

Finding a long-term solution for the inpatient mental health services previously provided at the George Bryan Centre

Summary consultation document



The NHS in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent has been working with local patients, staff, interested groups and partners to redesign our mental health services.

Our priority is to deliver quality mental healthcare for patients in their own home or community whenever possible, rather than in hospital. This model of care is the national ambition set out in the NHS Long Term Plan. It is based on the latest clinical evidence, which shows that this approach gives the best outcomes for most patients.

This is not new – we have been working with our partners and investing in our community mental health services for many years. We have enhanced our community teams and built better ways of working that help us meet the national goals – like making community services easier to access and giving people more choice and control over their treatment.

For the small number of patients who do need a hospital stay, we want to make sure that the right specialist staff are on hand to give them the best care.

Thank you to everyone who has joined in these conversations so far. Your contributions have helped us draw up a proposal for improving mental healthcare in the local area.

Our proposal is about where we provide the inpatient (hospital bed) services that were previously provided at the George Bryan Centre. These are services for people living in south east Staffordshire: adults (aged 18–65) with severe mental illness, and older adults (aged 65 and over) with severe mental illness or dementia.



We are running a consultation about the proposal we have described on page 2.

This is a summary of the main consultation document, which you can find online on our [website](#), along with the consultation survey. Please read the main document if you would like to read more detailed information about why we are reviewing our mental health hospital services, how we have reached our proposal and evidence that we have looked at. You can also find out more about how we have involved the public and patients up till now.

Who is conducting this consultation?

The Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent NHS Integrated Care Board is legally responsible for this consultation. Integrated care boards are the organisations that commission NHS services in their local area, from the NHS trusts and other bodies that provide them.

We welcome all responses to this consultation. The deadline for responses to the survey is midnight on 23 March 2023.

We want to know:

- if there are any other ideas we have not considered
- if there is any positive or negative impact we need to plan for, if we decide to go ahead with this proposal
- how we can support people if these changes are agreed, including how we can support people with travel.

To help you to understand our proposals and give your views on them, we have a range of information available on our dedicated [website](#).



Why are we reviewing our local mental health hospital services?

There have been changes in national best practice for delivering mental healthcare. The national guidance says that most patients should be treated in the community, rather than in hospital.



National best practice and clinical evidence

Clinical evidence shows that most people have the best outcomes (best experience and chance of recovery) when mental healthcare and support are given by community teams.

National best practice in mental health services now is for care to be given at home and in the community, wherever possible. This helps people to stay connected with their family and friends, carry on everyday life and work, and keep their skills for independent living.

Of course, sometimes people become so unwell that they must go to hospital. The national best practice is that these stays should be as short as possible – giving essential treatment and care until patients can safely go home, with continuing support in the community.



George Bryan Centre temporary closure

The George Bryan Centre provided mental health beds for patients living in Burton upon Trent, Lichfield, Tamworth and the areas around those towns:

- the West Wing had 19 beds for adults aged 18 to 65 with severe mental illness
- the East Wing had 12 beds for older people (aged 65 and over) with dementia and/or other mental health problems.

In February 2019, a fire destroyed the West Wing. The patients there were moved to St George's Hospital, Stafford. Soon after the fire, the board of Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (MPFT) decided to temporarily close the East Wing, for safety reasons.

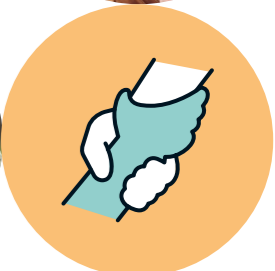
Admissions to the George Bryan Centre

Although they were diagnosed with a severe mental illness, the patients who stayed at the George Bryan Centre usually had low-risk or less complex needs.

The centre had limited numbers of specialist staff and no psychiatric intensive care unit for people who needed additional support. Because of this, more seriously ill patients were admitted to **St George's Hospital** in Stafford, or other specialist settings.

When it was open, **just one in four mental health patients** from the areas around the George Bryan Centre went there if they needed a stay in hospital or another specialist setting.

Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (MPFT), which operated the George Bryan Centre, has carried out a travel analysis. This suggests that if the George Bryan Centre had still been open, only five patients a month from these areas would have been admitted there between February 2019 and July 2022. The others would have gone to St George's Hospital or other hospitals. You can read about our travel impact analysis in our business case on our [website](#).



How we have been looking after patients since 2019

Adults with severe mental illness (the service in the West Wing of the George Bryan Centre)

People who would previously have stayed at the George Bryan Centre, and **who do not need a hospital stay**, are being supported in the community.

Over the last three years, MPFT has been investing in local community mental health services and improving them:

- making it easier to access care, so people can get the right treatment and support more quickly
- creating integrated neighbourhood teams, bringing together mental health professionals, GPs, social workers and other teams
- giving better support to people experiencing a mental health crisis
- working in partnership with the voluntary sector, helping provide ‘wrap-around’ care.

Since the George Bryan Centre temporarily closed, most patients from the area it served **who do need a hospital stay** have been admitted to St George’s Hospital in Stafford.

The ward that some former George Bryan Centre patients were transferred to on the night of the fire has been refurbished since then and provides 18 beds.

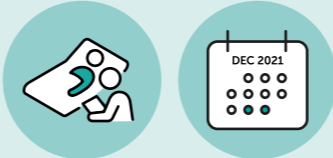
There are benefits of being an inpatient at St George’s Hospital rather than at the George Bryan Centre:

- much greater range of specialist services at St George’s Hospital, including art and music therapy
- patients with approved leave can easily walk into Stafford town centre – helping to keep their independence and connection with everyday life

- specialist facilities at St George’s Hospital, including seclusion rooms and a psychiatric intensive care unit for male patients. This means if their condition gets worse, people can be moved between wards, rather than between two different sites. This is better for patients, as there is less disruption to their care.

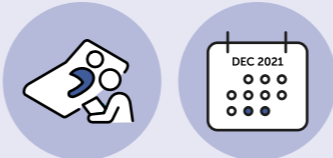
On a larger site like St George’s Hospital, staff are used flexibly across different wards, providing cover and maintaining a high level of care, particularly during periods of staff sickness. This is not possible at a smaller centre.

Since 2019, the average length of stay for patients at St George’s Hospital has been shorter than the average stay at the George Bryan Centre, 2017–19. This meets the national best practice goal of keeping hospital stays short.



Average stay at St George’s Hospital:

22.94 days
(12 Feb 2019 – 23 Nov 2021)



Average stay at George Bryan Centre:

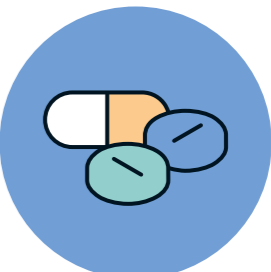
30.62 days
(11 Feb 2017 – 11 Feb 2019)

Older adults with severe mental illness or dementia (the service in the East Wing of the George Bryan Centre)

Clinical evidence suggests that hospital stays for people with dementia can make symptoms worse, permanently reduce their independence, and make it more likely that they will go into residential care and/or back into hospital.

We have enhanced our community mental health services with specific support for older adults:

- an older adult specialist is involved when a patient or carer first gets in touch, to get the right teams in place and speed up the process
- the Hospital Avoidance Team provides support seven days a week to help older people get care at home instead of going to hospital
- voluntary sector partners provide a range of services.



The proposal

Our mental health clinicians and staff have been working to find a long-term solution for the services that were based at the George Bryan Centre.

They have:

- considered the national guidance for mental healthcare and the clinical evidence that supports it
- gone through a tried and tested process and considered two proposals:
 - one proposal was to make the changes we made in 2019 permanent
 - one proposal was to reinstate a ward with 18 beds at the George Bryan Centre site
- involved patients and carers, staff and interested groups, and listened to your views.

After examining the options, our clinicians and experts have recommended that we make the changes we made in 2019 permanent. This means keeping open the refurbished 18-bed ward at St George's Hospital.

They looked at any potential impacts if we make the temporary changes permanent.

