

Agenda Item: 12.0

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Governing Body</h2> <h3 style="margin: 0;"><i>held in public</i></h3>	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Report</h2> <p style="margin: 0;">Date of Meeting: 18th July 2019</p>
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Report Title	MSK Hydrotherapy Service		
Report Author	Presented By	Responsible Director	
Tara Dear, Assistant Director of Planned Care Commissioning Sian Pither, Planned Care Commissioning Manager [Joint paper with Bedford Hospital]	Mike Thompson, Chief Operating Officer	Mike Thompson, Chief Operating Officer Signature: 	
Purpose for presenting report	This report outlines the current position relating to the MSK Hydrotherapy Service at Bedford Hospital North Wing, the joint options appraisal with Bedford Hospital and the planned engagement.		
Action Required:	For information and for approval		
Approval Route:	Approval by BCCG Chief Operating Officer and BLMK Accountable Officer BCCG Clinical Reference Group – 11 th July 2019 Patient and Public Engagement Committee – 2 nd July 2019		
Further Assurance:	Following completion of the patient/public engagement and options appraisal, a recommendation will be presented to Governing Body in September 2019.		
Which Strategic Objectives does this report provide evidence for?			Please Tick ✓
We will commission high quality, safe and sustainable models of care that deliver effective clinical outcomes and patient experience using evidence based decisions and best practice			✓
We will ensure that there is a financially sustainable and affordable healthcare system in Bedfordshire.			✓
We will lead, engage and operate as an effective place based and STP wide system partner to achieve greater integration of care delivery.			✓
We will support local people and stakeholders to have an influence on services we commission to ensure our decisions are informed and shaped by local views and insights.			✓
We will operate and manage our Governing Body to the highest standards of accountability and transparency.			✓
Implications/Assessments	Yes	No	N/A
Have any financial implications been signed off by the Chief Finance Officer?			✓
Have any quality implications been signed off by the Director of Nursing & Quality?			✓
Have any privacy implications been signed off by the Head of Information Governance?			✓
Have any conflicts of interest implications been signed off by the Corporate Office?			✓
Have any public engagement implications been signed off by the Head of Communications & Engagement?	✓		

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?		✓	
Key Risks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Risk of service and access inequity for Bedfordshire patients 2. Risk of poor patient experience and impact to their physiotherapy healthcare requirements 3. Risk to viability of Gilbert Hitchcock House hub 4. Risk of impact to BHT capital commitments 5. EEAST capacity to provide transport to alternative locations 		
Executive Summary	<p>The Bedford Hospital Hydrotherapy Pool was temporarily closed in November 2018 due to continued challenges of maintaining and running the pool. Since the closure, patients have been offered land-based physiotherapy.</p> <p>A joint options appraisal is being undertaken by Bedford Hospital and Bedfordshire CCG to determine the preferred approach to future service provision. As part of this appraisal, a six week targeted engagement exercise will be carried out from 22nd July utilising both a questionnaire, engagement meetings and focus groups with key stakeholders. The approach to the options appraisal and engagement will be presented to Bedford Borough Health Overview and Scrutiny on 8th July and Central Bedfordshire Health Overview and Scrutiny on 22nd July.</p> <p>A recommendation will then be taken to Bedford Hospital Trust Board and Bedfordshire CCG Governing Body in September 2019. As part of the evaluation and recommendation, a Quality Impact Assessment and Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken.</p> <p>Governing Body is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the report for information 2. Ensure the adequacy of the proposal and the options presented. 3. Provide support to a targeted six week engagement approach commencing 22nd July 2019 		

1. Background

Hydrotherapy is used to treat a wide range of conditions including Rheumatoid arthritis, spondylo-arthropathy, chronic pain, neurological disorders and Musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions. Whilst the national evidence base for the use of Hydrotherapy in MSK conditions on its own is limited, there is some evidence to support the use of Hydrotherapy alongside land based therapies.

Patients with MSK conditions referred to Bedford Hospital Physiotherapy Service are offered land based therapy, Hydrotherapy or a combination of the two based on the patient's individual physiotherapy requirements.

