

Developing a new Health and Wellbeing Hub in Mitcham

Healthier Communities and Older People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Overview of our plans

- Health and care partners are working to design a new health and wellbeing hub in Mitcham - focusing on delivering care in a different way for local residents.
- We know people in Mitcham and the surrounding areas experience unacceptable health inequalities. For example, life expectancy for men in Cricket Green is 78, while it's 85 in Merton Park. Obesity and diabetes rates are also higher and some areas are among the top 20% most deprived nationally.
- We are already supporting people with long term conditions and social factors that influence their health and wellbeing. Local programmes include: The East Merton Model of Health & Wellbeing; the Merton Social Prescribing service; and the Wilson Wellbeing programme. The new hub model takes this work a step further with a focus on children, families and adult mental health.
- The idea for the hub is that it will not just be a building that people go to when they're ill, but somewhere to help the community connect and stay healthy. It will be home to a range of different services for the people of Mitcham and the surrounding areas, as well as signposting to other sources of support across Merton.
- Supporting the development of the hub is a priority in the recently refreshed Merton Health and Care Plan and identified as one of the key enablers for the joint plans of health and care organisations locally.

Where will the hub be?

- We're currently evaluating the possible locations for the new health and wellbeing hub. The Wilson Hospital site is the NHS preferred option because it offers advantages.
- Looking at the three available sites, the Wilson makes most sense because we have an NHS source of funds and there is a clear path to delivering the hub there. This path is more uncertain for non-NHS owned sites.
- The size of the Wilson hospital site also means there is potential to expand services in the future if required. For example, the site is currently hosting a mobile MRI scanner as part of the nationally funded Community Diagnostics Centres programme.
- We'll be reviewing each site in detail as we revisit the Strategic Outline Case from 2015, as part of the development of the Outline Business Case, required by national Better Business Case processes.
- We will be holding stakeholder options appraisals workshops to determine the site in February. Our plan is to invite local Ward Councillors as well as community representatives.
- The other sites which have been put forward to us are the NHS owned Birches Close site and the council-owned Sibthorpe Road car park site in Mitcham.

What will be provided at the hub?

- A lot has changed since the building part of programme had to be paused – because of the pandemic, but also new ways of working in the NHS and changes to the way we use our buildings and spaces – which has meant we’ve had to refresh our approach.
- Our current vision for the hub is to provide health, care and wellbeing services in an integrated way around the needs of local people, complementing and enhancing existing services in the area. Our priorities include: wellbeing services, social prescribing, children’s services, children and young people’s mental health services and adult mental health services.
- The hub will also have outside community space as part of its wellbeing offer and bookable rooms for community use and multi-disciplinary team working.
- Discussions are ongoing about what else might be possible. We are committed to ongoing joint work with the local community as the project progresses – feedback received so far will not be lost and we’ll be engaging as we deliver the recently refreshed Merton Health and Care Plan.

Programme timelines

- NHS building projects take time and there is still a long road ahead, but we are making progress.
- The programme was delayed in 2018/19 when the LIFT (Local Improvement Finance Trust) scheme came to an end which resulted in loss of funding and delivery model. We've also been responding to the Covid-19 pandemic as a priority.
- Since 2019 we have been in discussion with NHS Property Services and have identified enough potential funding through the new NHS Property Services Disposal policy, along with investment from SWL CCG/ICS, to enable us to move forward with the project.
- National processes for developing a Business Case for projects like this mean we have to revisit the location, reviewing each of the options available to us now in detail.
- We are developing an Outline Business Case to be ready in 2022 and then expect the Full Business Case to follow within the next 18-24 months.
- We will be working closely with the service design team and NHS Property Services on an estimated timeline for delivery which we will share as soon as possible.

Developments in other local services

- We've been clear all along we didn't have to wait for a new building to make new services available for local people. The NHS took extraordinary steps to create facilities on the Wilson site which could be used as a vaccination centre. This was an acceleration of work already in train to create space the community can use for wellbeing services and activities.
- There are exciting developments in local wellbeing services - a space at the Wilson has been created to host the delivery of wellbeing services and activities and social prescribing. Work is underway through the Wellbeing Steering Group with membership from the local community to get this up and running.
- The newly-developed community garden at the Wilson has now opened and plans underway to get the community involved and link to local social prescribing work. Creating the garden was part of NHS Property Services 'Healthy Places' programme, colleagues have worked with Groundwork UK to create a peaceful garden on the site using repurposed plants from the Wimbledon Championships.
- In addition a mobile MRI scanner opened on the site on 4 October – this is part of the Community Diagnostics Centre work at Queen Mary's hospital. We are developing services in areas which help us address health inequalities and meet the needs of local people. We want people to have faster access to tests and scans, so we can start treatment sooner for serious conditions like cancer and heart problems, and have better outcomes for patients.