



Powys Community Health Council Response to NHS Future Fit Public Consultation 30 May 2018 to 11 September 2018

Background

Powys Community Health Council (Powys CHC) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the NHS Future Fit consultation.

Community Health Councils (CHCs) are the independent watchdog of NHS services within Wales and we seek to encourage and enable members of the public to be actively involved in decisions affecting the design, development and delivery of healthcare for their families and local communities.

CHCs seek to work with the NHS and inspection and regulatory bodies to provide the crucial link between those who plan and deliver the National Health Service in Wales, the English Trusts, those who inspect and regulate them, and those who use them.

CHCs maintain a continuous dialogue with the public through a wide range of community networks, direct contact with patients, families and carers through our enquiries service, independent complaints advocacy service, visiting activities and through public and patient surveys.

Powys Community Health Council was established in April 2015, following the abolition of the former Montgomeryshire CHC and Brecknock and Radnorshire CHC.

Powys Teaching Health Board (PTHB) is responsible for providing and/or commissioning local health services to reflect the needs of the people of Powys. As there is no acute hospital in the PTHB area, services for Powys patients are primarily secured from Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, Wye Valley NHS Trust, Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board, Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust and Hywel Dda University Health Board.

It is important to note that, at the time of drafting this response, Powys Community Health Council has not had sight of the Powys disaggregated findings from the consultation responses sent directly to Participate Ltd.

This response from Powys Community Health Council should, therefore, be seen as an interim response and we reserve the right to comment further once we have seen the findings from the consultation responses.

The NHS Future Fit Programme

As laid out in the Community Health Councils (Constitution, Membership and Procedures) (Wales) Regulations, it is the duty of a relevant English NHS body to consult with Powys CHC when (a) planning the provision of services; (b) developing and considering proposals for changes in the way those services are provided; and (c) making decisions affecting the operation of those services. It is incumbent upon each relevant English NHS body to consult Powys CHC at the inception and throughout any such planning, development, consideration or decision-making process.¹

¹ See NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE WALES The Community Health Councils (Constitution, Membership and Procedures) (Wales) Regulations 2010 As amended by The Community Health Councils (Constitution, Membership and Procedures) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 – Regulation 27

Since April 2015, Powys CHC has been involved in the monitoring and scrutiny of the NHS Future Fit programme. Prior to April 2015, Montgomeryshire CHC undertook the monitoring and scrutiny of the programme and hosted a 'shaping engagement' event in April 2014. During the last three years, representatives of Powys CHC attended public roadshows, focus groups, workshops, the options appraisal workshop, and travel and transport group meetings. Powys CHC's Chief Officer was in attendance at Future Fit Programme Board meetings in an observer capacity but with speaking rights.

Representatives from the NHS Future Fit Programme Team, Shrewsbury & Telford Hospital NHS Trust and Powys Teaching Health Board regularly attended CHC Full Council and Local Committee meetings. This was to keep CHC members updated on the process and decisions being made throughout the planning and development of the proposals for services at Royal Shrewsbury Hospital and Princess Royal Hospital. CHC members also had the opportunity to comment on the public consultation documents before they were finalised. Powys CHC was satisfied that the documents were in line with the NHS Wales Guidance for Engagement and Consultation on Changes to Health Services.²

Under Section 183 of the National Health Services (Wales) Act 2006, Local Health Boards are required to involve and consult citizens in (a) planning to provide services for which they are responsible; (b) developing and considering proposals for changes in the way those services are provided; and (c) making decisions that affect how those services operate. This means, therefore, that Powys Teaching Health Board has a duty to engage with Powys residents over the proposals under the Future Fit Programme and it is the duty of Powys CHC to ensure that the Health Board carries out that duty.

Powys CHC worked closely with the Future Fit Programme Team, Powys Teaching Health Board, Powys County Council and Powys Association of Voluntary Organisations in the planning of the consultation events which were held in Powys. This work was undertaken by the NHS Engagement and Consultation Programme Group.

² See [NHS Wales Guidance for Engagement and Consultation on Changes to Health Services](#)

It is the opinion of Powys CHC that Powys Teaching Health Board has undertaken a full and comprehensive engagement and consultation exercise on these proposals for change.