They considered our workforce, clinical safety, health inequalities, and travelling times for family and carers.

They also considered the benefits to patients of the specialist services and facilities at St George's Hospital, which we describe on page 6.

In summary, evidence considered by our clinicians and experts suggests an isolated ward at the George Bryan Centre would not:

- be clinically safe
- be sustainable in terms of staffing
- provide the same high-quality care that patients could access at the specialist site at St George's Hospital.

You can find out more about the safety, staffing and care considerations that have led to the recommendation to keep the 18 beds at St George's Hospital by reading our full consultation document, pages 18-21. You can find this on our [website](#), along with our full business case.

No decision has been made yet about this proposal, and any decision about future service change will consider the findings from this consultation.

Our recommended proposal

We will keep our enhanced community mental health services in place, which provide the right support for adults with mental health needs or dementia in their usual place of residence.

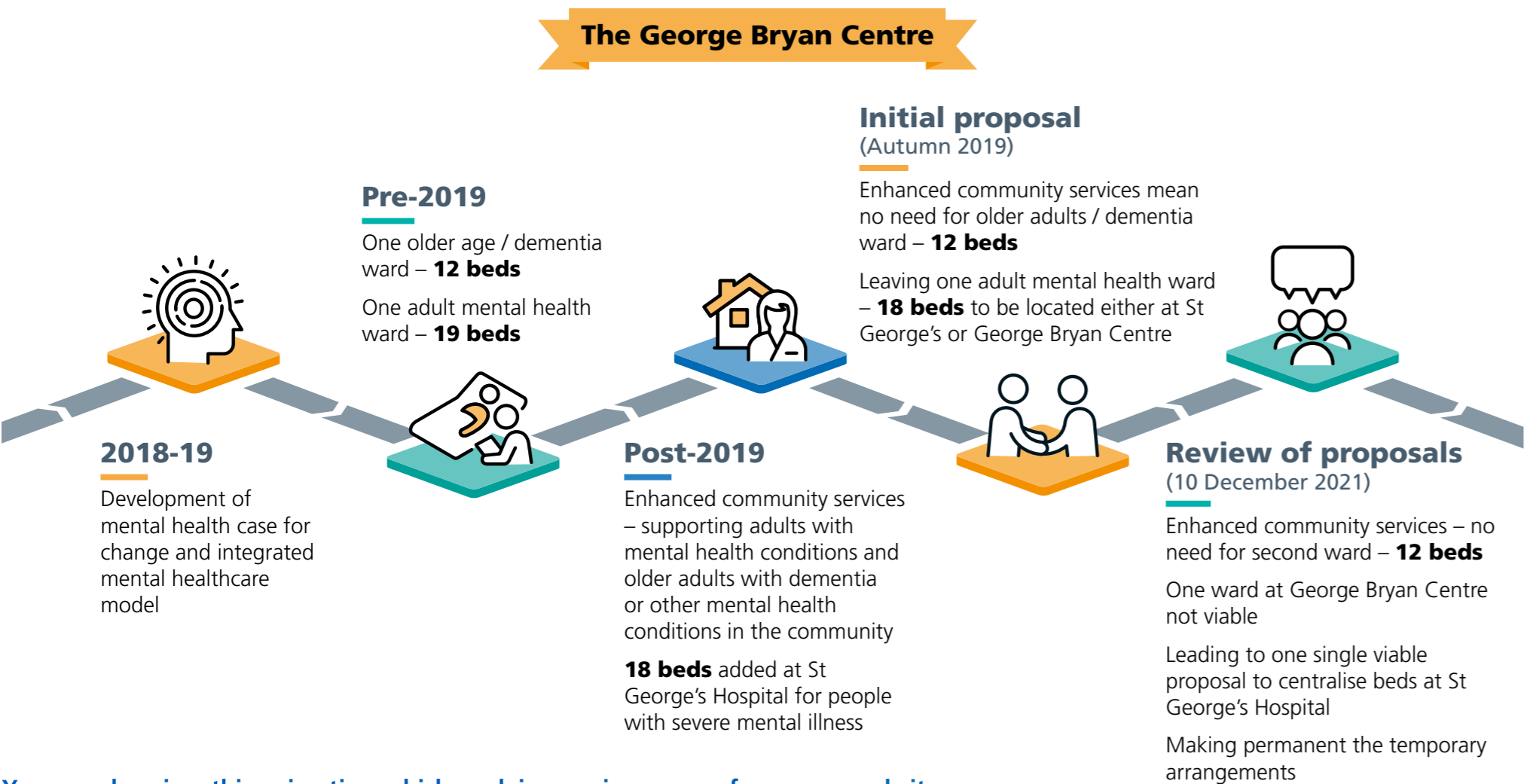
This means we do not need to re-open a ward for older adults with dementia at the George Bryan Centre site. National best practice is to care for people with dementia in their own home or community.

