

## EXTERNAL SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE - MOUNT VERNON CANCER CENTRE REVIEW

<b>Committee name</b>	External Services Select Committee
<b>Officer reporting</b>	Nikki O'Halloran, Corporate Resources and Services
<b>Papers with report</b>	None
<b>Ward</b>	n/a

### HEADLINES

To enable the Committee to keep up to date on the progress of the review of services at the Mount Vernon Cancer Centre.

### RECOMMENDATION:

**That the External Services Select Committee notes the update on the Mount Vernon Cancer Centre review.**

### SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The NHS in the East of England and in North London is working together to review the services at Mount Vernon Cancer Centre (MVCC). MVCC is run by East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust and delivered from Mount Vernon Hospital which is managed by The Hillingdon Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (THH). It is a standalone cancer centre and primarily serves a population of over 2 million people in Hertfordshire, South Bedfordshire, North West London and Berkshire. The patient pathways involve a large number of other hospitals and arrangements with several other NHS trusts.

MVCC is the largest single site non-surgical cancer facility in the South East of England and treats around 6,000 new patients per year. More than 4,500 patients a year have radiotherapy treatment and around 1,500 patients receive chemotherapy. MVCC prides itself on being at the forefront of the latest technology and research, with many patients being offered clinical trials. Patients from across the country may be referred to the centre for specialist treatment which may not be available to them locally.

The population using MVCC comes from a large geographical area:

<b>Geographical Area</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>%</b>
Herts Valleys CCG	3,509	3,359	27%
East and North Herts CCG	1,611	2,186	17%
Hillingdon CCG	1,805	1,750	13%
Harrow CCG	1,099	1,076	8%
Bedfordshire CCG	660	711	6%
Buckinghamshire CCG	733	624	6%
Luton CCG	550	539	5%
Brent CCG	508	491	4%

<b>Geographical Area</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>%</b>
East Berkshire CCG	394	375	3%
Ealing CCG	388	397	3%
Barnet CCG	246	215	2%
All other CCGs	526	704	5%

The services at MVCC are commissioned by NHS England's Specialised Commissioning team and local Clinical Commissioning Groups. The Centre provides outpatient chemotherapy, nuclear medicine, brachytherapy and haematology as well as radiotherapy for these populations. There are also inpatient and ambulatory wards.

NHS England / Improvement has been working with the staff at Mount Vernon, with other local hospitals and commissioners, and with the local Cancer Alliances to look at how we can best meet the needs of local people, and develop options that will build on the services, research and patient experience the Centre already delivers.

### **Why do things need to change?**

Services need to be organised in ways that provide the best modern care for patients (including access to research trials and new technology and treatments) from good quality buildings and facilities. Many of the buildings on the Mount Vernon site are not in a good state of repair, and concerns have been raised in relation to the long-term clinical sustainability of the Cancer Centre.

As well as ageing buildings, there are limited support facilities on site. For example, there are no high dependency or intensive care beds, so patients who become very poorly are sent in an emergency ambulance to nearby hospitals. The limited support at the site creates challenges for the patients and staff, resulting in many patients receiving treatment in a number of different places because of this. As cancer treatment becomes more advanced, and as demand for cancer treatment grows, this is becoming less sustainable for patients at Mount Vernon.

Some newer treatments and research trials have high levels of toxicity and, whilst the benefits in treating cancer might be greater, there is more risk of side effects that require the right care. Without the support of services such as high dependency or intensive care, patients will not have access to the latest cancer treatments. As people live longer, more people with cancer are also living with other illnesses or conditions which require treatment alongside their cancer treatment. This cannot be done at MVCC.

The staff at MVCC have done a good job (despite the conditions) in providing high quality treatment and ensuring patient safety. Patient survey feedback regularly shows that most patients are happy with the services they receive. However, everyone agrees that a more permanent solution needs to be found to ensure the sustainability of the services in the long term.

### **How will the review work?**

The review of Mount Vernon Cancer Centre services started in May 2019. It is being led by a Programme Board chaired by the Regional Director of Specialised Commissioning and Health and Justice for the East of England. It has representatives from Healthwatch Hillingdon and Healthwatch Hertfordshire, London and East of England Cancer Alliances, local ICSs, CCGs, and a number of acute hospitals, including East and North Herts and Hillingdon Hospitals NHS trusts.

The first stage of the review was about gathering information:

- Reviewing data – for example, looking at where patients come from to Mount Vernon and which parts of their treatment they have elsewhere, what patient outcomes are like, travelling times for services such as radiotherapy.
- Interviewing clinical staff and stakeholders – asking the staff who work at Mount Vernon and key stakeholders for their opinions on what the options should be.
- Independent Clinical Review Panel – leading clinicians from other parts of the country accompanied by representatives of Healthwatch Hillingdon and Healthwatch Hertfordshire reviewing the suggestions of clinical staff, speaking to clinical staff and to patients, and visiting the site, before producing a report in July 2019 making recommendations on the long term options and any short term actions that need to be taken. These recommendations included appointing a specialist cancer hospital to run the Mount Vernon Cancer Centre services. This report was published on 25 July 2019<sup>1</sup>.
- Patient and public engagement – analysis of existing patient feedback, and hearing patient views and ideas through public events, focus groups and a bespoke survey. Through July, August and early September 2019, patient and public workshops took place in Stevenage, Luton, Uxbridge, North London, Watford and at Mount Vernon. Structured interviews were held with representatives of some patient groups and a patient survey was available for all patients to complete. The patient feedback was analysed independently and a final engagement report was published<sup>2</sup>.

At the end of the first stage, a decision was made to appoint University College London Hospitals (UCLH) as the preferred provider to run the Mount Vernon Cancer Centre. This is subject to a period of diligence which will ensure the clinical and business implications are properly understood before a final commitment is made, and that East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust and University College Hospitals can have important discussions with staff whose contracts would transfer to University College London. This would mean that future Mount Vernon Cancer services will be provided by UCLH from the Mount Vernon site at least until a decision is made on the long term future of Mount Vernon Cancer Centre services.

If changes are proposed in future, they will only take place after public consultation. There are no plans to move any patients to Central London unless they would need to go there anyway. In fact, UCLH would like to explore the possibility of some patients currently being treated in central London, being treated at Mount Vernon instead, if it was closer to where they live and if the right clinical facilities were available.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.england.nhs.uk/east-of-england/wp-content/uploads/sites/47/2019/08/Independent-Clinical-Panel-Report.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.england.nhs.uk/east-of-england/wp-content/uploads/sites/47/2020/01/MVCC-Stage-One-Patient-Engagement-Report.pdf>