

## **Head and Neck Cancer (HNC) Rehabilitation: Care Closer to Home Project**

**Wiltshire Health Select Committee Briefing 11<sup>th</sup> September 2018**

### **Background**

Swindon and Wiltshire HNC patients have been treated surgically and with follow-up care primarily at the Oxford University Hospitals. From the 5<sup>th</sup> September some HNC patients will now, instead, be able to receive their follow up rehabilitation appointments at Great Western Hospital in Swindon. The clinic will be run weekly by a team led by a consultant Head and Neck or Maxillofacial surgeon and include access to a clinical nurse specialist, speech and language therapist, dietician as well as dentistry and psychology services – all in partnership with the Oxford University Hospitals team.

### **Benefits**

There are numerous benefits for the patients, trusts and wider health system including;

- Improved patient experience through reduction in frequent long journeys
- Improved quality of service for patients from Swindon and Wiltshire, with an innovative stratified pathway that stretches across their input at GWH and OUH, ensuring patients are managed by the most appropriate service for their needs but in a local setting where appropriate.
- Improved capacity for Speech and Language therapy, Dietitian support, Clinical Nurse Specialist support and improved access to Restorative dentistry services.
- Development of local expertise in Swindon which can be built on in the future
- Ensuring the long-term sustainability of the whole networked service, with a pathway that has the resilience to cope with increasing referrals including the projected rise in incidence of oral cancer and expected increases in population in both Swindon and Wiltshire. The current service is stretched and unable to absorb additional referrals.
- Completion of more Holistic Needs Assessments to enable patients to be referred for appropriate support
- Increased patient education and focus on prevention of recurrence to enable patients to feel more in control of their own health and wellbeing.
- Reduction in unplanned emergency presentations at GWH by patients who are unable or unwilling to travel to Oxford for support.
- Development of a blueprint for localised follow- up which can be replicated across the Thames Valley

### **Update**

The Clinic opened last week on the 5<sup>th</sup> September 2018 with 9 patients invited to attend tomorrow's second clinic. We will expect a gradual increase in the number of patients attending the clinic over the next 3 years.

**The Patient View: Nick Crowson-Towers**

Local HNC patients now know their follow-up treatment can be carried out at GWH – wonderful news. To avoid the trauma of extended, regular, costly travel to Oxford will be a tonic in itself, and not to have to prepare refreshments for the journey, a relief.

A realisation that the standard of complex treatment will be to the same high standards, but locally, from a cohesive team of medical professionals will be so reassuring; with an open route to Oxford Churchill should it be necessary.

The HNC Patients and Carers will truly cherish this local breakthrough.