

## Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust – Update on Community Hospitals in Somerset

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Cabinet Member: N/A

Division and Local Member: N/A

### 1. Summary

- 1.1. There are currently 13 community hospitals within the county of Somerset. The 13 community hospitals in Somerset each play a unique role within their local health economy. These hospitals have developed over time and each hospital provides a different mix of services. A map showing the location of the hospitals is attached at the end of this report.
- 1.2. The hospitals primarily provide inpatient, outpatient, minor injury unit and diagnostic services; however the particular services provided at each hospital vary, as do the providers of some of the services.
- 1.3. Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust is the sole provider of inpatient and minor injury unit services and also provides the management function for the hospitals as a whole, with the exception of Shepton Mallet, where Care UK hold the contract and inpatient services are subcontracted to Somerset Partnership.
- 1.4. The Trust owns 11 of the 13 hospitals. Shepton Mallet Community Hospital is owned by NHS Property Services as part of the Shepton Mallet Health Campus and West Mendip Community Hospital is a PFI building also managed by NHS Property Services. These hospitals are leased by the Trust.
- 1.5. The fabric and condition of the community hospitals varies. Although five of the community hospitals were built or rebuilt within the last 12 years, some of the older premises are below satisfactory standards, particularly the inpatient facilities at Shepton Mallet and Chard.
- 1.6. The Trust has experienced – and continues to experience – significant issues in relation to the recruitment and retention of registered nursing staff in our hospitals. As at 8 September 2017 the Trust had 30.85 wte vacancies for Band 5 Registered General Nurses (RGNs) in community hospital services (20.98% of the total). This has meant the requirement in recent times to temporarily close inpatient wards (e.g. at Minehead) for patient safety reasons. The age profile of the nursing workforce means that in 8 of the 13 hospitals, more than 35% of the existing RGN workforce are already eligible for retirement.
- 1.7. As at 8 September 2017 the Trust had 222 inpatient beds open to patients of which 195 (88.7%) were occupied. 22 of these are dedicated for stroke rehabilitation. These are fully occupied with patients waiting in acute hospitals to transfer in to them, although, similarly to the GP beds, there are a significant number of patients who have a delay in their transfer of care.

## 2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations

2.1. Scrutiny is asked to note the update on community hospitals in Somerset.

## 3. Background

### 3.1. Overview

There are currently 13 community hospitals within the county of Somerset. These are:

Bridgwater	Shepton Mallet
Burnham-on-sea	South Petherton
Chard	Wellington
Crewkerne	West Mendip
Dene Barton	Williton
Frome	Wincanton
Minehead	

Details of the services provided from each hospital can be found on the Trust website at <http://www.sompar.nhs.uk/what-we-do/community-hospitals/>

Services provided from community hospitals include:

- Inpatient beds (222\*including 24 dedicated stroke rehabilitation beds located at South Petherton (16) and Williton(6))
- Minor Injury Units (7)
- Assessment services – to help support patients and keep them from being admitted to acute hospitals
- Outpatient clinics including:

**Consultant- led services** (provided by acute service providers including Taunton & Somerset, Yeovil District Hospital and RUH Bath) - Paediatrics, Diabetes, General Surgery, General Medicine, Care of the Elderly, Gastroenterology, Dermatology, Ear nose and throat, Urology, Gynaecology , Ophthalmology, Rheumatology, and Endocrinology

**Specialist Nurse led services** - Diabetes, Respiratory, Dermatology, Oncology, Continence, Lymphoedema and Leg Ulcer treatments.

**Therapy services** - Speech & Language Therapy, Podiatry, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy and Audiology.

- Day Care Services (sometime call ambulatory care) including:

Blood Transfusions, IV Medication, PICC Line therapy, balance and safety assessments and classes, Multi-Disciplinary Assessments, support for Long Term Conditions and 24 hour Blood Pressure Monitoring.

Some community hospitals also have specialist services provided within them such as Renal Dialysis (at Frome), birthing units (at Bridgwater and Frome),

The hospitals at Minehead and West Mendip have surgical theatre capacity to provide certain general surgical procedures.