The Hydrotherapy Service is a combination of physiotherapy activities within a Hydrotherapy pool, delivered on either a one to one basis or in group sessions. The water is a higher temperature than conventional swimming pools, which can help relax and support the muscles and joints, while providing resistance to help patients gradually improve strength.

The Hydrotherapy Service is based at Bedford Hospital on the North Wing site of Gilbert Hitchcock House in a purpose built facility. The facility at Gilbert Hitchcock House is currently only used to treat MSK conditions and forms part of the Physiotherapy Service provided by Bedford Hospital.

Bedfordshire CCG will be evaluating future provision of Hydrotherapy for non-MSK patients, but for the purposes of the options appraisal, the scope will be restricted to MSK patients as users of the Hydrotherapy Service prior to the pool closure.

2. Breakdown and Maintenance

Throughout 2018 the Bedford Hospital Hydrotherapy pool was repeatedly closed due to experiencing numerous faults and maintenance issues. The causes of these were multifactorial and often unpredictable. This was having an impact on service delivery with patients and external groups having their treatment cancelled, often with no notice, consequently having a negative impact on patient experience.

The boiler plant supporting the hydrotherapy pool requires significant investment to modernise and to isolate it from the main heating and hot water infrastructure in the Gilbert Hitchcock House building. In order to heat the pool, the heating in the whole of Gilbert Hitchcock House is required to operate 24/7 all year around.

One of the challenges facing the team upon re-opening is the balancing of the water quality, which on occasion has been difficult to correct. This has resulted in excess chlorine levels and unsuitable pH (acid/alkaline) levels. This carries a clinical risk, particularly with chlorine as high levels can cause irritation to skin and mucosa and low levels will fail to control the bacteria. It is suggested that if the plant were upgraded and refurbished, this would become less of an issue.

The decision was taken by the Bedford Hospital Executive Team in November 2018 to temporarily suspend the service during the winter period with an intention to review the position in Spring 2019.

As part of the review process, in February 2019, the Bedford Borough Overview and Scrutiny Committee highlighted the need for a wider discussion surrounding the commissioning and sustainability of the service. Since the Committee met, Bedford Hospital and Bedfordshire CCG have been working in partnership to ensure patients continue to receive land based therapy and to consider the available options for future Hydrotherapy provision.

3. MSK Hydrotherapy Services at Bedford Hospital

Hydrotherapy is provided by Bedford Hospital as part of the Physiotherapy Service of which referrals are made from Circle MSK and Bedford Hospital consultants in Rheumatology and Trauma & Orthopaedics. The suitability of Hydrotherapy for each patient's physiotherapy treatment plan, is made and recommended by the Bedford Hospital Physiotherapists.

Since the pool closure, patients previously accessing the Bedford Hospital Hydrotherapy Service have subsequently been offered land-based treatment as an alternative. As an interim solution, patients have been signposted to other hydrotherapy and swimming pools as illustrated in Figure 1. Bedford Hospital are in discussions with local Hydrotherapy pool facilities to secure a temporary service arrangement pending the outcome of the local review.

Figure 1 – Map of local Hydrotherapy pools and swimming pools



In 2017, 525 referrals were made for hydrotherapy by the Bedford Hospital Physiotherapy Team, resulting in 2,981 patient contacts with the pool. In 2018, due to the closure of the pool in November, this activity reduced to 476 referrals and 2,531 contacts.

When open, the pool was utilised by NHS patients for a total of 17 hours per week:

Tuesday 09:00 – 12:30 and 13:30 – 16:30 (6.5 hours)

Wednesday 09:00 – 12:30 (3.5 hours)

Thursday 09:00 -12:30 and 13:00 – 16:30 (7 hours)

It was also used by private patient groups as follows:

Monday 13:00-15:00 Waterwise Group (3 hours)

Friday 09:00 – 12:00 Infant Aquatics (3 hours)

Saturday 09:30 -12:30 Waterbabies Group (3 hours)

In addition there was 7.5 hours per week allocated for private patients for both group and individual sessions. In total the pool was in use for 33.5 hours per week.

