

**What size of expansion of the hospital is being planned and will this be an extension to the existing wards or a new unit?**

The plans that we have developed to date actually involve a reduction in the amount of beds at Ferndene from 40 to 38. These plans do involve some minor extensions to the rear of the building (totalling an overall increased floor area of 7.8%) in order to create more therapeutic space.

**Will this be on land that currently forms part of the Ferndene unit?**

Yes - all of the plans only apply to the land currently occupied by our services and are classed as Ferndene.

**Will Ferndene continue to be low-secure wards only or will the extension include provision for medium or high-secure wards?**

The current Low Secure services will remain and we are proposing to move 14 medium secure beds to Ferndene from the St Nicholas Hospital site so that we have all of our children's services together on one site.

**Will this involve an expansion of the PICU unit in any form?**

No - the PICU will remain as a 4 bed facility but we are proposing to improve that facility as part of the scheme.

**Will this involve an extension for the maximum length of time that patients can be held within the PICU for their own safety?**

No – If anything we are hoping that the improvements will actually help reduce the lengths of stay.

**What category of patient will this new facility be aimed at and does it include mental category 4 (patients suffering from psychotic episodes) or mentally disordered sex offenders?**

The facility will provide services for the current patient groups, which already includes young people suffering from a psychosis, as well as the transferred medium secure services. This may also very rarely include young people who are classified as mentally disordered sex offenders; however any young people within this type of category would be subject to very stringent security measures.

**What plans have been made to address the security needs of these vulnerable patients and to protect them, the staff and the general public nearby (local children, schools etc)?**

The Trust has a very long and reputable history of providing medium secure services to vulnerable young people and our current services are located in Gosforth, Newcastle which is very near to residential housing, schools and nurseries. We have never had any form of security breach whereby local children or members of the

public have been at risk of immediate harm. We can assure you that all of the young people who come under our care are subject to very robust clinical risk assessment and planning procedures. Our staff are focussed upon providing highly specialised treatment which will hopefully help these young people to get back to living a normal and fruitful life at some point.

**Will extra staff be required for this expansion and if so, are there any plans to expand the parking for staff given the overflow of staff cars onto the estate access road on a regular basis?**

There will be an increase of staff who will be based at Ferndene; our plans include an increase of parking spaces at the rear of the building to accommodate this.

**Will this extra staffing level be sufficient to address the numerous patient escapes that have been observed by Humbles Wood residents over the last 3 years?**

These incidents usually involve young people who have had planned escorted leave and have ran away from nursing staff. These young people are often very frightened and anxious and do not present as a danger to the public otherwise they would not be having planned escorted leave. On very rare occasions some young people manage to get out of the non-secure facilities at Ferndene although none of these incidents have resulted in anything untoward happening to a member of the public. Whenever a young person absconds from the service in this way there are emergency procedures involving the police that are put into action immediately and that usually results in the safe and quick return of the young person. Along with other measures (including increased security via the introduction of a secure fence around the rear of Ferndene) currently being put in place the increases in staff numbers will help us to reduce these types of incidents.

**Will there be increased visitor parking provided as a result of Ferndene's expansion?**

As stated earlier we are actually reducing the bed numbers at Ferndene therefore do not anticipate increases in visitors; however the increased parking spaces will absorb any peaks in demand.

**How are the hospital planning to route and manage construction traffic (building materials, contractors, heavy equipment etc) during any planned expansion to the unit?**

Every effort will be made to reduce the impact of traffic associated with the building works on local residents by directing the majority of traffic down the side and rear of the building i.e. the first turn right off moor road. The volume of new building and alterations is low and is likely to be split over two phases.

**A rough breakdown of how the 100 staff will operate - relating to travel plans - will it cause a major issue on the roads and car parking.**

Although 100 staff sounds a lot, they will be spread over a shift pattern that involves four different shifts across a 24 hour period. Some of them may be 9am – 5pm

admin workers or AHP's. It is not envisaged that this will cause any issues with the roads and the planned increase in parking spaces will easily accommodate these numbers. The busiest times will be shift hand overs and 9am – 5pm.

### **Where will the patients come from? Just the Trusts area?**

The majority of patients that will come into Ferndene will be from the North East and Cumbria area. Due to the fact that the Medium Secure wards are national services some of the patients admitted to these wards will be from other parts of the UK. In general when placing young people in hospital the principle across NHS services is to place within locally provided services wherever possible.

### **How will they be transported to/from the hospital? - Thinking about security enroute.**

Most of the young people who are admitted to Ferndene are transported by their families or family social workers, however this will vary dependant on risk and which unit/ward they will be admitted to. This will range from secure transport for those at high risk, ambulance in some cases and police transport.

### **How can visitors be deterred from entering the housing estate?**

Due to the level of concern relating to this issue we can suggest that the council take the view that yellow lines and 'access only' signs be installed. They may want to recover the costs of these measures from the Trust as part of the planning approval. This would obviously be a decision for the council and the highways department rather than the Trust.

### **How quick and effective will procedures be if someone absconds - medium or low risk patients**

The Trust have very robust policies and procedures that apply when a young person absconds without planned leave. Every incident of this nature that occurs will instigate an immediate response from the clinical team which involves an instant search of the immediate vicinity and surrounding area. If this proves unsuccessful then the police will be informed and the young person will be classified as a missing person. When the individual is considered to be a risk to themselves or others the police are informed immediately and they are informed of these risks which tends to escalate their response to the situation.

### **Will residents be warned of absconders?**

In the majority of cases this would not be appropriate because most of the young people who abscond do not present any risk to the public; however if the young person did present as a risk to others the clinical team would work in conjunction with the police in order to determine whether or not this would be necessary.

### **Is there a higher risk adolescent category than medium?**

No – medium secure inpatient services are the highest level of security offered within hospitals in the NHS for young people under 18 who are receiving treatment.

**How many medium secure patients have absconded from hospitals throughout the country? Circumstances / any criminal acts committed? How did they abscond?**

There have been no incidents of absconding from an adolescent medium secure facility within the Trust. We are not sure how many incidents there have been nationally however there have been none communicated through the national network system in recent years that we have been made aware of. It is possible to submit a freedom of information request to NHS England who would have this type of information on record.

**No smoking policy and impact upon the housing estate**

The Trust maintain a commitment to the national no smoking policy for NHS facilities as we have a responsibility to everyone who uses and works within our services to promote healthy living and a smoke free environment. We recognise that this can have a negative impact upon residential areas surrounding hospital sites when people choose to stand just outside the hospital boundary to smoke. The Trust have no legal authority to prevent this from happening; however we actively discourage staff, patients and visitors from doing this and we will continue to strive to prevent this from happening in the future via a number of strategies including improved signage, raising issue via staff meetings and guidance for visitors to the unit.