Key Comments and Observations Noted during the Consultation Period

During the consultation period Powys CHC officers and members were present at the following events in Powys, to raise awareness of the NHS Future Fit consultation and listen to the public views:

- 6 June, 10am-12noon, Machynlleth Market
- 13 June, 2pm-4pm, Llanidloes Library
- 14 June, 10am-1pm, Newtown Tesco
- 14 June, 1pm-4.30pm, Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant Public Hall
- 18 June, 2pm-7pm, Machynlleth Y Plas
- 23 June, 2pm-4pm, Newtown Bear Lanes Shopping Centre
- 25 June, 12noon-5pm, Welshpool Town Hall
- 27 June, 10am-12noon, Montgomery Library
- 27 June, 5pm-7pm, Caersws The Unicorn
- 28 June, 3.30pm-7.30pm, Newtown Elephant & Castle Hotel (Main Exhibition Event for Powys)
- 13 July, 10am-12noon, Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant Church
- 19 July, 10am-12noon Welshpool Town Hall
- 19 July, 5pm-7pm, Welshpool Tesco
- 22 August, 6pm-8pm, Kerry Herbert Arms
- 30 August, 4pm-7pm, Welshpool Royal Oak Hotel (Second Exhibition Event for Powys)

Powys CHC had a presence at the following events and used the opportunity to raise awareness of the work of CHCs, provide information about ongoing consultations, encourage people to respond to those consultations and to listen to people's comments:

- 23-26 July, Royal Welsh Show in Builth Wells
- 4 August, 8.30am-6.00pm, Brecon County Show
- 4-11 August, National Eisteddfod of Wales in Cardiff
- 9 August, 8.30am-4.30pm, Guilsfield Show
- 11 August, 9am-5pm, Llanfyllin Show
- 25 August, 10am-5pm, Berriew Show
- 1 September, 9am-5pm, Sennybridge Show

The key comments and observations made by members of the public in respect of the Future Fit consultation were noted.

Key Themes

The following key themes emerged from discussions with members of the public:

- A clear consensus in favour of Option 1.
- The impact on patients and relatives/carers by having to travel to either hospital, but especially the difficulty travelling to Princess Royal Hospital, Telford. This is particularly difficult for older people and people who do not have their own transport.
- The lack of public transport, particularly from rural areas.
- The desire to have more services provided in Powys.

What Powys CHC Members Heard

The following is an overview of comments and views expressed to officers and members of Powys CHC, categorised in line with the format of the Future Fit consultation survey.

Section 1: Views on the Proposed Model of Hospital Care

Powys CHC noted the following views expressed by members of the public:

- Some people said that they thought things should stay as they are.
- Several people thought this was a referendum/vote on which hospital they would access for health care.
- It was hoped that the new proposals would lead to better resources, which would attract more and better doctors and

nurses.

- Several people supported the model of care.
- Some people said they did not mind travelling for the right care by specialists; the most important thing is getting the right care. We heard from people who were travelling to Liverpool, Manchester and Cardiff for treatment.
- Most people understood the basics of the model in terms of emergency care but some people did not understand the particulars of the provision of urgent care.

Section 2: Views on Option 1 – the Emergency Care site is the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital and the Planned Care site is the Princess Royal Hospital in Telford

Powys CHC noted the following views expressed by members of the public:

- CHC members obtained a clear consensus in favour of Option 1, principally based on concern over travel times for emergencies. Some people commented that it was better overall for mid Wales residents. Some people stated that there would be a better chance of receiving life-saving treatment in an emergency if the Emergency Care Centre was at Shrewsbury.
- Some people commented that access to emergency services was still a long way for many people even if it is based in Shrewsbury.
- Several people commented that they welcomed the Women and Children's Centre being based at Royal Shrewsbury Hospital.
- If planned care is based in Telford, people highlighted the difficulty for relatives/carers to visit patients. They said that transport was exceptionally difficult from some areas and they

asked about overnight accommodation.

- People were concerned about the difficulties for older people and disabled people in travelling to Telford, particularly if they do not have their own transport.
- Some people considered that travel was a major problem for older people, whether having to go to Shrewsbury or Telford.
- Some people said they would be prepared to travel to Telford for planned care if it means they have less distance to travel when dealing with a relative who has an emergency admission. They thought it would be possible to plan the journey to Telford for planned care and that people who don't drive would have time to make other arrangements.
- Some people commented that the volunteer drivers who take patients to outpatient appointments provided a fantastic service and suggested this system could be extended to support patients and visitors.
- There were concerns expressed about travelling all the way to Telford for only a short appointment – it can take a huge chunk out of the day.
- One person stated that it was impossible to attend an outpatient appointment at Telford within school hours, when travelling by public transport from Montgomery.
- Some people commented on the extra expense incurred by having to travel to Telford.
- Several people commented on the appointments system if patients were having to travel to Telford. There were concerns about the time of appointments for people travelling from Wales and people felt there was a need for better arrangements to take into account distance to travel. Some people commented that there should be opportunities to have appointments closer to home or better transport arrangements.

- People commented that there would need to be additional bed capacity if planned care is in Telford.

Section 3: Views on Option 2 – the Emergency Care site is the Princess Royal Hospital in Telford and the Planned Care site is the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital

- We heard from one person who preferred this option, stating that more people would be accessing planned care and Telford was too far away for that care. This person felt that, in a life threatening emergency, patients would more likely have emergency staff (ambulance) with them who could treat them and then get them to an emergency care site quickly, possibly by air ambulance.
- Most people spoken to did not favour this option.
- Most people felt that the longer travel times for emergency care would not be acceptable. There were many comments about travelling to Telford in an emergency situation.