We will keep the 18 beds at St George's Hospital for people who need a hospital stay for high-risk and complex mental health needs. We will not re-open a ward at the George Bryan Centre site.



How we reached this proposal

This diagram shows the development of the proposal.



You can also view this animation which explains our journey so far on our [website](#).

Listening to your views

We started our conversation with local people in 2019 to understand what worked well and what could be improved in our services.

In autumn 2021, we ran two online events and a survey about mental health services in south east Staffordshire, including the services that were provided at the George Bryan Centre. This was to ask patients and interested groups if there was anything new we needed to consider since the COVID-19 pandemic.

The findings from our public involvement have been part of the evidence that our technical group of clinicians and staff have considered.

We continue to listen to your views, and this consultation is the next stage in this conversation. You can find out more about our involvement work to date on our [website](#).

Actions we have taken after hearing your views

What you have told us:	What we have done, or will do:
You are worried about travelling to see a loved one at St George's Hospital.	We are asking for your views on our travel policy as part of this consultation.
You are worried about how to keep in touch if travelling is not practically possible, or too expensive.	We will help you keep in touch through digital technology – we recognise some people may need equipment and support to use these tools. MPFT's website has a page offering support and guidance with digital skills.
You are worried about the lack of mental health services in your area to replace the George Bryan Centre.	We have enhanced our community mental health services. You can read more about these services in our full consultation document, pages 10-15.
You are worried about lack of crisis support in your area.	A crisis café has opened in Tamworth, offering a safe space, emotional support and information.
More help should be available before someone reaches crisis point.	We have redesigned our community services to help people get support more quickly. For example, having your first appointment at your GP practice with a mental health nurse, instead of having to wait for your GP to refer you.
You have felt isolated and it has been difficult to find the help you needed.	We have been working to make services easier to find and access. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a single phone number for the 24/7 helpline, which anyone can use to ask for help• for older adults, a specialist involved at an early stage to help find the right services and support for complex needs• more support for carers, for example the new out of hours home sitting service.

Addressing the negative impacts of the proposal

We have heard that your biggest worries are around visiting and staying in touch with loved ones during a hospital stay.

Travelling

In recommending that we keep the mental health beds at St George's Hospital, we have thought carefully about the potential disadvantage caused by travel difficulties for some patients and carers.

Even if the George Bryan Centre was the nearest unit, many patients would still be admitted to St George's Hospital, because it has the facilities and staff to help patients with more complex and serious conditions.

There are potential advantages of the proposal that may **mitigate** (make up for) the travel disadvantages.

- Better care through on-site access at St George's Hospital to a bigger range of mental health specialists, more treatment options and activities, and the safer care that the facilities help provide
- Getting the right specialist treatment means that hospital stays can be shorter and people are helped to stay independent
- Our community services are giving better support to people with severe mental illness in the community, so that fewer people need to stay in hospital. This includes better support for people in crisis.

We understand that visits are very important for patients, families and carers, and we are exploring ways to help manage any impact on this. The views and comments you give us during this consultation will help MPFT shape their travel policy. We are open to hearing new views and suggestions.

Staying in touch

We have also heard that you are worried about how to keep in touch if travelling is not practically possible, or too expensive.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, MPFT used digital devices, including tablets, so that people on their wards could see and speak to people at home. This will continue. MPFT has a dedicated [webpage](#) to support carers to use digital technology.



