

Stakeholder briefing Planned care waiting list management

25th August 2022

Summary

Greater Manchester (GM) is one of the areas hardest hit by COVID-19. There are currently 499,000 people waiting for planned hospital care and reducing the backlog continues to be a priority for the health and care system.

Our recent focus has been on treating people who had waited the longest, 104 weeks or more. The number of people waiting over 104 weeks was a significant challenge with over 7000 patients needing to be treated between February and the end of July. We are pleased to report that at the end of July, other than those patients who chose to wait longer or who had specific complex requirements, we have no patients waiting over 104 weeks in GM.

The focus will now shift on treating people who have waited 78 weeks or more by the end of March 2023.

The GM Elective Care Recovery and Reform Board has agreed a strategy that describes the approach we will take to tackle the waiting list backlog.

We are continuing to develop resources to support people while they wait for hospital treatment. Our GM website [While You wait](https://whileyouwait.org.uk) [whileyouwait.org.uk] has been updated and is now accessible to more residents in GM. We are also working on procedure level information that will help people to prepare for their treatment.

Introduction

This briefing is designed to update stakeholders in GM on the NHS waiting list backlog and the work that is being done to tackle it and support people while they wait. There have been four previous stakeholder briefings, the last in April 2022.

Current position

GM is one of the areas hardest hit by COVID-19 and this has impacted on our speed of recovery.

The number of people on the total waiting list is increasing and currently stands at 499,000 (as of start August 2022). The three specialties with the longest waiting lists are Trauma & Orthopaedics, Gynaecology and Ear Nose and Throat (ENT).

Reducing the number of people waiting for planned treatment continues to be a key focus for us in GM. The NHS and partners across the region are working together to treat people as quickly as possible.

We appreciate that people waiting a long time for care or treatment may be struggling with their physical and/or mental health and may have questions.

In GM we have [While You Wait](http://whileyouwait.org.uk) [whileyouwait.org.uk] to support people with information and advice on how best to manage their health and wellbeing while they wait.

While You Wait is now accessible to more people across GM. With our new accessibility toolbar, people can translate the content into 100+ languages, use the text to speech functionality, reading aids and styling options

Elective care recovery and reform strategy

We have now agreed a strategy that describes the work that will be done across GM to tackle the waiting list backlog. The strategy has 6 pillars:

Integrated elective care	Looking at how we can improve referral processes and what we can do to better support people to prevent or manage conditions.
Productivity and efficiency	Ensuring we are using our existing resources as efficiently as possible, including our theatres, our beds and our staff.
Utilising the independent sector	Working in partnership with local independent sector providers, who provide NHS services, to offer people treatment as quickly as possible.
Waiting list management	Reviewing how we manage our waiting lists and prioritise patients and how we can provide support to people while they wait and ensuring a focus on health inequalities.
Surgical hubs	Exploring how we can create and protect additional capacity in our existing hospitals to treat more people.
Children's elective recovery	Focusing on how we tackle waiting list backlogs in children's surgery and how we support children and young people.

(GM elective care recovery and reform strategy, 6 pillars, July 2022)

Treating people who have waited the longest

Our recent focus has been on offering treatment to people who had been waiting 104 weeks or more. The number of people waiting over 104 weeks was a significant challenge for GM with over 7000 patients needing to be treated between February and the end of July. We are pleased to report that at the end of July, other than those patients who chose to wait longer or who had specific complex requirements, we have no patients waiting over 104 weeks in GM.

This represents a huge effort from our hospitals across GM, including independent sector providers. Providers worked together to provide mutual aid and supported patients to be treated at the most appropriate site where capacity was available.

Some patients will have accessed their treatment in a different place, and we'd like to thank them for being flexible.

The focus now shifts to treating people who have waited 78 weeks or more. Our target is to treat all people who have waited this length of time by the end of March 2023. To deliver this we will use the same principles of working together as we did for the 104 week waits.

Care Navigation in Gynaecology services

The elective care board has agreed to fund Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust and the Healthier Wigan Partnership to undertake 6 months pilot projects to test out a new approach to care navigation. The pilot will focus on Gynaecology services as one of our specialties with the highest number of people waiting in GM.

The aim of the pilot will be to better support patients in the community rather than having to access hospital care. If successful, the approach will be rolled out to other specialties and localities in GM.

MyRecovery App

The MyRecovery app is designed to support patients waiting, preparing for and recovering from surgery. It provides a range of information and advice from clinical teams about what patients can do in the lead up to surgery and in the recovery period, to help them get the best possible outcome from their treatment.

The app is currently being used by 3 of our GM hospital trusts in Orthopaedics. Further investment has been agreed to enable the app to be rolled out to remaining hospital trusts and to be used in more pathways, such as Urology.

Patients eligible to use the MyRecovery app will be invited to register for the service by the hospital.

Supporting people while they wait

[While You Wait](http://whileyouwait.org.uk) [whileyouwait.org.uk] is a resource designed to support people to look after their physical and mental wellbeing while they wait for care and treatment. We have recently updated the website to provide accessibility and language support.

Via the new accessibility toolbar people can translate the content into over 100 language, text to speech functionality, reading aids and styling options.

We are working with local clinicians on new sections that will support people waiting for treatment under Trauma and Orthopaedics and Gastroenterology. A new section will also be launched to support children waiting for surgery and their parents/carers.

Further Information

For any further information, please contact Vicky Sharrock, Programme Director GM Elective Care Recovery and Reform Programme, Vicky.Sharrock@mft.nhs.uk.