
PATIENTS FIRST

A Vision and Plan of Action for Healthcare in the Saltash Area



Rear of St Barnabas Hospital
and Port View Surgery

Mission The Action Group exists to ensure health and wellbeing services are fit for purpose for residents of all ages in a town whose population is growing. It also provides a regular forum to share good practice between services, identify need, improve collaboration and ensure that the patient voice is central to all decision making.

Action We are agreed that the neglect of healthcare development in this town (compared to other towns in this part of Cornwall, which have had considerable investments over recent years) will have to be reversed. Some improvements are beginning to happen now, others will come soon, and some will necessarily take time. The overall plan is outlined here, but the headline messages for NHS bodies are:

1. COORDINATE EVERYTHING BETTER
2. MAKE ACCESS EASIER FOR PATIENTS
3. BRING BACK LOCAL SPECIALIST PROVISION

“It is a key principle of our integrated working to listen to the voices of the communities we serve and work with them to co-design services”.

Kate Shields,
Chief Executive,
Cornwall & Isles of Scilly
Integrated Care Board,
in a letter to the Mayor of
Saltash, July 2023

Background

Below is the vision and outline plan developed by a collaborative Action Group of patients, community representatives, health professionals and NHS leaders. The Group was formed in belated response to (1) the disinvestment in local services in 2016 through the closure of beds and minor injuries services at St Barnabas Hospital and, more recently, (2) the negative impact of national pressures in the NHS on local services. There is massive frustration in the town that nothing has ever been actioned by the NHS following extensive consultations about the hospital's future.

Saltash Town Council, in its Business Plan 2024-27, is including support for the Action Group in its goal of improving local NHS provision



The most ambitious elements of the vision at this stage are the future role of existing buildings, and options for building new ones, to create a 21st century pattern of provision. Finding sites and building up a financial package are essential steps that will need collective determination which we want to see through. We will be on the look-out for any opportunity to move forward.

1. Coordinate everything better

This is vital to **prevent patients falling between the gaps in services** on the journey between GP, hospital, and community care, etc.

This is particularly important for patients on discharge from hospital or needing acute care at home or rehabilitation, and those with chronic conditions and disabilities, including carer support. Regular “huddles” of community staff, supported by the Integrated Transfer of Care (ITOC) service, are already taking place to manage patient journeys better, and are being developed further by CPT and the 2 GP Practices.

(Action 1) Integrated locality team working - primary, community, mental health and social care - to be fully established by the end of March 2024

2. Make access easier for patients

This will come via **personal tailored advice from Practices** at the point of contact, or by using IT or apps. It will give access not only to GP or nursing appointments, but also direct to wider community services eg physio, clinical pharmacy, mental health, social & community support. This should be a positive experience for all patients, including children.

(Action 2) *Changes are already being introduced by Saltash Health Centre and Port View Surgery with additional back-up from East Cornwall Primary Care Network. Progress will be dependent on recruitment, team building, patient engagement, etc. It will additionally need a continuous programme of promotion and explanation in 2023 to win over the hearts and minds of patients.*

(Action 3) *This new style of service would be enhanced by more modern premises, ideally a single Health and Wellbeing Centre for the town on the Plougastel Drive campus. This is an ideal location for patients - and where there are current opportunities for project partnerships. This would be a major project over a number of years, but we are aiming to agree an initial vision by end of March 2024.*

NHS dental services are now totally lacking in the town, which is of great concern to patients and families. This is also a problem to be found in most Cornish towns, and is based on national policy issues which are not being resolved. However, one consequence is a large underspend in the NHS budget in Cornwall - and we are interested in the initiative taken recently in Lostwithiel to access and redeploy this.

(Action 4) *We will explore all options in the hope of taking any opportunity for improved dental provision.*



Emergency visitor to the town

3. Bring back local specialist provision

Specialist provision includes: wound dressings & minor injuries provision which are now not easy to access here, wider availability of consultant clinics which are under-used currently, and provision of local diagnostics, eg scans and radiology, which are justifiable in a town of the size of Saltash. The approach needs to include provision for children, and for people of all ages with mental health concerns.

(Action 5) *Cornwall Partnership Trust (CPT) has undertaken to promote to the public the services available now at St Barnabas Hospital - which are not widely known and understood - and to seek to expand their range.*

(Action 6) *There is a need for a new type of provision for hands-on services for dressings and minor injuries etc. The idea would be to shift suitable provision from Derriford Hospital and the Cumberland Centre back to where it is actually needed. This may be served by a partnership between CPT and the Practices to be commissioned by Integrated Care Board (ICB)*

(Action 7) *ICB to be encouraged to plan to commission in 2024/25 new provision of diagnostics in the town for local patients*

A vital ingredient of the pattern of service we are seeking to develop is the **NHS provision of short term beds** in the town to facilitate rehabilitation or prevent acute hospital admission.

We are agreed that St Barnabas Hospital cannot be adapted for short-term care beds, but we ask whether any local NHS or public sector owned premises could be used for this purpose since beds are needed now. Local patients and their families are currently ill-served by lack of local provision.

(Action 8) *The provision of local beds would be ideally met by the incorporation of a unit into the plan for the Plougastel Drive campus. Failing that, a new unit, possibly in the Treledan development, or the permanent adaptation of existing NHS premises, would be needed.*

Decisions on how to proceed have been put off for too long, so we will put together with partners an outline vision by the end of March 2024. We need tangible clarity of purpose, or else stakeholders will never be in a position to seize opportunities as they emerge

Let us know your views - we need your support