

Update on what the NHS in Norfolk and Waveney is doing to respond to coronavirus (26 May 2020)

Hospitals in Norfolk and Waveney working to treat more patients

- The three hospitals in Norfolk and Waveney are working to restore some of their services, which were paused because of coronavirus.
- The Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital (NNUH), James Paget University Hospital (JPUH) and The Queen Elizabeth Hospital, King's Lynn (QEH) have continued to treat people with life-threatening conditions such as cancer or cardiac conditions and emergency situations such as stroke or accidents.
- Zones have been created to separate patients who have coronavirus symptoms from those who do not. This has meant many urgent operations or treatments have been able to proceed as normal whilst patients with severe coronavirus symptoms have been looked after in separate areas. These arrangements will continue. Many outpatient appointments, too, will continue to take place by telephone or video conference.
- Now hospitals are beginning to identify patients on other waiting lists who have the most clinical need for planned operations.
 - The QEH has restarted some routine, planned orthopaedic operations and endoscopy work (the latter at QEH and North Cambridgeshire site in Wisbech)
 - The NNUH is looking to restart its Day Procedure Unit and some endoscopy by the end of May as well as continuing a record number of remote outpatient consultations.
 - The JPUH has already started to undertake some planned operations and procedures and will be looking to increase its capacity for this work in the weeks ahead.
- Offering more routine hospital treatments will take time, and in line with the Government's approach this work may need to be scaled up or down according to coronavirus infection rates and the resulting pressure on NHS services.
- Patients should still expect to wait longer than usual for non-urgent or elective procedures during this unprecedented period. Each hospital will be contacting their patients as appointments/operations are confirmed.
- The NHS is encouraging people to seek medical advice if they are worried about their health, to attend clinics and appointments and not to let health conditions get worse and risk having an emergency.
- One of the most important areas is to ensure that patients with cancer are seen quickly.
- Dr Linda Hunter, cancer lead for the Norfolk and Waveney Health and Care Partnership, said: "People with cancer want to be seen and treated as quickly as possible and our cancer specialists have been working together to try to ensure this happens even within the extraordinary circumstances we're all facing. Our pledge to cancer patients is that we will do all we can to see you in a timely way and give you the care you need."
- All cancer patients can access one to one telephone support from their hospital-based cancer clinical teams for advice and reassurance. They can also access support from local and national voluntary sector partners including the Big C, Macmillan and Cancer Research UK who all provide cancer information and support services.

Local antibody testing

- This week we anticipate starting local antibody testing (using Roche's serology test). The blood test is used to find out if someone has had COVID-19.
- Antibody tests differ to virus swab (PCR) tests, which test to see if you currently have the virus. A positive antibody test will tell you whether you've previously had the virus that causes COVID-19 and that your body has produced an immune response.
- If you receive a positive antibody result it does not mean that you're immune, or that you cannot pass on the virus to others. It also does not mean that you can ignore social distancing measures.
- Our understanding of the virus will grow as new scientific evidence and studies emerge. COVID-19 is a new disease, and our understanding of the body's immune response to it is limited. We do not know, for example, how long an antibody response lasts, whether the antibodies produced are effective in neutralising the virus, or whether having antibodies means a person cannot transmit the virus to others.
- We're at the beginning of our antibody testing programme, and will be prioritising NHS and care home staff who would like to be tested. Clinicians will also be able to request the tests for patients in both hospital and social care settings if they think it's appropriate.
- Each NHS region is coordinating its own specific arrangements to roll out antibody testing to NHS staff. We'll be communicating with local organisations and staff about how this will work.
- While the results of an antibody test will not allow people to make any changes to their behaviour, such as easing social distancing measures, the testing programme will provide information on the prevalence of COVID-19 in different regions of the country and help us better understand how the disease spreads.

