

## **Frimley Collaborative COVID-19 Briefing - 27 March 2020**

As you know the situation regarding Covid-19 is evolving rapidly and we want our stakeholders to be updated on how Frimley Health and Care Integrated Care System is operating during this time.

We want to assure you that our staff across all our partner organisations are going above and beyond to not only care for patients with coronavirus and prepare for the surge in cases we know is coming, but also to continue to provide the other health and care services that remain vital to our local communities.

### **Changes to Health care provision**

A huge effort is underway with the NHS mobilising to change the way that hospitals and GP practices run, freeing up tens of thousands of beds, bringing in more staff and ventilators, getting protective equipment to where it is needed and increasing the level of testing.

The NHS is ramping up services across the country:

- Hospitals are freeing up as many as 30,000 general and acute beds by postponing non-urgent operations and discharging all those patients who are medically fit to leave.
- The NHS is asking tens of thousands of former doctors and nurses to return and help the fight against the virus. Over 5,000 people have already signed up to come back.
- The NHS is also asking 18,000 student nurses and 5,500 medical students to start work a few weeks early to help.
- The NHS has struck an unprecedented deal with the independent sector which will add 8,000 hospital beds across England and around 20,000 more staff.
- The NHS has increased the number of adult mechanical ventilators to around 7,000 and should be able to go to 12,000 in the coming weeks. Many firms are answering the Prime Minister's call to build more, with 1,400 companies coming forward and saying they can turn their manufacturing capability to make ventilators.
- Department for Health and Social Care colleagues have assured us there is enough Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). NHS England are making sure it is in the right place with deliveries of millions of masks, gloves, hand sanitisers and other kit over the last few days. Every single GP practice, dental practice, and pharmacy has had a delivery.
- NHS labs are being brought online to increase testing. Public Health England (PHE) and the NHS can now process around 7,500 tests a day and that will rise to 10,000 by the end of the month. Private sector capacity is also being brought in. As this capacity increases more NHS staff will be tested.
- The NHS is using the latest technology to increase the number of remote consultations that can take place.

## **Changes to Primary Care in the Frimley Health and Care system**

From now Primary care will be operating differently and we will be communicating widely to ensure people understand the new arrangements for their care and support.

- All GP appointments are now initially over the phone or online to be triaged/assessed for coronavirus and to see if their needs can be met without the need for a face-to-face appointment. Patients will be invited to attend a face-to-face appointment if it is deemed safe and appropriate for them to do so.
- This might mean that some people who require face-to-face services will have to go to another local practice which has been chosen to provide these services.
- GPs are preparing to visit more people at home because of social distancing, home isolation and the need to discharge all patients who do not need to be in hospital.
- Dedicated sites in the local community will be set up to offer services to people affected by Covid-19.

## **Changes to Secondary Care in our hospitals**

In the next 3-4 weeks, hospitals will be changing the way they work:

- Hospitals will stop doing non-urgent operations – and will provide services to people for emergency admissions or people needing clinically urgent treatment.
- Patients who are medically fit to leave hospital, will be helped to do so quickly (see Social Care below).
- People may be treated in a local private hospital for urgent surgery or if they have Covid-19. This will not cost individuals any money and people will still receive high quality care.
- Nationally, NHSE have written out to 65,000 doctors and nurses who've recently retired or left the NHS to come back and help us in the time of national need. Locally we will benefit from that support in the coming weeks.

## **Changes to Social Care**

- The Government has announced it is to spend £3 billion to help urgently discharge all hospital in-patients who are medically fit to leave.
- We are supporting their release into the care of our community health providers, who will be able to increase their capacity as a result of this investment.

## **How people can help**

We need everybody in our communities to continue to follow the government advice and comply with social distancing rules and to socially isolate where necessary. This will have the biggest impact on the prevention of spread of Covid-19, and support the NHS by reducing the number of patients needing support at any one time. Your support in continuing to promote these messages would be most welcome.

We would also like to ensure you that we are working closely with the voluntary sector who are supporting the increased numbers of volunteer offers which have been so heartening to see. You may also be aware of the Government initiative via Good Sam which is coordinating offers of support across England.

## **Communication on COVID-19**



**Frimley Collaborative**  
Partnership of Clinical Commissioning Groups

The pace of change is increasing each day and along with it the level of expectation and the pressure to respond. We are working together across our organisations and with the NHS England team to ensure our communications are consistent and timely. For the latest local position on COVID-19 please visit this link

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-track-coronavirus-cases>

This will be the first of a series of weekly bulletins to keep you up to date and provide you with the latest information on the measures we are putting into place to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 on our local health and care services. Future bulletins will be sent to you on behalf of Frimley Health and Care Integrated Care System.