

**A paper for information**

**Fixed term changes to East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust (ESNEFT) Endoscopy services in Colchester and north east Essex: update for Essex Health Overview Policy and Scrutiny Committee**

2 November 2023

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 In January 2024, ESNEFT will partially close the Elmstead Day Unit building at Colchester Hospital. The area of the building to close provides endoscopy services including operational work in theatres. This closure is to allow for the building work to continue for the Essex and Suffolk Elective Orthopaedic Centre (ESEOC) which opens in summer 2024, in the Dame Clare Marx Building.
- 1.2 This will mean a temporary change in location for those patients having planned endoscopy procedures up until a new outpatient endoscopy centre opens at Colchester Hospital in summer 2024. This new centre will be a stand-alone building with four state-of-the-art rooms designed for endoscopy procedures. This development will mean shorter waiting times for patients, with fewer chances of a cancellation. Patients will be treated quickly and safely with better access to endoscopy procedures. The design will also meet the highly sought after Joint Advisory Group on Gastrointestinal (GI) Endoscopy (JAG) accreditation. This is a supportive process which promotes improvement through highlighting best practice and encouraging continued development of services.
- 1.3 Before the new unit opens we will support our capacity by sending patients to our two new endoscopy procedure rooms at Clacton Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC) facilities and to the Oaks Hospital. Facilities will still remain at Colchester hospital for endoscopy procedures during an inpatient stay.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 The construction work for ESEOC is on track to open in summer 2024. Which is a programme that the HOSC has been involved with from our public consultation in 2020. Part of the building work includes providing link corridors to the Elmstead Day Unit next door and a turning circle with a drop off zone by the time it opens. The drop off zone is vital for patient's access to the centre. To allow for this work to take place, some of the current endoscopy space in the Elmstead Day Unit will be required to relocate for a temporary period.
- 2.2 In November 2023, the CDC at Clacton Hospital is due to complete all building work. This final part of the programme includes the opening of two diagnostic procedure rooms for endoscopy. This will mean that Clacton CDC will be the first such facility in the country to provide this particular service. This will really benefit local residents who will no longer need to travel from Clacton to Colchester for investigations, and reduce their waiting times.

### **3. Changes taking place for patients and staff**

- 3.1 When Elmstead Day Unit partially closes at the start of next year, patients will be offered appointments at two different locations. These will be pre-determined by clinicians and the booking team to make sure the location is suitable to deliver the procedure required. Any pre and post procedure outpatient appointments are still planned to take place in a patient's normal hospital. Endoscopy facilities will remain at Colchester Hospital for high risk and complex inpatients only, until the new centre opens during summer 2024.
- 3.2 Clacton CDC was designed to provide diagnostic procedures for patients living in Clacton and the surrounding areas to allow for quicker diagnosis and treatment for local residents. During this interim period, patients from Colchester and other areas in north east Essex will also be referred to Clacton CDC until the new endoscopy centre at Colchester Hospital opens.
- 3.3 Clacton CDC will be staffed by the Colchester Hospital endoscopy team.
- 3.4 For those procedures not suitable for Clacton CDC we are looking at alternative options for patients to keep their appointments. We are talking to the Oaks Hospital in Colchester to rent space for a short period until the new endoscopy centre opens. For inpatients at Colchester Hospital (as listed in 3.1), we will be using a room in the radiology department that is in the main building, close to the emergency department and other teams.

### **4. Conclusion**

- 4.1 We are confident that this temporary transfer will not impact on patients care. To support this transition we are creating the opportunity to have more capacity for endoscopy than what we currently have on offer, with the use of the CDC, Oaks and a radiology room. Therefore, the only scenario a delay would occur is if a patient declines treatment either at the Oaks or at Clacton CDC. Reporting times, staffing, and delivery of care will remain the same as they would if the patient was to be seen currently at the Elmstead Day Unit.
- 4.2 The project team are running patient engagement activities to ask patients about any additional support they need. The booking team for endoscopy procedures will also signpost any extra support our patients may need during this period like access to community transport, which we are aware is going to have a reduction of funding.

**Report author:** Rebecca Driver

**Title:** Director of Communications and Engagement, ESNEFT

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