

Response to supplementary questions from Southampton HOSP 27.11.18

The service provided at Beaulieu Ward, inc number of beds

Beaulieu Ward is, a 17 bed, acute admission (short stay) assessment and treatment ward, providing care for older people with organic mental health needs. In most cases this is dementia.

The reasons for closure

Despite considerable efforts, we have been unable to recruit the registered nurses needed to ensure Beaulieu Ward is a safe place for our patients and staff. We were relying on a high number of bank and agency staff which is not sustainable.

As a result we have taken the difficult decision to temporarily close Beaulieu Ward, for up to six months (depending on our ability to recruit registered nurses). Patient safety and the health and wellbeing of our staff are always our priority and we feel there is no alternative option at this current time.

The alternate OPMH wards (Dementia) in Hampshire (inc Solent NHS Trust Wards in Portsmouth)

Poppy ward, based at Gosport War Memorial Hospital
Elmwood ward, based at Parklands Hospital in Basingstoke

The number of Southampton residents in Beaulieu Ward at time of closure decision

Three patients were Southampton residents, who have since been transferred to care homes.

The proposed pathway for Southampton residents requiring OPMH services akin to those delivered at Beaulieu Ward, following closure

Each patient will be assessed based on their individual care need and the patients and their family members will be involved in this discussion. We will consider alternatives to admission including care home placement, and additional support in the community. For people who do require inpatient care, patients and families will be given the option of being transferred to Poppy ward based at Gosport War Memorial Hospital or Elmwood based, at Parklands in Basingstoke. We will speak with individual families to offer support to cover additional transport needs they may have in order to visit loved ones.

Support to be provided to family members

We recognise the impact that caring for a loved one with dementia can have on family members, and have apologised for the additional disruption that this change has caused. Our staff work closely with families and carers to provide advice,

guidance and awareness of additional support available to them, and this will not change during the closure period.

Support is being offered to cover additional transport needs families may have in order to visit loved ones during this period.

As soon as it became apparent that a temporary closure was the only option, we immediately began to have conversations with patients being supported on the ward and their families.

Staff met with patients and their families to discuss the most appropriate options for meeting the patients' future care needs. This included moving to a bed on an alternative ward, a care home placement or being cared for in the community in their own homes.

Proposals to increase the number of qualified nurses employed by Southern

Extensive recruitment activity is already taking place and ongoing. This includes recruitment campaigns, open days, links with universities, and social media recruitment. Specific recruitment activity is also taking place for older peoples mental health nurses: A recruitment action plan is in place to help us recruit more registered nurses and health care professionals into this particular service.

We are working to develop new career pathways and roles, and a new care model for older people's mental health. This aims to deliver more effective care and make working in this service a more attractive proposition for clinicians.

During the period of closure, staff redeployed from Beaulieu Ward are being supported to remain as a 'virtual team' – with ongoing supervision and development. It is hoped they will gain new skills and experience from working in different settings and this will benefit patients when they return to Beaulieu Ward.