,000 of CHS staff (48% of our substantive workforce, up from 44.5% last year).

Whilst we await the publication of the full results over the coming months, what we know already is how vital it is that we continue to listen to and support our staff, particularly during these busy winter months.

Early analysis suggests a number of areas where we have to do more, but also the continuation of some clear improvements, particularly relating to the areas that impact our staff each and every day.

This includes support from immediate line managers and compassionate leadership through to career development, as well as our ability to empower colleagues to show initiative and make improvements happen in the areas they work in.



The bigger picture

Pressures are ever increasing for GPs, hospitals, mental health, social care and voluntary services, but we cannot forget what we have achieved to date.

Biggest-ever Croydon Stars

Held for first time since the COVID-19 pandemic, increasing pride and recognition in our staff

650 nominations, resulting in over **70** finalists.



PM chooses Croydon

New PM chose Croydon Health Services for his first official visit, less than a week into his premiership

Bringing investment into the borough

Additional £15 million secured to expand elective services in Croydon and PWMH, including eight enhanced procedure rooms.

Plus funding for a new Community Diagnostic Hub in Purley and New Addington to deliver more life-saving checks, scans and tests.

Transforming services

Officially opened state-of-the-art stroke unit in December, with the help of award-winning actor, Miriam Margolyes OBE. The move is the next stage in the £15m transformation of services, including new Critical Care Unit opening Autumn 2023.



Our continued focus needs to be:

- Managing unprecedented demands
- Maintaining patient safety
- Ensuring high-quality care,
- Improving patient experience
- Supporting staff wellbeing
- Balancing rising costs to live within budgets

This requires us to build on our successful track-record of collaboration in Croydon

- Combining our experience and expertise
- Joining-up health and care
- Breaking down barriers between professions
- Reducing health inequalities by improving access to the right services, in the right care setting

CHS has an ambitious and challenging financial plan for 2022/23:

- **£22.6m (6%)** recurrent savings
- **£10m** non recurrent support
- **£8m** elective recovery fund income
- To achieve a deficit of **£16.7m**
- Against annual income of **£400m**

This requires financial efficiencies to be clinically-led, safeguarding patient and backed by strong financial controls.



Thank you

Questions and discussion

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