Current inpatient bed numbers as at September 2017 are set out below:

Bridgwater - 30 beds	Shepton Mallet – 10 beds
Burnham-on-sea - 16 beds	South Petherton - 8 beds
Chard - 14 beds	South Petherton stroke unit -16
Crewkerne - 14 beds	Wellington - 11 beds
Dene Barton - 8 beds	West Mendip - 26 beds
Frome - 26 beds	Williton - 16 beds
Minehead – 14 beds	Wincanton - 13 beds

Minor Injury Units are open seven days a week. The opening times are set out below:

Bridgwater - 08:00 - 21:00.
Burnham on Sea 10:00 - 18:00
Chard - 08:00 - 21:00
Frome - 08:00 - 21:00
Glastonbury - 08:00 - 21:00
Minehead - 24 hours.
Shepton Mallet - 08:00 - 21:00

X-ray services (provided by acute trust providers) are available to clinicians at these MIUs and during these times:

Bridgwater 08:30-17:00 (Mon-Fri)
West Mendip 09:00-17:00 (Mon-Fri)
Shepton Mallet 09:00-17:00 (Mon-Fri)
Frome 09:00-17:00 (Mon-Fri)
Minehead 09:00-17:00 (Mon-Fri)

### **3.2. Activity and Performance**

Somerset Partnership is contracted by Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group to provide community hospital inpatient services on the basis of an 'annualised bed days contract' – that is, for a total number of 82,260 beds to be available across the county during the year which can be flexed to respond to higher demand (e.g. in the winter periods) and similarly reduced when demand is lower.

As at 8 September, of the total of 290 community hospital beds potentially available across all 13 sites, 222 beds were open to admissions and 195 were occupied (88.7% of open beds and 67.3% of total bed stock).

Figure 1 below is taken from the 2016 version of the NHS Benchmarking Network's Community Hospitals project. The chart shows the number of community hospital beds for each provider organisation which contributed data, per 100,000 catchment population.

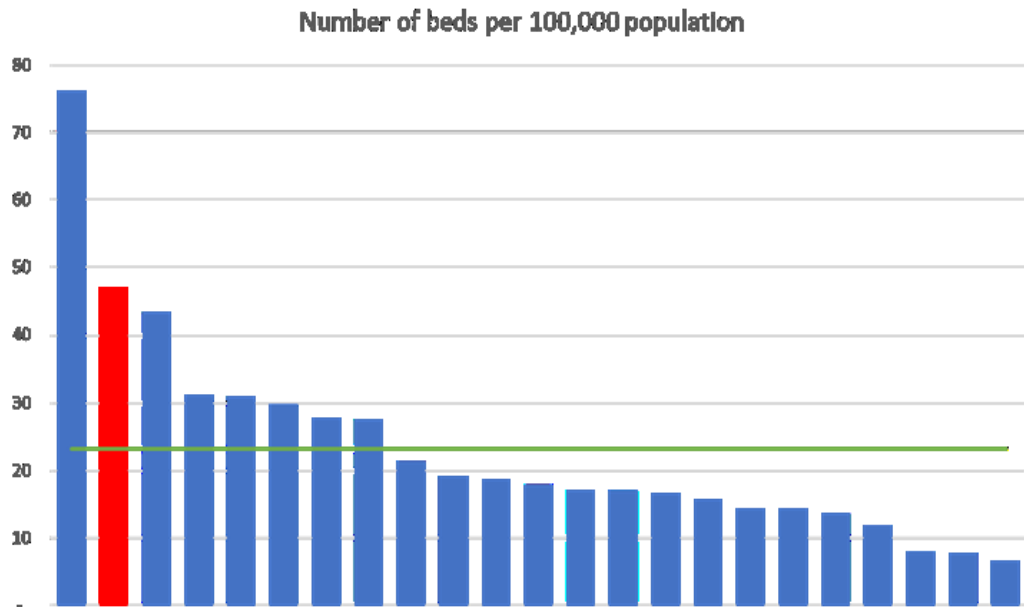


Figure 1 shows that Somerset Partnership, highlighted in red, has 47 beds per 100,000 population served, compared to an average of 23 beds for the other provider organisations which contributed data to the project.

Figure 2 below shows a comparison of the number of community hospital beds per 100,000 population in Somerset, compared to other South West counties and other Clinical Commissioning Group areas nationally which have similar demographic and geographic characteristics to Somerset.

