

The development of Nevill Hall Hospital and our enhanced local general hospitals

Frequently asked questions

Why is the health board proposing these changes?

Our critical care centre (the Grange University Hospital) has been open for over four years. There are severe pressures on the hospital (for example, there can be long waits to be seen in the emergency department, and we have many patients who are medically fit but not able to be discharged) and as a result it is not operating as effectively as we would like. In addition, the Health Board has particular financial challenges and needs to ensure that all of its services are provided as safely and efficiently as possible (for example, we currently have more beds open than we originally planned, and these need to be covered mainly by agency staff, which is more expensive to maintain).

Because of this, we are looking carefully at what we provide in our supporting 'enhanced local general hospitals', to see if we can adjust these to improve the position. (For example, where it is difficult to operate the same services in all of these hospitals, it may be sensible to try and base these on just one site).

Although this applies to all of our local general hospitals, we are focussing on Nevill Hall Hospital in the first instance, as this site is likely to have additional investment and needs attention to address the presence of reinforced autoclaved aeriated concrete (RAAC) in some areas.

What is an 'enhanced local general hospital'?

These are our hospitals that support the critical care centre at the Grange University Hospital. They provide a wide range of less complex and routine services, so that the Grange can concentrate on patients who require more complex and specialist care. They include Nevill Hall Hospital in Abergavenny, the Royal Gwent Hospital in Newport and Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr in Ystrad Mynach. We expect that each of these will have a lead role in the future, for example for radiotherapy, stroke rehabilitation or certain day unit treatments.

Will the health board still provide all the services that are available now?

Our population will still have access to all the services that they do now. What may potentially change is exactly where and on how many different sites some services are provided.

What services will be provided at Nevill Hall Hospital?

We intend that Nevill Hall Hospital will provide a very wide range of services in the future, including urgent care, outpatient clinics, planned surgery, radiotherapy, children’s centre, mental health services and diagnostic tests such as MRI / CT scanning and endoscopy.

Will any current services at Nevill Hall Hospital not be provided in the future if these plans go ahead?

Whilst we do not expect any major existing services to be moved entirely, it is possible that some adjustments to the way some services are provided would be necessary over time, consistent with the principles that we have set out in the briefing document e.g. ensuring that services are well-staffed and are delivered safely and effectively for our population. If any significant changes were proposed in the future, these would be subject to a separate and specific period of engagement.

How will this affect me if I need treatment?

You will still receive all the care and treatment that you need, but exactly where the care is provided may depend upon your exact needs, for example, much routine care will still take place in all our main hospitals, some (more involved) care may be provided in one of our enhanced local general hospitals and complex / specialist care will be provided (as it is now) in the Grange University Hospital. Some examples are shown below:-

What care do I need?	Where might this be provided?
Routine check-up for a chest condition e.g. asthma	Local GP surgery and / or local general hospital
More detailed assessment if suddenly feeling unwell with a chest condition	Royal Gwent Hospital as our lead site for 'walk in' respiratory care
Admission to a bed for specialist care by a Consultant Chest Physician	Grange University Hospital as our critical care centre

What urgent care do I need?	Where might this be provided?
Minor injury	Minor injury unit at each of our local general hospitals
Injury concern out of hours	Minor injury unit (as per opening hours) at each of our local general hospitals or dial 111/999
Accident or emergency requiring specialist urgent care (including an urgent operation)	Grange University Hospital as our critical care centre

Will this mean I need to travel further for treatment?

To ensure that all our services in our enhanced local general hospitals continue to be delivered consistently of high quality, it is possible that the care you need may be provided on just one site, and this may then require travel to that site. We will always ensure that the need to travel is always minimised and that where services are centralised, this is done purely for quality and safety reasons.

How will the Health Board minimise potential travel implications?

Whilst we always try to ensure that care is provided as close to people's homes as possible, we recognise that if this takes place at the Grange University Hospital or in just one of our enhanced local general hospitals, this may be some distance from your home. Where care is provided in this way, the Health Board would look to support patients and their families with community / hospital transport where required, offer different visiting times to support families around local transport services and provide a contact within our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) team to provide updates on loved ones' care if they are unable to visit. We will also make use of digital options for contact in the future where these are effective and remove the need to travel.

Will the Health Board support families with transport arrangements to visit their loved ones?

We will continue to provide a range of transport support for our patients, including the following: -

- Community / Hospital transport assistance / information
- Information about local bus services
- Information about financial support available in some circumstances e.g. taxi fares where there are no direct bus services
- Free parking at our hospital car parks
- Bespoke visiting times for those that need them

Additional advice and support are also available from the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS): <https://abuhb.nhs.wales/files/patient-advice-liaison-service-pals/pals-leaflet-v1-2-english-pdf/>

Will these plans take pressure off the Grange University Hospital?

It is intended that making our enhanced local general hospitals as efficient and effective as possible will have a beneficial impact on the workings of the Grange University Hospital, for example reducing delays for treatment and transfers.