Hydrotherapy patients access the Bedford Hospital Hydrotherapy Service from across Bedfordshire (Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire), but the main concentration is in central and west Bedford as per the access map illustration at **Appendix 1**. This is to be expected, as Hydrotherapy is currently only offered to patients accessing Bedford Hospital Physiotherapy, following a discussion with each patient to determine their choice of provider and location.

In 2017, 25 patients (5%) required transport to be arranged by BHT to take them to the Gilbert Hitchcock House pool and in 2018, 9 patients (2%) required transport. Patient transport is provided by the East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EEAST) who are contracted to transport patients to various NHS sites across the county.

4. Gilbert Hitchcock House Hub

As part of the Bedfordshire Primary Care Strategy and in line with the NHS Long Term Plan, Primary Care Networks (PCNs) of GP Practices are currently forming. One of the Networks in Bedford Borough has expressed interest in relocating some of their services into a Primary Care Hub, which would enable them to provide more services to patients within primary care such as multi-disciplinary long term condition and frailty clinics, integrated mental health services, and extended hours. This would require relocation into larger more suitable premises to deliver this enhanced model.

Bedfordshire CCG has been working with Bedford Hospital, primary care stakeholders, the Local Authority and external advisors to scope out the Gilbert Hitchcock site which is currently the preferred location and premises for the hub.

The interdependency between the future Hydrotherapy pool arrangements and the availability of adequate and viable estate for the hub model is recognised within the options appraisal advantages and disadvantages. The options appraisal, engagement and recommendation however will not be predicated on the viability of the hub's success.

5. Options Appraisal

A review of available options has been jointly considered by Bedford Hospital and Bedfordshire CCG based on the information presented in this paper. The outcome has resulted in four options which will be discussed with our patient users and key stakeholders before a conclusion is reached.

#	Option	Description
1	Re-open the Hydrotherapy pool at Gilbert Hitchcock House with immediate effect	Re-open the pool in its current state with immediate effect and without refurbishment works.
2	Refurbish the Hydrotherapy pool and re-open at Gilbert Hitchcock House	Bedford Hospital to work with the Estates Team to refurbish the Hydrotherapy pool, update the plant and re-open
3	Close the Hydrotherapy pool at Gilbert Hitchcock House offering only land based therapies	Bedford Hospital to permanently close the Hydrotherapy pool at Gilbert Hitchcock House and only offer land based therapies

4 Provide Hydrotherapy Services at local facilities on a sessional basis	Bedford Hospital to close the pool at Gilbert Hitchcock House and offer this service to patients who are deemed to clinically require this treatment as an adjunct to land based treatment
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Option 1: Re-open the Hydrotherapy pool at Gilbert Hitchcock House with immediate effect

In its current state the pool is unreliable with risks to patient safety and poor patient experience as a result of short-notice cancellations. An action plan would need to be put in place with safeguards to ensure chemical balance and patient safety.

The advantage of this option would be that patients would begin receiving a hydrotherapy service immediately, subject to maintaining the correct temperature and chlorine/pH levels.

The disadvantages of this option would be:

- the risk to patient safety from a chemical imbalance and risk of clinical harm
- the probable short notice closures associated with the chemical imbalances giving patients a poor service
- the current state of inequity of service provision for those patients living in the South of the county who would have to travel to the North for therapy
- risk that keeping the pool open in Gilbert Hitchcock House could make the Primary Care Hub unviable

Option 2: Refurbish the Hydrotherapy pool and re-open at Gilbert Hitchcock House

In order to refurbish the Hydrotherapy pool, Bedford Hospital would need to invest in a new boiler plant specific to the pool and adapt the current system so that the building heating is not running all year round. To secure a longer-term sustainable service, the pool itself would require refurbishment with significant capital investment.

BHT is currently exploring local facilities as an interim measure. If this option is selected as the preferred approach, the interim engagement of local facilities would continue until refurbishment works have been completed.

