


# Agenda Item 5

		<b>THE HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR LINCOLNSHIRE</b>	
Boston Borough Council	East Lindsey District Council	City of Lincoln Council	Lincolnshire County Council
North Kesteven District Council	South Holland District Council	South Kesteven District Council	West Lindsey District Council

**Open Report on behalf of Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust**

Report to	<b>Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire</b>
Date:	<b>20 March 2024</b>
Subject:	<b>Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust - Update</b>

**Summary:**

Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (LPFT) is the principal NHS provider of mental health services and also provides some learning disability, autism and social care services in the county. LPFT has attended the Committee on several occasions over the last twelve months to provide an update on many of the Trust’s services. Most recently sharing some stakeholder updates regarding the continued temporary closure of Lincolnshire’s male psychiatric intensive care unit, as well as some work started to review the current high dependency rehabilitation service for females in the county at the Vales in Discovery House.

This report summarises these updates, as well as providing some more brief updates on general waiting times, recruitment and retention and further investment in new services for mental ill health and autism.

**Actions Requested:**

That the Committee consider the information presented by Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and decide on any required next steps.

## 1. Temporary Service Closures

### The Hartsholme Centre, Lincolnshire's Male Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU)

The Hartsholme Centre, Lincolnshire's male psychiatric intensive care unit (PICU) based in Lincoln, has been temporarily closed since October 2022 following an escalation of concerns around available staffing across the adult inpatient and urgent care division and concerns about patient and staff safety.

The Hartsholme Centre was chosen to be closed at the time, as it had an impact on the least number of patients and the highly skilled workforce was able to be redeployed to good effect across the remaining wards for the period of closure.

Since its temporary closure the Trust has made substantial efforts to recruit to our adult mental health wards and has had positive success with stabilising staffing across the division, meaning the Trust was then in a position to safely and sustainably reopen the Hartsholme Centre.

The service was due to be reopened on a phased basis from November 2023 with a new staffing team on the Hartsholme Centre. However, shortly before the work began to remobilise the service, water quality issues were identified during routine water sampling.

Historically, the building that the Hartsholme Centre forms part of, has had previous issues with water quality due to its age and network of water pipes. The presence of legionella bacteria has been tackled in the building previously and required the temporary closure of the site whilst maintenance and cleansing took place. As a consequence, the Trust has robust water management processes in place to manage with regular flushing of systems and water testing to closely monitor.

During the temporary closure of the ward the Trust took the opportunity to undertake some much-needed maintenance and improvements to the bathrooms and water systems which were completed in October 2023. However, as part of the water testing that took place shortly before the planned reopening, significant levels of legionella were detected across the building, including significantly on the ward itself, which meant we could not move to reopen the ward for residential use until the system was cleared.

The Trust, in discussion with commissioners NHS Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board, took the difficult decision to extend the period of closure whilst water cleansing work took place. Several systemwide disinfections, both thermal, and chemical, have since been undertaken and are believed to have improved the situation, but not entirely brought the bacteria to safe levels. It has however had some positive impacts and the issue is now localised to just the ward itself, which will mean the Trust is able to take a more targeted approach.

A new water hygiene risk assessment of the property has taken place, alongside an authorised engineer inspection, and identified further works that can be done and these are being completed as a priority. In the meantime, an enhanced flushing regime remains in place with regular retesting.

Because of the unpredictable nature of Legionella, the team have been unable to identify an exact timescale for how long this cleansing work may take to clear the system and therefore make it safe for reopening. However, based on progress to date, the Trust are now aiming for May 2024. This will be dependent upon the results of further testing.

The Trust has reassurance from the independent authorised engineers that it is doing all it can to tackle the issue as quickly as possible and remain in a position to be able to remobilise the team within four to six weeks once the all-clear is given.

The Board are very aware of the impact this closure is having on patients, their families and staff who are currently redeployed supporting alternative wards across the division. Whilst numbers of patients requiring out of area care have remained small during the temporary closure, between 2-5 male patients at any time, we continue to do all we can to support people as close to home as possible and bring them back to services in Lincolnshire as soon as we are able to. We also remain in regular contact with patients and their families during this time to offer any support we are able to provide.

