

## FONTWELL HEALTH AUTHORITY

### Consultation paper on burns and plastic surgery services

#### Background to the consultation

The overall philosophy of Fontwell Health Authority over the past three years has been to shift from hospital care to care in the community, where possible. Our aim has been:

- a much higher proportion of treatment as day cases, or out-patients, or in primary care settings
- shorter length of stay in hospital.

This philosophy enables us to concentrate our specialist resources where they are most needed, and to enable patients to stay at home and receive treatment near their home wherever possible. Other benefits as a whole are:

- shorter waiting times
- more people receiving treatment
- better facilities
- more money available for patient care.

Applied to the specialist areas of burns treatment and plastic surgery, this philosophy requires the following approach:

- developing more local out-patient services and day surgery
- maintaining a centre of excellence for in-patient services.

This will enable the development of advanced specialist skills in the central in-patient unit, and at the same time enable more out-patients to receive treatment.

#### Current services

The Regional Unit at Birdham Hospital currently provides services to the entire Fontwell region. These include assessment, treatment, rehabilitation, consultation and advisory services, to GPs and other clinicians as well as patients.

#### Birdham Hospital: admissions

Plastic surgery referrals are almost all from GPs; a few are also from other hospitals and A&E departments.





Admissions to the Burns Unit are all from hospital A&E departments. It is the nature of this work that patients' condition has to be stabilised first, before they can be transported to the specialist unit. There is generally time for the unit to prepare for the admission while the patient is cared for at the referring hospital.

### Other hospital services

The following chart shows the range of other facilities across the area.

Hospital	Out-patients [weekly]	Day cases	In-patients
Felpham	✓		Combined*
Elmer	Fortnightly		
Nutbourne			
Slindon			Combined*
Middleton	✓	✓	✓
Barnham	✓	✓	✓
Yapton			
Flansham	Fortnightly	✓	Combined*
Bersted			

\* From time to time plastic surgeons operate at these hospitals in conjunction with other specialties.

The unit needs to move from Birdham Hospital in order to make full use of new surgical techniques and to work with other specialists. This means a district general hospital, with immediate access to:

- an intensive therapy unit
- orthopaedic surgeons
- renal physicians
- paediatricians
- ear, nose and throat specialists
- isolation facilities.

These are not available on site at Birdham.

### The proposed change

Tenders were received from Bersted Hospital NHS Trust and Slindon Hospital NHS Trust, for new units on the sites at Bersted and Slindon



respectively. It has been decided that Slindon Hospital NHS Trust submitted the proposal that best met the service specifications.

The following changes are therefore proposed:

1. Out-patient services to continue from local hospitals (with the addition of Bersted Hospital).
2. Day surgery to continue from local hospitals (with the addition of Bersted).
3. Hospital treatment for patients needing a highly specialised service to be provided at a new, high quality, purpose built centre at Slindon District Hospital.

#### **The service specification**

- The service is an assessment, treatment, rehabilitation and advisory service to the population of the Fontwell region, to GPs and other clinicians, in respect of patients who might require plastic surgery or who sustained injuries associated with burns and smoke inhalation.
- The service agreement would be reached with a single NHS Trust which would be expected to arrange with local hospitals to provide services to residents in the four main districts and beyond.
- The central unit would be situated on a district general hospital site, providing in, out and day patient services. The burns centre would be self-contained. There would be a full range of acute support services, including Intensive Therapy Units and a 24-hour theatre cover, diagnostic and rehabilitation services and specialist nursing support. Satellite services would provide for out-patient and day cases.
- There would be access on site to the following specialties: ENT, orthopaedics, oral surgery/facio-maxillary surgery and renal medicine.
- There would be helicopter landing facilities within the hospital grounds.
- Any wait for admission would be no longer than 15 months from the time of referral to a plastic surgeon.
- There would be accommodation for relatives.
- The specialist service would be provided by consultant plastic surgeons, one of whom would be required to provide assistance in other hospitals.



## **Evaluation criteria**

### **Service:**

- Discrete area on district general hospital site with good links to other services.
- Dedicated day care unit with additional capacity.
- Self-contained burns unit and dedicated theatre and intensive therapy unit.
- 24-hour access to designated plastic surgery emergency theatre.
- Facilities for accommodating patients' relatives.
- Access to a specified range of clinical support services.
- Plans for access to: Ear, Nose and Throat;  
Orthopaedics;  
Paediatrics;  
Renal services;  
Neuroscience.
- Facilities for post-graduate education.
- Suitable management arrangement.
- Commitment to improved efficiency and productivity targets.
- Facilities to care for children.
- Environment for Research and Development.

### **Cost and Value for Money**

Outline costs were required to be submitted and the financial assumptions were tested to ensure value for money.

### **Travel to Slindon**

The sites were compared in terms of car and public transport travel times for the whole of the purchasing area. For each location the group looked at a complex analysis of travel times and distances, including information on age and size of population.

There was only a marginal difference in travel times, with Bersted being slightly more accessible than Slindon.

It is acknowledged that people in Birdham, the current host district of the service, will incur extra travelling time. Although much of the service will be based at Bersted, Birdham Health Authority is concerned about travel difficulties that may be experienced by some of its residents in getting to Slindon Hospital. Birdham Ambulance Service could provide a special service for patients and their visitors which would operate seven days a week, from Bersted Hospital and Slindon Hospital.