We have analysed the impacts of this proposal

Sometimes it is necessary to travel for specialist care

If you need a hospital stay, you should expect to receive the best care from our specialist mental health teams. They are used to dealing with the most complex and serious needs.

Like cancer, stroke, cardiology (heart) and other specialist services, these teams work in our major hospitals, as they need to maintain their skills by seeing larger numbers of patients. They are also in high demand, so we need to use them to the maximum benefit for everyone.

Like travelling for cancer treatment, it does potentially mean a longer journey for visitors. We recognise the important role visitors have for mental health patients, and we are balancing this against the need to deliver the best quality care.



Equality Impact and Risk Assessment (who would be negatively impacted by the proposal?)

MPFT completed an Equality Impact and Risk Assessment (EIRA) in March 2022. It found the proposal had positive impacts for most groups. It found a potential negative impact for those carers and family members who would need to travel further to visit a patient staying in St George's Hospital in Stafford.

You can read the full EIRA in an appendix of the business case on our [website](#).



Financial analysis

Our priorities have been ensuring clinical safety and that we have enough well-trained staff for the long term. To ensure due diligence (proper approach), our finance teams completed a detailed financial analysis on both proposals in spring 2022.

This showed that the cost of rebuilding the George Bryan Centre would be £11.37 million. This proposal was discounted because it is not viable on the grounds of clinical safety and workforce.

You can read more about the financial analysis in the business case on our [website](#).

Having your say

This consultation will run for six weeks from Thursday 9 February 2023.

The responses received during the consultation will be analysed by Midlands and Lancashire Commissioning Support Unit and a report will be produced.

The report will be carefully considered by the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB), who are legally responsible for making a decision. The Staffordshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee will also examine the report. Their meeting about this will be held in public and we will publish all the relevant documents on our [website](#).

Once the ICB has made its decision, we will keep you informed.

We will continue to work with NHS England and the Consultation Institute who will monitor our decision-making process.

How to have your say

Complete the survey:

- You can fill in the survey online on our [website](#) - the survey closes at **midnight on 23 March 2023**
- If you do not have access to the internet, please phone us on **0333 150 3069** for a paper copy of the survey and send it to this Freepost address (you do not need a stamp):
Freepost Plus RTAA XTHA LGGC
Communications
Heron House
120 Grove Road
Stoke-on-Trent
ST4 4LX

Take part in our online events:

- Friday 3 March 2023, 1pm – 4pm
- Thursday 9 March 2023, 10am – 1pm

Visit our website to register for an event.

Come to our drop-in roadshows:

- Lichfield Library**
Thursday 23 February, 10.30am – 2.30pm
- Asda, Ventura Road, Tamworth**
Monday 6 March, 10.30am – 2.30pm
- Burton Library**
Friday 10 March, 10am – 2pm
- Asda, Octagon Centre, Burton**
Friday 17 March, 10.30am – 2.30pm.

We may have to make changes to times or venues, so please check our website for updates. If you don't have internet access, call us on **0333 150 3069** for the latest information.



How to contact us


If you would like regular updates on the development of the long-term solution, email us at mlcsu.involvement@nhs.net and we will add you to the mailing list.

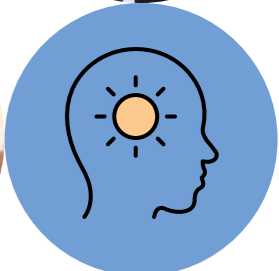
If you would like printed copies of the documents or survey, need documents in different formats or languages or need help to complete the survey, please phone us on **0333 150 3069**.

If you have additional feedback you would like to share, you are welcome to send this to us by email or through the Freepost address on [page 14](#).

We will also be carefully monitoring social media during the consultation:

 Tweet us [@staffsstokeicb](#)

 Follow us on Facebook [StaffsStokeICB](#)



If you need printed copies of the documents, need documents in different formats or languages please call us on **0333 150 3069**.

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