#### Manthorpe Unit, Dementia Ward in Grantham and District Hospital

The Trust last presented an update on the continued temporary closure of the Manthorpe Unit in May 2023. The decision at that time had been to extend the temporary closure for a further twelve months to extend and enhance the pilot of dementia home treatment teams and independently evaluate its impact to decide on next steps.

The enhanced teams were fully operational from July 2023 and are continuing to work well and have a positive impact on reducing the number of people requiring hospital care. Anyone still requiring hospital treatment for their dementia continues to receive this at Langworth Ward in Lincoln, and no one has had to travel outside of Lincolnshire for hospital care during the period of closure.

The team undertook further engagement between July and October 2023 to understand any impact of the continued closure and any feedback on the home treatment team to date. As part of this there were no concerns raised about the continued closure and feedback about the impact of Dementia Home Treatment was very positive.

The service is shortly to commence an independent evaluation of this extended pilot with the East Midlands Clinical Senate, as well as a further round of engagement with patients, their carers and family, other supporting agencies and staff to feed into this evaluation exercise. This is expected to take place from May 2024. LPFT then expect to be in a position to discuss potential next steps with the ICB and other key partners in September 2024.

## 2. Service Reviews

### Review of the Vales at Discovery House

Over the past five years the Trust has seen the type of patients being supported on female mental health wards change considerably, with growing complexity meaning some people are needing longer inpatient support.

This has been particularly felt on Lincolnshire's female high dependency rehabilitation ward, the Vales at Discovery House in Lincoln, where over the last five years the types of patients they have been caring for has become more complex, often with complex trauma, personality difficulties and other problems such as eating issues, all of which come with differing needs to those traditionally supported on the ward.

The ward is intended to provide longer ward-based rehabilitation care to those with severe and enduring mental health needs, helping them gain control and understanding of their conditions and supporting them to learn to live as independently as possible again in the future. Whilst all patients being cared for on the ward always receive caring, compassionate, and safe care, the Trust has heard that it is not always fully meeting people's needs and staff are not always feeling fully equipped to adapt their care.

This is not a problem only seen in Lincolnshire and something many NHS trusts nationally are finding. As this trend has continued, both the Trust and our commissioners at NHS Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board (ICB), have agreed that a review is required of our local provision to ensure it can best meet the needs of our service users both now and in the future.

The Trust therefore launched a review of current female rehabilitation provision on the Vales in January 2024, to understand the needs of the patients they are caring for, how the service has adapted over the last five years, what more might be required and any potential gaps in service.

Local engagement started with staff and current patients on the ward and has been widened to other patients who may have had a stay on the ward over the last five years, as well as those who care for them. In addition, the Trust has also been talking to other local services that might refer to, or support the Vales with care and discharge, to understand any wider impacts.

Given the very low turnover of patients on the ward, where people stay on average for two to three years, this phase of engagement has focused on trying to hear the views of around 25 patients and their families/carers who received care during this time.

Whilst we have not been able to directly reach out to patients that have since left our services, we have made every effort to open the engagement opportunities out to our local community to seek feedback. To date this has been very limited other than those patients currently on the ward and local staff, but the Trust continues to make every effort to provide this opportunity to share feedback in a variety of different ways and has had some invaluable feedback from current patients and staff to help inform next steps.

The Trust is continuing to analyse all available data to them, as well as the feedback given to date to understand what next steps may be. Further updates will of course be provided as any options emerge.

### **3. New services**

#### NHS 111 Mental Health Option

NHS 111 has historically been used to support those seeking help with physical health needs, however from 2 April 2024 people of all ages will also be able to access urgent mental health support through NHS 111 too.

This enhanced offer will enable specially trained mental health clinicians operating in the local area to speak to callers 24/7, discuss their urgent needs and assess the best way to support them. The team will be part of LPFT and calls will be re-routed by the NHS 111 technology to the most appropriate locality team based on where the person is calling from.

Currently in Lincolnshire, people access mental health support via the *Mental Health Matters Helpline*, where dedicated staff provide emotional support and someone to talk to 24/7. If an individual requires urgent care, this is escalated to local crisis teams for support. Those seeking emotional wellbeing and mental health support for children and young people are also able to call the *Lincolnshire Here4You* advice line, which is also open 24/7.

