

# Stakeholder briefing

## Planned care waiting list management.

05 September 2023

### 1. Background

There are 558,000 people waiting for planned hospital care (elective care) in Greater Manchester, approximately to 1 in 6 people living in the region. Reducing the waiting list backlogs remains a priority for the health and care system.

Staff in hospitals across Greater Manchester are working hard to see and treat people, maintaining the delivery of services as much as possible during recent periods of industrial action.

This briefing is designed to update stakeholders across Greater Manchester on our work to manage waiting list backlogs and to support people while they wait. There have been five previous briefings which you can find [here](#).

In this briefing you will find an update on the current position of our planned hospital services and the size of the waiting lists. You will also find feedback from recent engagement work with people and communities, updates on 'While You Wait' and Greater Manchester and locality-based initiatives that are helping to manage backlogs.

### 2. Current position

The number of people on the total waiting list at the end of August is 558,000. The three specialties with the largest waiting lists are gynaecology, ear, nose, and throat (ENT) and trauma and orthopaedics.

Reducing the number of people waiting for planned treatment continues to be a key focus for us in Greater Manchester. Hospitals are working together to treat people as quickly as possible, particularly those who are a clinical priority and those who have waited the longest.

Many patients who have waited 104 weeks or 78 weeks have now been treated unless they have a particularly complex medical issue, have been poorly, or have chosen to wait longer. The next significant milestone for us is to treat everyone who has waited 65 weeks or more by the end of March 2024.

### 3. Greater Manchester initiatives

#### Feedback from people and communities

Between February and April 2023, we spoke to people about planned hospital services and gathered feedback via a survey. The purpose was to understand people's experiences, how we

can best help people while they wait and to understand how to support people to access care in a different way. The engagement outcome report has now been published and you can read it by clicking [here](#).

Due to the large number of people on hospital waiting lists this is a challenging situation and we know the longer waits are having a significant impact on people and their loved ones. It is clear from the feedback that we must improve communication with patients on the waiting lists to offer more updates, reassurance, and support.

Seven recommendations have been made in the engagement outcome report and we will be working with hospitals across Greater Manchester to make improvements. In approximately six months' time, we will publish a 'you said, we listened' document to update you on our progress.

Thank you to everyone who spoke to us or completed the survey. We are still in the process of contacting people who told us they wanted to give more information about their experience.

## New British Sign Language (BSL) resources available



While You Wait is our website designed to support people waiting for hospital care or treatment. People visiting the site can find answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs) plus information and advice on how to manage their physical and mental wellbeing.

A new British Sign Language (BSL) page has been launched to support members of the deaf community. Visit [www.whileyouwait.org.uk/BSL](http://www.whileyouwait.org.uk/BSL) to find:

- How hospital waiting lists are prioritised and how to look up an average waiting time.
- What to do if your condition gets worse.
- Why it's important to use your waiting time to prepare your mind and body.
- How to get additional support.
- A range of videos covering how to look after your physical health.
- A range of videos covering how to look after your mental health.

## Patient choice

In many cases, patients have a right to choose where they want to have their NHS treatment, and this might include private hospitals if they have been funded to provide NHS care. The [NHS e-Referral service](#) provides an easy way for patients to choose where to go.

Work is underway to improve the choices offered to patients when they are referred and to provide a means by which they can 'change provider' if they have been waiting a long time.

Patients should now expect to be given an average of five providers to choose from if a referral is made for them on the e-Referral system.

One of the likely questions patients will have when looking to choose a hospital will be how long they may wait. It is very difficult to give patients a precise waiting times because the waiting list change daily. It is however possible to look up an average waiting time for the specialty at a hospital by visiting [My Planned Care](#). This is currently the best resource available to get an idea of the average wait time, but it should be noted that waiting times for specific procedures within a specialty could differ significantly.

## The recovery of services for children and young people

Long waits before accessing planned hospital services can have greater impacts on children and young people. In May 2023, NHS England published a checklist that outlines actions we must take to accelerate the recovery of services for children and young people. You can read this by [clicking here](#).

On 28 July 2023, approximately 40 clinical and non-clinical colleagues from hospitals across Greater Manchester came together to discuss how we can make sure that services for children and young people recover at the same speed as those for adults. There were lots of ideas about how we can increase capacity for children's surgery, use more Patient Initiated Follow Up (PIFU) where appropriate to free up slots in outpatient clinics and how we can standardise preoperative assessments.