People felt that driving to Telford in an emergency would be daunting for many people, especially older people. They said that people who are not confident driving on unfamiliar roads would be disadvantaged.

We heard that some people cannot afford to run cars and would find it extremely difficult having to travel to Telford.

Concerns were expressed about the extended distance for ambulances taking people from mid Wales to Telford. This would mean ambulances may not be available when needed in Powys.

Section 4: Any Other Comments

Powys CHC noted the following views expressed by members of the public:

- Some people commented that they would rather not have to travel to Telford at all for NHS care.
- Many people commented that they felt that more services should be provided in Powys. Several people suggested that there should be more outpatient appointments provided locally, in community hospitals and health centres. This could avoid travelling long distance for short appointments. People also suggested that more simple (surgical and diagnostic) procedures could be done more locally.

Several people thought that there should be an emergency hospital in Powys.

Some people asked what happened about the hospital which was being planned for Newtown several years ago.

Some people asked whether PTHB would be reorganising the provision of minor injuries services in Newtown, to provide a 24/7 service.

Some people asked whether PTHB would encourage more doctors and nurses to work at Newtown Hospital. They were concerned that, if option 2 was taken up, then more doctors would live near Telford and, therefore, would be less likely to want to cover outpatient clinics in Powys.

One person commented that people should not have to travel a great distance for radiotherapy, especially if it is happening on a regular basis. This needs to be provided locally.

One person suggested that more mobile scanning could be done locally, eg in units sited on supermarket car parks.

- People expressed concerns about the waiting times for Welsh patients (for planned care) and also asked if there could be easier access for patient notes between NHS England and Welsh patients.
- Some people expressed concern about the timing of any new developments following this consultation. They considered that

the matter had been going on for too long and had cost a lot of money. They wanted to know if this was the final time the matter would be discussed and would it be acted upon this time.

- Several people commented that they had filled in questionnaires and made comments about Future Fit several times over the last four years and they did not understand why they were being asked to do so again now.
- Car parking was considered an issue at both Royal Shrewsbury Hospital and Princess Royal Hospital. People cited the difficulty in finding a space but also the cost of parking, particularly when parking is free in hospitals in Wales.
- Some people commented that there should be better organised transport for people to get to hospital. This also needs to take into account the need for adapted transport for disabled people and the journey time for them. More consideration should also be given to allowing relatives/carers to accompany patients (on patient transport) as, sometimes, a carer is not allowed to accompany a patient and this causes distress. There should be better links with local transport such as Dial-A-Ride and voluntary organisations.
- We heard from one person who stated that they would prefer to attend Wrexham Maelor Hospital rather than Princess Royal Hospital.
- One person told us that they, and many people they knew, did not know how to respond to the consultation because they did not know what Powys Teaching Health Board was thinking or planning.

Quotes

Please find below some quotes of comments received from members of the public:

"We need the nearest service to Mid Wales for emergencies".

"I would prefer Option 1".

"Not too happy" (when discussing Option 2).

"When do we get a more local hospital? Newtown or Welshpool would be good".

"Mid Wales needs a Mid Wales Hospital – Newtown nearly had one some time ago – what happened?"

"Why can't we have an emergency department in Newtown?"

"Much of our routine care and procedures needs to be provided locally. Waits for treatment should be shorter. If you catch things early, people are less likely to need more extensive treatment. Use the community hospitals and local health centres more."

"You can plan your journey to Telford for planned care. If you don't drive, you have time to make other arrangements."

"My husband would not be able to visit me if I was admitted to Telford in an emergency".

"Driving to Telford in an emergency situation would be daunting for many people, especially older people. There's the motorway and also fear of finding your way after leaving the motorway".

"Older people are especially disadvantaged, as they are less able to drive or cope with the stress of travel plus the emergency situation".

"Just the sheer distance to travel in an emergency is a negative, even if travelling by ambulance".

"Having the women's and children's unit at Telford is a great inconvenience. The last time I attended hospital with my child, we went to A&E at Shrewsbury, did the admission process, gave all the information, then we were transferred to Telford and went through the whole process again. It seemed so inefficient, and it was distressing for us".

“Don’t mind travelling for the right care by specialists. The most important thing is getting the right care.”

“It takes 1 hour 40 minutes to get to Telford by car from home”.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of what Powys CHC officers and members have heard when attending engagement and community events, Option 1 is clearly the preferred option for Powys residents.

However, it should be noted that Powys CHC will wish to see the analysis of the disaggregated findings before making a final response to the Future Fit proposals. This response is, therefore, an interim response.