The expansion of NHS 111 enhances this offer further by giving a direct line for those in crisis and requiring more urgent help. The local helplines will remain for emotional support and less urgent signposting. We will ensure that no matter what number people call they will still get to the right service to meet their needs.

The Trust is currently actively recruiting for this new team and has had a very good response. We expect to have sufficient staffing capacity to be able to launch on the national launch date and continue to expand and adapt the service as it embeds.

#### Virtual Autism Hub

As part of work to increase support for autistic people in Lincolnshire, the Trust has been working with NHS Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) to provide a new grant programme for volunteer-led community groups in Lincolnshire that support autistic adults, children, young people, their families, and carers, as well as bring together a hub of information on groups and agencies that could support the autistic community.

The new Virtual Autism Hub officially launches this month, and the specialist autism navigators are already in post and able to start taking enquiries now should anyone need support. These roles work directly with autistic people of any age and their parents/carers/families across the county to help them access statutory services and other local support.

This support is non-clinical and includes advice, signposting to the community groups and services, information about autism and diagnostic pathways, and some practical support with tasks such as filling out forms or accompanying individuals going to their first meetings.

People can find out more about the service at [www.lpft.nhs.uk/virtual-autism-hub](http://www.lpft.nhs.uk/virtual-autism-hub) or by calling 01522 458 588.

### Expanded Eating Disorder Support

The Adult Eating Disorders Service is expanding to offer dedicated specialist support for mild to moderate eating disorders, in adults aged 16 and over. Previously, this support has been provided by *Lincolnshire Talking Therapies*. However, as part of the Community Mental Health Transformation Programme and plans to expand the Lincolnshire Adult Eating Disorders (AED) offer, the service will be introducing dedicated specialist support to ensure that eating disorders provision is in line with national standards. People aged under 16 will continue to receive support through the children and adolescent mental health eating disorder service.

From this month, the mild to moderate eating disorders pathway will be gradually rolled out across the county on a phased basis, whilst team recruitment and training is implemented.

The service will work with people who have anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa and binge eating disorder, with specialist treatments offered in line with national and NICE guidelines. The service will mostly offer support in the form of guided self-help and group treatment using a cognitive behavioural model. One-to-one appointments will be offered where groups are not suitable.

Initially people registered at GP surgeries in the following primary care network areas can self-refer:

- Lincoln Health Partnership <sup>1</sup>
- IMP <sup>2</sup>

This will be rolled-out to all primary care areas in Lincolnshire over the next twelve months. During this roll out, people can still access support via Lincolnshire Talking Therapies.

The aim of the treatment is to support people to understand their eating disorder, regularise their eating where necessary and support them to develop a different way of valuing themselves, as well as different ways of coping.

---

<sup>1</sup> Lincoln Health Partnership Primary Care Network comprises the following GP practices based in Lincoln: Brayford Medical Practice, Portland Medical Practice, University of Lincoln Health Service, and Newark Road Surgery.

<sup>2</sup> IMP Primary Care Network comprises the following GP practices, based in Lincoln and the villages north of Lincoln: Abbey Medical Practice, Cliff House Medical Practice, Glebe Park Surgery, Lindum Medical Practice, Nettleham Medical Practice, the Ingham Practice, Welton Family Health Centre, and Willingham-by-Stow Surgery.

#### **4. Recruitment and Retention**

The Committee will be aware that staff recruitment and retention continues to be a challenge in local services, as it is in all NHS services across the country. As mentioned above the Trust has had to take some difficult decisions over the last few years as a consequence of available staffing and temporarily close some services such as the psychiatric intensive care unit as a result.

This has been, and continues to be, one of the Trust's main risk areas and significant work has been undertaken to proactively recruit to services in Lincolnshire and find new roles and ways of working to help retain staff working for the organisation. This proactive approach has greatly improved our recruitment status and is starting to stabilise staffing in many areas.

