

NHS Somerset Board confirm preferred option for stroke services in Somerset

30 November 2023

NHS Somerset Board has accepted a recommendation to take forward one preferred option for stroke services in Somerset for more detailed analysis. Following further evaluation, a final recommendation whether to proceed with this option will be made to the Board in a decision-making business case.

The preferred option for the future proposes a hyper acute stroke unit at Musgrove Park Hospital, Taunton and acute stroke units at both Yeovil District Hospital and Musgrove Park Hospital.

Clinicians, people working in stroke services, key stakeholders and people with lived experience of stroke led the options appraisal for the pre-consultation business case which recommended the proposals taken to public consultation earlier this year.

Following analysis of the public feedback, detailed modelling, and a further options appraisal of the two options the decision has been made to discount option b, which proposed creating one hyper acute stroke unit and one acute stroke unit at Musgrove Park Hospital.

Option b has been discounted because further modelling has shown that it is not feasible to provide the significant investment required to deliver this model of care. The extra resources required at both Musgrove Park Hospital and Dorset County Hospital would not be sustainable. The consultation feedback also highlighted the important role family and loved ones play in the recovery and wellbeing of stroke patients. An acute stroke unit at Yeovil District Hospital would enable patients to return to Yeovil, if that was closer to their home.

Dr Bernie Marden, Chief Medical Officer, NHS Somerset, said: “This is the next step in creating high-quality stroke services in Somerset, which are sustainable and fit for the future.

“We have listened to what people have told us and undertaken detailed analysis of the two options that were taken to public consultation. The final recommendations will be further developed by senior clinicians, health and care staff and people with lived experience of stroke.

“Currently, outcomes for stroke patients vary depending on where you live and the time of day you have a stroke. This review focuses on creating safe and sustainable stroke services in Somerset with 24/7 emergency stroke care, and is not about saving money.”

The final decision-making business case is expected to be considered by the NHS Somerset Board in January. This review focuses on creating safe and sustainable stroke services in Somerset, and is not about saving money. All the evidence gathered will enable the Board to make an informed decision on the best way forward.

The final decision-making meeting will be held in public to allow those interested to hear the discussion and how the final decision is made.

You can read more about the proposed changes, reasons why change is needed and our regularly updated FAQs at <https://oursomerset.org.uk/working-together/stroke/>.