The advantages of this option would be:

- a fully working and safe hydrotherapy facility for patients providing a longer-term sustainable service
- a business opportunity for Bedford Hospital, generating revenue by renting out the facility to private patients and other organisations such as baby/children’s swim lessons, ante natal exercise, patient groups/societies and private physio companies

The disadvantages to this option would be:

- the continuing post code lottery of inequity of service for those patients living in the south of the county as they would have to travel north for the service
- risk that keeping the pool open in Gilbert Hitchcock House could make the Primary Care Hub unviable, thus impacting on the ability to bring integrated care together for patients across this geography.
- impact on other Bedford Hospital capital developments due to the investment requirement
- Capital investment cost versus the quality and accessibility of care

Option 3: Close the Hydrotherapy pool at Gilbert Hitchcock House offering only land based therapies

This option provides no alternative hydrotherapy provision, however patients would still have access to land based therapies provided by Bedford Hospital Physiotherapy Team.

Patients currently receiving hydrotherapy at alternative facilities will continue to receive this treatment until their management plan completes. New patients, however, will not have access to NHS funded hydrotherapy.

Alternative options are available to patients still wishing to proceed with water based therapy within a short travelling distance as long as the patients have transport and the funds to pay for the use of the pools.

The advantages of this option would be:

- Bedford Hospital would save the cost of refurbishment which could be utilised in other areas within the hospital
- the space could be re-utilised for the Gilbert Hitchcock House hub providing services to Bedfordshire residents such as multi-disciplinary long term condition and frailty clinics, integrated mental health services, and extended hours

The disadvantages to this option would be:

- patients would have no NHS funded hydrotherapy
- patients would have to pay to use alternative pools which would give inequity of therapy for those without funding or transport
- physiotherapists would not be present to go through the exercises with the patients

Option 4: Provide Hydrotherapy Services at local facilities on a sessional basis

This would involve BHT subcontracting with alternative pools to provide group sessions with a Bedford Hospital physiotherapist.

Six pools have been identified in the local area as suitable to treat patients who would benefit from hydrotherapy. Bedford Hospital is currently in discussion with two pools to provide an interim arrangement until the review has been completed. Based on the outcome of the patient and stakeholder engagement, these arrangement may continue longer-term.

The advantages of this option would be:

- those patients that may benefit from hydrotherapy would still be able to access it in a reliable and safe pool
- depending on the location of the pools, patients may have less travelling to access the therapy
- access times may be different to current, which some patients may find more useful
- patient parking at the alternative interim pools is free (parking charges currently apply at the Gilbert Hitchcock site)
- the space could be re-utilised for the Gilbert Hitchcock House hub providing services to Bedfordshire residents
- The service could be more reliable and sustainable than current

The disadvantages of this option would be:

- patients may experience transport difficulties to the alternative pools
- access times to the alternative pools may be different to current, leading to inequity of service if patients are unable to have carers or transport available at those times

6. Next Steps

Bedford Borough Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to review the content of this report and the joint identification of options available. Both organisations are seeking the support of OSC to undertake a six week targeted engagement exercise. The details of the Communications and Engagement Plan can be found at **Appendix 2** with the intention of starting on 22nd July 2019 following the opportunity to discuss this approach with both Bedford Borough (8th July 2019) and Central Bedfordshire (22nd July 2019) Overview and Scrutiny Committee's.

The outcome from the planned engagement and the review of the available options will be evaluated with a recommendation to both Bedford Hospital Trust Board and Bedfordshire CCG Governing Body in September 2019. As part of the evaluation and recommendation a Quality Impact Assessment and Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken.

A further update will be provided to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee's in October 2019.