Test, track and trace

- Norfolk has been named as one of 11 pilot areas which will play a key role in the government's efforts to use testing and tracing to prevent the spread of coronavirus.
- Local authorities will be central to supporting the new test and trace service in England, with the government providing a new funding package of £300 million to develop local outbreak control plans.
- Our plan will focus on identifying and containing potential outbreaks in places such as housing complexes, workplaces, care homes and schools.
- Dr Louise Smith, Norfolk's director of public health, said: "Contact tracing is a proven, effective method of controlling the spread of infectious disease in countries around the world, and I welcome the opportunity to bring that approach to Norfolk to tackle coronavirus. We will respond to any local outbreak as a community, and the plans we'll be drawing up will reflect that need to work together."
- Andrew Proctor, Norfolk County Council leader, said: "We're delighted that Norfolk has been chosen as a pilot for the test and trace service: robust, comprehensive plans to deal with local outbreaks of COVID-19 are key to allowing our residents to live their lives out of lockdown, and it's wonderful that Norfolk has the opportunity to be among the first in the country to develop these."
- And Tom McCabe, who chairs Norfolk's strategic co-ordination group and is the council's head of paid service, said: "Being a pilot for the Test and Trace Service is a great opportunity for Norfolk: these plans will be vital to allow our residents to return to their day to day lives, confident that any cases of COVID-19 will be swiftly brought under control."
- More information can be found [here](#).

We Care Together – a photo documentary recording the impact of COVID-19

- Local health and care staff and volunteers are sharing their experience of COVID-19 in a new photo documentary on Instagram. Each portrait is accompanied by a personal reflection to record the emotion, experiences and resilience of people as they work through the pandemic.
- The campaign has started on Instagram, with the aim to follow this up with formal exhibitions of the images at sites across Norfolk and Waveney in the future.
- You can read:
 - Jodie's story – she's a newly qualified community nurse starting her new job in a pandemic
 - Maria's story – she's a Matron and describes her experience of working for the mental health trust throughout COVID-19
 - Verkat's story – he's a Consultant Respiratory Physician at the James Paget University Hospital and he explains the key role he's playing in shaping how the hospital cares for patients.
- Read these and many more stories at: <https://instagram.com/wecaretogethernw>.



Photo credits:

@johnmallettphotography

Warren Page

Mental health support available

- It's important that we look after our mental wellbeing during this time – for tips and advice visit www.everymindmatters.co.uk.
- If you are worried about your own mental health and wellbeing call First Response, a free 24/7 helpline offering immediate support, on 0808 196 3494.
- 11 to 25 year olds in Norfolk and Waveney can get support and online counselling via www.Kooth.com. The service provides support or advice on any topic, including managing your feelings during the pandemic.

NHS
Norfolk and Suffolk
NHS Foundation Trust



First Response
Call: 0808 196 3494
(Freephone)

A 24/7 service for people of all ages in Norfolk and Suffolk requiring mental health care, advice and support.

kooth
Lost your routine? We'll be here when you need us

- Discussion Boards
- Kooth Magazine & Help Articles
- Free Counselling
- Journal & Self-Help Tools

Sign up for free at Kooth.com

Local testing available for key workers, including care home staff

- **Key workers** (including NHS, care home staff, teachers and household members if eligible) can use a dedicated local arrangement or the national booking system. The local arrangement and the national system offer appointments in different places. Please see below for more details.

- **Members of the public** (who are not key workers) who are eligible according to the latest government criteria should use the national booking system.
- Find out [who can be tested](#).

Key workers

- All key workers are invited to apply for testing, if eligible, at one of three sites in Norfolk and Waveney. Their household members may also be eligible. The sites are at:
 - James Paget University Hospital
 - The Centrum Centre near Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital
 - Queen Elizabeth Hospital, King's Lynn
- The service is by appointment only. Appointments for these locations cannot be booked using the national portal, they must be booked using our local system:
 - **NHS acute hospital staff:** Use your organisation's existing booking arrangements.
 - **All other NHS employees** can email NHScovidtesting@nnuh.nhs.uk.
 - **All other essential workers, including care home staff:** Ask your employer/line manager to email NorfolkRegistercovidtesting@nnuh.nhs.uk with their name, job title and contact number to obtain a unique code for your organisation. Once you have that, please ask for an appointment by email: covidtesting@nnuh.nhs.uk.
- If you choose to book via the national booking system, you will be directed to centres at Ipswich, Peterborough or Stansted, or a mobile testing centre if available.

Members of the public

- Members of the public who are not key workers must book using the national booking system. You will be offered a choice of a home testing kit or travelling to a regional testing centre. The nearest regional testing centres are at Ipswich, Peterborough or Stansted, but from time to time mobile testing centres will also be set up. Appointments for these will be shown on the national booking system when available.

People's experience of care

- Healthwatch in Norfolk and in Suffolk are asking for people to share their experience of accessing information, care and support during the coronavirus outbreak. People are being asked to complete a survey which can be found at www.healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk/hwn-covid-19-survey, or <https://healthwatchesuffolk.co.uk/news/covidsurvey>.