There is a dedicated section on 'While You Wait' for children and young people where you can find information on how to manage childhood illnesses, how to manage pain and mental health and how to look out for sepsis. You will also find information for children waiting for dental and urology procedures with more detailed advice. Visit <http://www.whileyouwait.org.uk/childrens-surgery>.

## Investing in our workforce to improve glaucoma care

Glaucoma is a common eye condition where the optic nerve, which connects the eye to the brain, becomes damaged. It is vital that people diagnosed with glaucoma are monitored regularly and that glaucoma is diagnosed effectively.

Work is taking place across Greater Manchester to improve access to glaucoma services, including glaucoma enhanced assessment prior to referral and for low-risk patients to be monitored in primary care, by an optometrist with an appropriate glaucoma qualification. To support this, the NHS in Greater Manchester has funded 65 optometrists to complete the College of Optometrist Professional Certificate in Glaucoma at the University of Manchester.

The new glaucoma enhanced assessment service is available in eight of our ten Greater Manchester localities, with the final two due to follow soon. This investment in our optometry workforce will enable people to be cared for closer to home and will reduce the number of people who need to be referred to hospital.

## 4. Locality and hospital initiatives

### Funding to update endoscopy facilities

There are over 28,000 people currently waiting for an endoscopy procedure in Greater Manchester and it was recently announced that two of our local hospital trusts will receive extra funding to improve their endoscopy facilities.

Over £18million will be spent at Wythenshawe Hospital, Leigh Infirmary and Wrightington Hospital to increase the number of endoscopy rooms and to upgrade facilities in line with the Joint Advisory Group (JAG) Gastrointestinal accreditation.

This means that all our endoscopy units in Greater Manchester will soon be JAG accredited and patients can have an increased confidence in their endoscopy service and be assured of the same quality of care no matter where it takes place. You can find more information about the JAG accreditation process by [clicking here](#).

### Rochdale surgical hub recognised for high standards

Rochdale Infirmary is one of surgical hubs recently accredited for high standards in clinical and operational practice. The accreditation scheme run by 'Getting It Right First Time' (GIRFT), in collaboration with the Royal College of Surgeons of England and supported by the Royal College of Anaesthetists, assesses hubs against a framework of standards to help deliver faster access to some of the most common surgical procedures and to assure patients of high standards of care.

Surgical hubs, which provide protected elective capacity and are separated from emergency services, are part of plans to increase capacity for elective care with more dedicated operating theatres and beds. The hubs exclusively perform planned surgery and mainly focus on high volume, low complexity surgery across various specialties including ophthalmology, general surgery, orthopaedics, gynaecology, ear nose and throat, and urology.

The surgical hubs based at Wrightington Hospital and Leigh Infirmary are currently going through the accreditation process.

### Community Diagnostic Centres will improve access to tests and scans

Communities across Bolton are set to benefit from a brand-new Community Diagnostic Centre that will provide thousands of patients with quicker access to vital tests and scans. Based at Royal Bolton Hospital, this will be a one-stop-shop for quick and accurate tests. [Click here](#) to read more about the Bolton Community Diagnostic Centre.

A new Community Diagnostic Centre is also set to open in Salford later in 2023 at West One Retail Park in Eccles. It will offer high tech scanning, heart tests and other diagnostic services, helping to detect a range of conditions quicker, ensuring patients can then be treated faster. Read more about the Salford Community Diagnostic Centre [here](#).

Stockport NHS Foundation Trust and Tameside and Glossop integrated Care Trust will build a Community Diagnostic Centre at Crown Point Retail Park in Denton, Tameside. It will provide around 129,000 extra tests a year when all services are live. [Click here](#) to find more information

about the Community Diagnostic Centre in Denton.

## 5. Regional bulletin

You can read the last NHS England North West recovery bulletin, version 05, by clicking [here](#).

## 6. Further information

If you have any questions or feedback about this briefing note, please do not hesitate to contact the Greater Manchester Elective Care Recovery and Reform Programme Team via [gmhscp.gmelectivecare@nhs.net](mailto:gmhscp.gmelectivecare@nhs.net).