Bedfordshire CCG Governing Body is asked to:

1. Note the report for information
2. Ensure the adequacy of the proposal and the options presented.
3. Provide support to a targeted six week engagement approach commencing 22nd July 2019

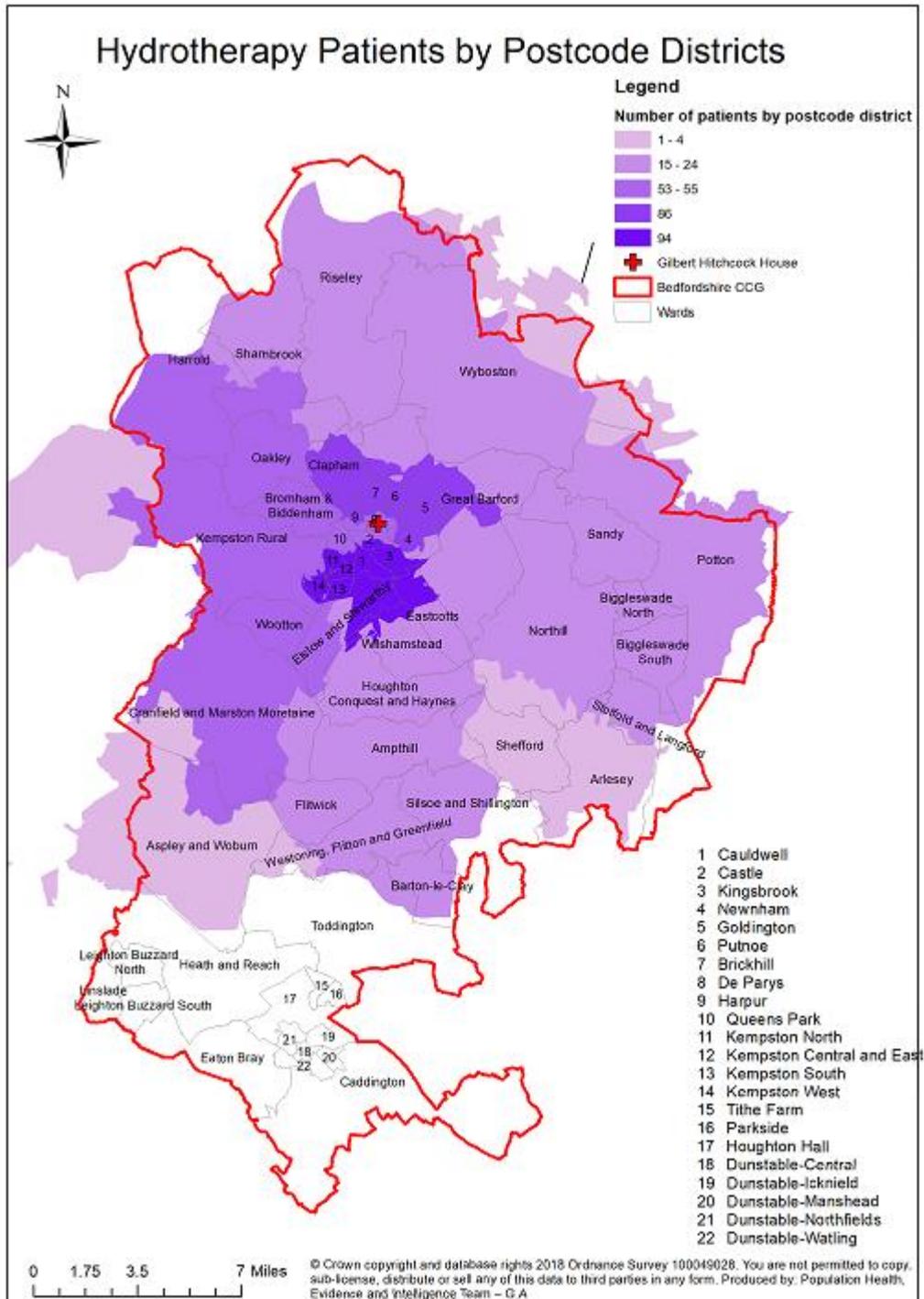
Supporting papers

Appendix 1 Access map of Bedford Hospital Hydrotherapy Services

Appendix 2 Communications and Engagement Plan for MSK Hydrotherapy Services

Appendix 1 Access map of Bedford Hospital Hydrotherapy Services

The following map indicates where patients, who access the Bedford Hospital Hydrotherapy Service, reside.



Appendix 2 – Communications and Engagement Plan for MSK Hydrotherapy Services