



Media Release

embargo until 11 am 23 March 2020

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HSC makes further changes to the provision of health and care services in response to COVID-19

To continue to effectively manage the rapidly changing COVID-19 situation so that patients and service users can receive the care they need whilst protecting those who provide it, it has become necessary to introduce further changes and measures as follows:

Outpatient appointments

All non-urgent outpatient appointments will be suspended from today **Monday 23rd March**. This includes all appointments provided by HSC and the MSG across the PEH campus, Alexandra House and Mill House. Patients will be contacted by administrative staff as soon as possible in respect of this decision.

It may be possible to conduct some appointments by telephone, and clinicians will endeavour to provide this service if it is feasible to do so. Urgent outpatient services such as cancer care will continue as scheduled. For outpatient appointments that do go ahead 'in person', HSC and MSG would appreciate patients attending alone if at all possible.

Visits to patients within the PEH Campus

It is with regret that visits from families and friends to facilities on the PEH campus are to be suspended from **Tuesday 24th March**. Visitors had previously been asked to make sure only one family member / friend visits a loved one in the various wards and departments during visiting hours and to use technology options for visits where possible. Despite partial support for this request, there continues to be visiting at a level and frequency that does not reflect the requests that have been made or, on occasion, the advice from Public Health meaning that regretfully, all in patient visits will need to be suspended with the decision kept under constant review.

There will be exceptions for those families and friends who wish to visit loved ones within Loveridge and Frossard wards, which can be arranged by contacting the ward manager and

on the basis of minimal visits consistent with the situation. There will also be exceptions for those understandably seeking to visit loved ones who are receiving end of life care by contacting the manager of the relevant ward. The Mignot Memorial Hospital in Alderney will introduce similar measures to align to those being undertaken within Guernsey.

PEH Public Entrances

The PEH main hospital building is considering options to close some of its existing four public entrances and will introduce a revised access system starting today. The Emergency Department entrance will remain open at all times in any revised access policy but it has become necessary to control the footfall within the hospital more generally. Details will be announced on this policy when a final decision has been made next week.

Creation of 'Hot' ICU facility

Urgent changes to ward layout within the PEH have been finalised this weekend which has allowed a dedicated 'hot' ICU area to be created in the area previously used as the day patient unit, if and when it becomes necessary to utilise such a facility. This is an area that is accessed directly from the Emergency Department and will be used to care for COVID-19 positive patients.

These changes have been delivered quickly by the in house PEH Estates team and are in line with the contingency plans maintained and revised daily by senior staff within HSC and the MSG.

Community services – Impact of social distancing

In light of the social distancing guidance that is being directed by Public Health, all HSC community facing services will be assessing the changes that are necessary to associated services across the coming days and will contact service users to advise them of any revisions that have to be introduced. Further communications on this issue will be shared through media outlets as soon as possible.

General Resilience

HSC are in the process of appointing additional temporary agency nurses to support service provision using its established agreements with a range of UK suppliers. The MSG, working in partnership with HSC are seeking to source and appoint additional temporary clinicians to support the on island COVID-19 response capability and resilience levels.

A dedicated team are working hard to ensure the continued supply of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) including masks, gloves etc is maintained from a range of suppliers including the NHS and other global suppliers.

Heidi Soulsby, H&SC President commented:

“All positive cases of COVID-19 currently have a clear travel history and there is no evidence of community seeding at the present time. However, our teams across health and social care will continue to assess and respond to the rapidly changing COVID-19 situation.

We ask for support and understanding from our community for the additional measures being introduced from today. These changes will continue to ensure our services can be maintained for those who most need our care. We are facing extraordinary circumstances currently, and I thank all our staff within HSC and across our partners for their continued focus and dedication to our community”.

Ends

Notes to Media

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