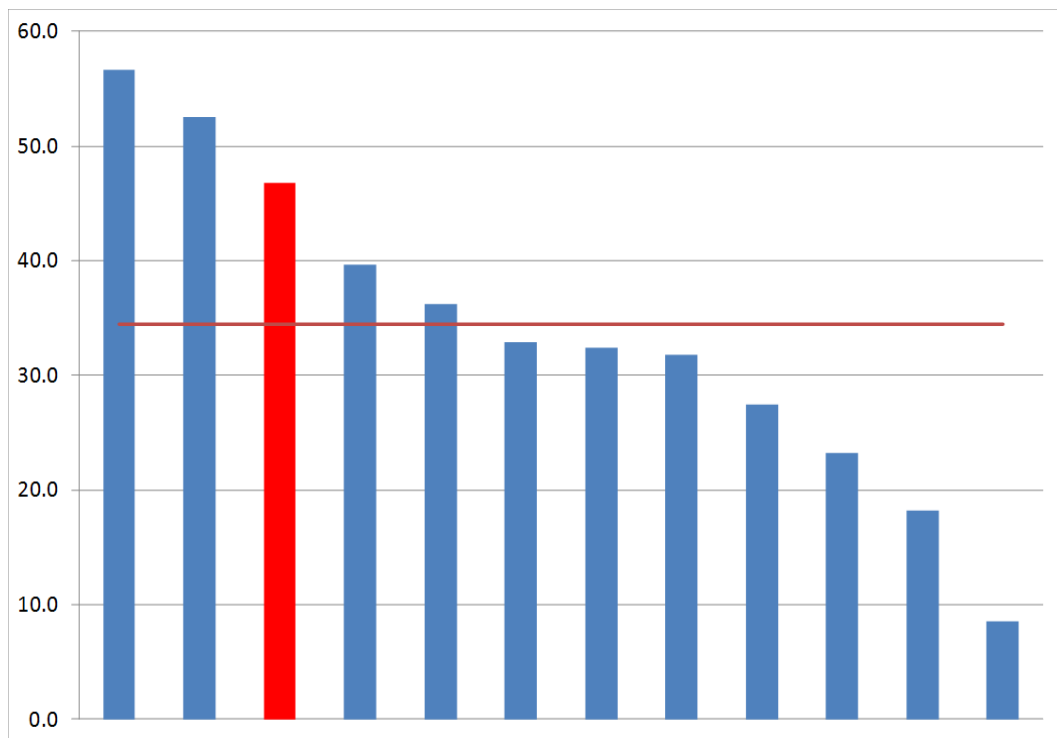


Figure 2 shows that Somerset has 47 beds per 100,000 population served, compared to an average of 34 beds in the other areas.

For the year 2016/17:

- Average bed occupancy for community hospitals across the county for was 91.2% (ranging from 95.9% to 77.7%)
- Average length of stay for a patient in a community hospital bed was 26.3 days (ranging from 36.2 days to 19.6 days).
- An average of 9.4% of patients were subject to a delayed transfer for care – i.e. waiting to leave hospital beyond the time they were well enough to do so (ranging from 15.3% to 3.3%).
- Overall, an average of 46% of patients in community hospital beds lived within 5 miles of the hospital (ranging from 16% to 74%).
- There were a total of 100,511 attendances across the 7 Minor Injury Units.

### **3.3. Estates and Facilities**

Overall, the Trust's current community hospital estate is in a largely good physical condition with five of the hospitals having been newly built or rebuilt within the last 12 years – these are at Bridgwater, South Petherton, Minehead, Frome and West Mendip. Buildings are operationally sound and are safe with a manageable backlog maintenance programme, although the continued use of the portacabins for inpatient services at Shepton Mallet Community Hospital and the first floor inpatient ward at Chard Community Hospital remain areas of sub-optimal estate, categorised as 'unsatisfactory' under NHS estate code standards.

The Trust has commissioned a series of six facet survey reviews of its estate, the first being for Shepton Mallet which has confirmed that the portacabin inpatient areas are beyond economic repair.

