

Joint Health Scrutiny Committee on the NHS Response to COVID-19

Public Questions

Please note that in view of the public's interest in this subject and because of their pertinence to the topic being scrutinised, multiple questions have been accepted from individuals for this meeting.

Questions from Claudia Sorin

- 1) Considering the advantages of local testing and tracing schemes as outlined above, will Dorset Public Health consider setting up a local scheme in Dorset, over which they would have much greater control?
- 2) How does Dorset plan to manage test, track and isolate?
- 3) The Chair of the Health Select Committee commented last week that “We do not know where about two thirds of new infections are happening, so we cannot feed them into the test and trace process”. What are Dorset’s plans for finding asymptomatic carriers?
- 4) How will those in insecure employment be supported to self-isolate?
- 5) Given concerns about asymptomatic carriers, and the Chair of the Health Select Committee’s further comments last week that about one third of new infections are of people who have caught C19 in hospital, or in care homes:
 - are there plans for regular routine weekly testing of NHS and care staff, including those caring for people in supported living in the community?
 - are there plans for regular weekly routine testing of hospital inpatients and care home residents?

Question from Lisa Weir

Could the Joint Committee advise:

- What are the infection control plans to safeguard Dorset patients - older patients, patients with long term conditions, BAME patients, mums-to-be and newborns – and to meet NHS England guidance of separating C19 patients from other emergency patients during any future wave of this pandemic, or during any other pandemic?

Questions from Chris Bradley

In any future waves of C19 or indeed any other pandemic, could the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee advise what will be done to ensure:

- we have enough acute and critical care beds to cope with a second C19 wave, or, indeed, another pandemic? Current planning indicates that there will be no emergency care beds at Poole, and 74 less acute beds at Dorset County. Although beds at Bournemouth Hospital will increase, there will be 245 less acute beds over our three Dorset hospitals*.
- we have enough acute beds to maintain planned operations?
- no one who is infected is either discharged from acute hospital, or admitted from home, into a care home?
- there will be timely access to adequate PPE for carers?

Could the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee also advise what the plans are to resume planned operations, what the backlog is, and when it is expected that we will catch up to where we were before the pandemic, given that, even at that time, people were waiting much longer times for planned operations than they were, say, 10 years ago?