Between April 2023 and December 2023, the Trust had 638 new starters. This figure is expected to hit over 800 for the whole of the 2023/24 financial year and is a significant improvement on the total for the 2022/23 financial year, where there were 460 new starters. Despite the usual turnover of staff and the expansion of services the Trust now has 300 more whole time equivalent staff working in the organisation than previous years. This positive progress is seeing a lessening impact on our adult inpatient wards, as well as some areas where the Trust had seen an increase in waiting times as a consequence of staff vacancies.

Significant work is continuing internally with teams to look at staff retention and the Trust, along with partners across the Lincolnshire NHS system, was recently accredited with national timewise accreditation, which supports organisations to maximise the benefits of flexible working.

There are also a number of areas where new roles are being piloted to try a new way of working that does not rely on more traditional hard to recruit roles.

The Trust is awaiting the full results from its last national staff survey which took place at the end of last year, but preliminary reports show the organisation has made further improvements in the feedback staff provide about working for LPFT and the Trust continues to benchmark very well amongst similar organisations across the country.

#### **5. Waiting Times**

Demand on services continues to be significant and whilst the Trust is expanding services to meet demand where it can, and finding different ways of working, there continues to be longer waiting times in some areas than the Trust would like. Much work is being undertaken to increase capacity and productivity to reduce waiting times to target levels, and a greater level of support is now in place to people whilst waiting; for example, family liaison workers in children and young people services and waiting well workers in older people and dementia services.

## Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

Waiting times continues to be a particular challenge in children and young people services and specifically the core children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) where there continues to be a sustained increase in the number of children and young people requiring treatment post pandemic. Significant improvements have been made following additional investment and the Trust has seen a reduction in the number of young people waiting over twelve weeks for treatment from 283 people in February 2022 to 130 people in February 2024 (a reduction of 54%).

There are currently 14 young people across Lincolnshire who have been waiting over 35 weeks and each young person has a plan in place to ensure they are supported whilst they wait and that their risks are monitored and responded to in a timely way. Anyone waiting for services also has contact at least once a month from a member of the children and young people's team to monitor any change and share useful guided self-help resources.

## Autism Diagnosis

Another area previously highlighted as having high waiting times is the adult autism diagnosis pathway, which saw a large increase in referrals following increased awareness and some backlog due to a pause in assessments taking place during the pandemic. All referrals are risk assessed as they are received and the team prioritise those requests for assessment where there is high risk, or where receiving a diagnosis would significantly impact on the individual's quality of life.

Following significant work to tackle the backlog of assessments following the pandemic, there is now only one adult who has been waiting over a year, and the median waiting time for assessment is currently 13 weeks. The Trust's improvement trajectory ambition had been to reduce the waiting list to 515 people by 31 January 2024, and this has actually reduced to 392 people, which is a positive step forward.

## Lincolnshire Talking Therapies

Lincolnshire Talking Therapies continues to consistently achieve the nationally set target of 75% of patients commencing treatment within six weeks and 95% within 18 weeks. The service however is seeing some increase in waits for some specific treatments due to vacancies and higher demand. Recent recruitment has been successful, and the Trust has been outsourcing some treatments to an external provider to support with reducing this wait.

## Early Intervention in Psychosis

The Trust has also previously highlighted that there have been some difficulties in meeting two week waiting standards for *Early Intervention in Psychosis* services. After a challenging period for the team, the service is now almost entirely recruited to, and has undertaken some remodelling work and additional investment and now consistently meeting this standard once again.



## Adult Community Mental Health Teams

For our adult community mental health teams, we are seeing a variable picture across the county as we continue to develop and implement the community mental health transformation work, with the new aspirational target of a four week wait. 67% of patients are now being seen within this new four-week wait target.

## Memory Assessment

For people waiting for a memory assessment the Trust currently measures itself against a target of 18 weeks for first appointments. The service as a whole is seeing people on average within twelve weeks. More work is currently being done to look at how the Trust could provide a dedicated memory assessment service, which would significantly help with managing demand for memory assessments. The service is also introducing new technology solutions such as online virtual assistants and digital pathways for those who wish to use this as an option.

### **6. Consultation**

This is not a direct consultation item.

### **7. Conclusion**

The Committee is requested to consider the report and decide on any required next steps.

This report was written by Jo Walker, Head of Communications and Participation,  
Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

This page is intentionally left blank