The inpatient area at Chard Community Hospital was identified as 'not fit for purpose' by the Care Quality Commission in its inspection report of December 2015 and a redevelopment board has been working to identify options for the redevelopment of the hospital since 2016. The board has identified that there is not currently an affordable solution to redevelop the hospital to achieve estate and CQC compliance standards. A Clinical Sub Group has therefore been established to develop possible alternatives to inpatient care for patients in Chard and the surrounding area. The board brings together senior representation from the local authority, the Somerset acute Trusts, primary care and the voluntary sector.

In working towards the development of the new model it has been important for the board to take into account the output of the various enhanced community services workstreams that have been set up as part of the sustainability and transformation process and also under the leadership of the A&E Delivery Board. Most recently this has focused on Discharge to Assess (Home First) service which was launched in the county in September.

### **3.4 Operational Issues and Risks**

#### **Staffing**

Staffing is the most significant challenge across all the community hospitals. The Trust publishes a monthly Safer Staffing report, setting out our performance against the agreed standards for nurse staffing levels in our community hospitals.

The position at the end of July showed that the Trust failed to achieve 100% of safer staffing rates at 9 of the 13 hospitals for daytime shifts and at 3 hospitals for the night shifts.

The Trust currently has 30.85 wte vacancies for Band 5 registered nurses in our community hospitals. Issues with staffing in West Somerset led to the temporary closure of the inpatient ward at Minehead Community Hospital from December 2016 to July 2017. During this period the inpatient beds and the staff were relocated to Williton Community Hospital where the consolidation of beds on one site allowed safer staffing levels to be achieved and patient safety better assured.

Staffing levels in other areas are also of significant concern. In particular, recruitment continues to be extremely challenging in South Somerset, with a recent advertising and radio campaign resulting in only one part time RGN expressing an interest in working at South Petherton Hospital. At the time of this report being produced, vacancy rates for registered general nurses (RGNs) ranged from 20% to 48.7% across the four hospitals in South Somerset.

In the West Somerset area three community hospitals all have vacancy rates in excess of 40%.

The age profile of the registered nursing workforce is also of concern. 8 of the 13 hospitals have more than 35% of the RGN workforce aged 55 or over and therefore eligible to retire immediately.

This is all set against a national context of challenges in recruitment and the availability of trained nursing staff across the whole NHS.

#### **4. Consultations undertaken**

- 4.1.** In 2013-15, Somerset CCG undertook a review of community services in Somerset, including community hospital provision, entitled 'Making the Most of Community Services'. This involved extensive engagement on the current and potential future provision of community hospital services in the county. A copy of the final report can be found on the CCG website at <http://www.somersetccg.nhs.uk/about-us/governing-body/meetings-and-papers/governing-body-agenda-and-papers-16-july-2015/>
- 4.2.** The Trust hosts a six monthly League of Friends Forum with representatives from the Leagues of Friends of all 13 community hospitals invited. The latest of these meetings is on 14 September 2017.
- 4.3.** The Chard Redevelopment Board includes representation from the League of Friends and members of the Essex House GP Patient Participation Group are included on the Clinical Sub Group.

4.4. The tendering and provision of services for the Shepton Mallet Health Campus was subject to public consultation and engagement and members of the League of Friends were included on the Project Board.

## 5. Implications

5.1. The future use and configuration of community hospitals in Somerset will form part of the consideration of the Somerset Sustainability and Transformation Partnership and the Somerset CCG's Clinical Commissioning Strategy. In the interim, the pressures on staffing and sustaining inpatient services mean that Somerset Partnership will be required to keep under review the sustainability of services across all 13 community hospital sites in conjunction with Somerset CCG. Discussions are underway with Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group with regard to increasing the number of beds available for specialist stroke rehabilitation within the county to address delays in patients transferring from acute hospitals.

## 6. Background papers

6.1. Making the Most of Community Services <http://www.somersetccg.nhs.uk/about-us/governing-body/meetings-and-papers/governing-body-agenda-and-papers-16-july-2015/>

6.2. Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust Annual Estates and Facilities Report 2016/17 [http://www.sompar.nhs.uk/media/4812/enclosure-n-annual-estates-and-facilities-report-2016\\_17-final.pdf](http://www.sompar.nhs.uk/media/4812/enclosure-n-annual-estates-and-facilities-report-2016_17-final.pdf)

6.3. Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust Safer Staffing Report <http://www.sompar.nhs.uk/who-we-are/safer-staffing/>

