

# Fort House Surgery relocation plans – FAQs

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## 1. What is happening?

Working with staff at Fort House Surgery, the CCG is developing plans to relocate Fort House Surgery on Hersham Road to Burwood Ward in Walton Community Hospital – 700 metres away. These plans are subject to planning permission.

The proposal is at an early stage and no decisions have been made yet. The CCG is committed to working with all stakeholders to explore how challenges facing primary care can be addressed.

## 2. Why does the surgery need to move?

The demand for primary care services in Walton is increasing. This is causing significant pressure on staff and the buildings where our primary care services run from. Fort House Surgery is based in a converted house that is not fit for purpose. There is not enough consulting space and the number of patients is four times what it should be.

There are also a number of wider challenges in the surrounding area. There is a need for more housing and five local GP practices have stopped registering new patients as they have reached capacity. This means people moving to Walton-on-Thames are finding it difficult to access essential healthcare.

We need to address these challenges now if we are to create a sustainable health and care system that works for patients for the future.

## 3. What do staff at Fort House Surgery think about the potential move?

Surgery staff have been heavily involved in developing the proposals so far and are positive about the potential to offer a wider range of enhanced services from new premises.

## 4. What other sites have been considered?

A number of options have been explored including:

- Buying a new stand alone, shell building that forms part of a proposed new, mixed use development being led by the Council on a site 400m away at Stompond Lane. The cost of this option was far beyond the funds available and could not be pursued.

- Exploring other suitable premises near to the existing site. Discussions with Elmbridge Borough Council have yielded no suitable premises.
- Redeveloping an existing empty space at Walton Community Hospital. The CCG currently pays £180,000 per year for this 'void space'. It provides three times more space than the current premises. This is the only viable option available to the CCG and Fort House Surgery.

## 5. How much will it cost and where is the money coming from?

The CCG has been awarded funding from the [Estates and Technology Transformation Fund](#). This is NHS England's multi-million pound investment in modernising buildings and making better use of technology to improve general practice services for patients.

Funds have also been secured from Elmbridge Borough Council Community Infrastructure Levy subject to a travel plan being agreed and sufficient engagement with the local community and councillors.

## 6. How are we involving patients and local people who could be affected by any relocation?

There are a number of ways local people have been engaged and can continue to be involved throughout September.

- Meeting with ward councillors and residents in June 2018
- Meeting with Fort House Patient Participation Group
- Meetings with practice staff and other local healthcare professionals
- An exhibition for local people to view the proposals and talk to CCG and surgery staff in September
- Two public meetings in September
- Discussions with the Patient and Public Engagement Forum
- Meeting offered with local MP
- Sharing information with Healthwatch and the local voluntary sector
- A communications campaign to raise awareness of the plans using online and offline channels – social media, local press, leaflets, posters, website information

## **7. Will there be a public consultation?**

The proposal does not constitute a substantial variation in services and therefore would not require formal public consultation. The proposed location is 700m away and therefore patients registered with Fort House will still be able to access primary care services locally.

## **8. I am registered with Fort House Surgery – what do I have to do?**

You do not need to do anything. The practice will keep you informed as the proposal goes through planning permission. All services will continue as normal.

## **9. Why can't the existing premises be renovated?**

The only option to provide enough space is to build out over the front car park. This would not be compliant with planning requirements for consulting rooms.

## **10. What does the space at Walton Community Hospital offer?**

Burwood Ward offers more space to accommodate the growing number of people needing GP services in Walton. It also offers versatile spaces to develop services that are an alternative to a hospital stay. The space could house outpatient services and teams of different healthcare professionals who are now working more closely together.

There would be room to host training for medical staff so that we can develop and retain highly qualified clinicians. The space is also currently paid for by the CCG so it offers good value for money.

## **11. What is the expected impact on local roads and parking and how will this be managed?**

The CCG recognises the concerns of residents of Sidney Road, Rodney Road and other nearby roads have about the potential for additional cars parking on roads adjacent to Walton Community Hospital.

The proposal we want to discuss with local people seeks to move Fort House Surgery to a location that is central to the patient population. It is therefore expected that the number of patients that would need to drive to their appointment and park would be low.

However, this will not be taken for granted. An independent specialist will develop a travel plan for the proposed premises. To do this they will liaise with Surrey County Council to consider options that would reduce the potential for anti-social parking.

The proposed premises fulfil the Elmbridge Borough Council requirement for parking spaces – one space per consulting room.

## **12. What will happen to the existing Fort House Surgery building and land?**

Part of this overall proposal requires Fort House Surgery to be converted back into residential use. Should planning permission be granted for this change of use, then the building will be sold by the old partnership.

## **13. Who is making the final decision and when?**

The key milestones (which are subject to change) are...

- September 2018 - discussing plans with local people
- November 2018 - planning applications submitted (residents can share their views with Elmbridge Borough Council)
- January 2019 – decision by Elmbridge Borough Council’s planning committee
- February 2019– business case approved (if council gives planning permission)
- March 2019 - renovation work starts on site
- June/July 2019 – relocation complete

## **14. What services will be available from the new site if the relocation goes ahead?**

The space available at Walton Community Hospital means we could provide a range of services needed by local people.

- Pre-diabetes sessions – to support people at risk of diabetes
- Asthma walk-in clinics
- Low-risk skin cancer clinics
- Screenings currently offered at hospital brought into the community – e.g. aortic aneurism screening to check for swelling in the main blood vessel that runs from your heart down through your tummy. It can be serious if not spotted early.
- Contraception clinics
- Sexually transmitted infection screening
- Well person clinics

- Mother and baby meetings
- Pre-university sessions to give advice on contraception, alcohol use and mental health issues
- Training centre of excellence for health professionals

### **15. What will happen if planning permission is not granted?**

The money secured cannot be transferred to another project in Elmbridge, or used for any other GP practices. Therefore the funding will be lost, and the CCG will not be able to apply for more.

The CCG would continue to pay £180,000k per year for an empty space that cannot be used.

Fort House will remain in non-compliant premises and the list will remain capped – so no new patients can register and it will not be possible to offer any further services.

The surgery premises would also not meet Care Quality Commission (CQC) conditions which will be taken into account by the CQC at their next review.

### **16. Why is the empty space at Burwood Ward not being used for community hospital beds for rehabilitation?**

Burwood Ward has not been used as an inpatient ward for over nine years. Data from adult community services has shown there is not a need for additional inpatient beds for rehabilitation.

Evidence also shows that patients benefit from receiving rehabilitation support in their own home.