

GP News

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Major Developments Set to Transform Care

THE New Year is set to see some major site changes to Blackpool Victoria Hospital after three of the biggest developments to happen in recent years were approved.

The Women's and Children's Unit, Urgent Care Centre and Surgical Centre have all had their business cases approved which means work can start on the projects this year.

Work on the Women's and Children's Unit has already begun and is set to take around five years to fully complete.

Consultant Paediatrician, Dr Nigel Laycock, said: "All of these developments are exciting steps for Blackpool Victoria Hospital. In particular, the developments for the Women's

and Children's Unit will enable us to make all our facilities truly child and family friendly.

"We will be able to provide seamless care from the antenatal period through to adolescence in one purpose built location.

"We have also won the biggest award in the country for a brand new Child Protection Unit. This is a hugely exciting move forward for all Women's and Children's services in Blackpool. As a whole, all three developments are of huge benefit for our patients and are fantastic assets to the hospital."

Work on the Surgical Centre is due to begin shortly and should be completed in April 2011 and the Urgent Care Centre is set to be started this year and be finished in 2010.

Artist's impression of New Surgical Centre



Urodynamics Satisfaction Survey

A RECENT survey of patients attending the Urodynamic Department at Blackpool Victoria Hospital has shown very high levels of satisfaction with the service.

Patients were asked a range of questions relating to waiting times, information received prior to their appointment, their consultation, and their overall experience.

Of the patients who responded to the survey, 100 per cent rated the overall service they received as 'excellent' or 'very good'. In addition, all patients who responded said that they were given a clear explanation of their treatment, their privacy and dignity was maintained, and they had enough time to ask questions about their assessment and treatment. The average wait for an appointment from the time of referral was one to two weeks.

Mr Mom, Urologist, who runs the urodynamics incontinence clinic with an urology nurse specialist, said: "We are delighted with the results. Our team works extremely hard to ensure that the patient is made to feel at ease, feels well informed and goes home satisfied with their overall experience."

Comments received included: "I was very nervous but was immediately put at ease," "very caring staff and doctor," "exceptionally helpful, considerate and efficient," "excellent treatment and explanation of condition."



The urodynamic team - Sue Raynor, Receptionist; Lesley Ben-Halim, Waiting list clerk; Mr Mom, Urologist; Karen Bardosco, Urology Nurse Specialist

Electronic Book-in System Cuts Waiting Times

A NEW electronic system to book in patients is being piloted at the Lancashire Cardiac Centre, Blackpool Victoria Hospital.

The Savience Check-In System means that patients attending an appointment in the department can book themselves in using a touch screen computer, instead of going through their details with a receptionist as they previously had to.

The check-in system asks the patient to confirm their details before directing them to the relevant waiting area. It has been purchased to support Centralised Patient Booking, a wider project aimed at enabling reception staff to book onward appointments for patients as they leave their outpatient appointment.

This will provide a better service for patients and help reduce the number of patient cancellations and 'did not attend's'.

Following positive evaluation, the system will be rolled out to other outpatient areas of the Trust's hospitals.

New Referral Form for Blenheim House

BLENHEIM House provides services for preschool children and their families where there is a concern about the child's physical and/or learning development. This service is for families across Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre and includes home visiting, support and advice into nurseries, preschools and playgroups and assessment and intervention at Blenheim House.

In order to help you know what services we offer and what to expect from a referral we have produced a referral form which has guidelines on the reverse. The information on this form helps us organise and prioritise the most appropriate assessments, and will also enable us to more effectively audit our service.

Please use this form for all referrals. If your GP practice does not have a form, call Blenheim House on 01253 651633 who will be able to provide you with some.

Developments in Stroke Services

A NUMBER of new developments are underway at Blackpool Victoria Hospital to improve services for stroke patients.

The rapid access Transient Ischaemic Attack (TIA) service for patients at high risk of stroke, which was launched last year, has been extended to daily clinics, Monday to Friday. Risk of stroke is greatest in the first 48 hours post TIA (50% occur within this time) and intervening within 24 hours can reduce risk of stroke by up to 80%. Patients who have suffered a suspected TIA can be referred directly to the service for diagnosis, investigation and treatment by a stroke specialist.

GPs who see patients with an ABCD2 score of four or above (or 2 or more TIAs in one week) should call the dedicated mobile 07827 988375 to discuss the case with a stroke specialist and arrange an urgent appointment at the TIA clinic. Patients with a lower risk of stroke can be referred to the service by faxing a TIA referral form to 01253 306810.

Dr Jim McIlmoyle, Stroke Consultant, who provides the service with two consultant colleagues, said: "This new system of enabling GPs to speak directly to a stroke specialist about patients with high risk TIA or minor stroke will hopefully result in these patients being assessed and treated within 24 hours of symptom onset."



Stroke Consultants Dr Jim McIlmoyle and Dr Mark O'Donnell

Stroke thrombolysis continues at Blackpool Victoria Hospital during office hours and we hope to be able to offer a 24 hour thrombolysis service in the next few months.

Dr McIlmoyle added: "With the recent launch of the national stroke awareness campaign (using the FAST assessment) it is important that GPs are aware of the services available and how to refer patients. We really welcome this campaign since diagnosing and treating stroke patients as an emergency reduces morbidity and mortality."

All GP practices should have copies of the new TIA Referral Form. For further information or additional copies contact Alison Stewart, Stroke Nurse Specialist, on 01253 655159.



Consultant ENT Surgeon, Mr Ajay Nigam

New Clinic Extends Patient Choice

A NEW clinic is set to open in Garstang offering outpatient services and minor surgical procedures.

The Garstang Clinic based on High Street will give patients living in Garstang and the surrounding areas access to services previously only available at Blackpool Victoria Hospital.

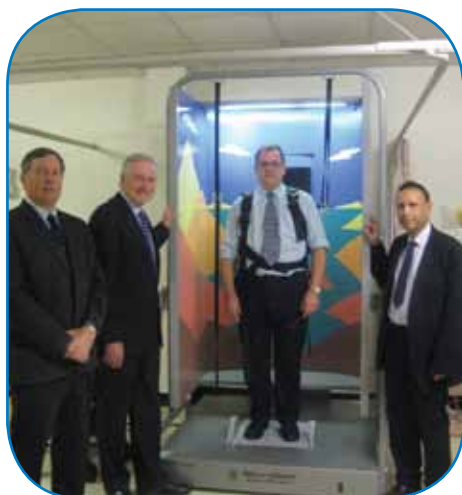
There is a lot of building work on the Victoria site at the moment so to avoid traffic congestion and parking issues the Trust has been looking at alternative accommodation for existing patients who live at the North end of our patch.

The clinic, which is furnished to extremely high standards, will open in April 2009. There is an adjacent large car park which is free to Wyre residents holding a permit. It is thought that this would be a more convenient location for patients who live in the Garstang, Great Eccleston and Hambleton areas.

It is planned that services available from the clinic will include general surgery, ENT surgery, maxillo-facial and orthopaedics initially, with other specialties to follow in the near future. The clinic will also have access to diagnostic tests such as x-ray of the jaw, camera endoscopy and audiology. Minor procedures such as removal of skin lesions will also be available. An IT link with the hospital is being set up so that all MRI and CT scans and pathology results can be accessed at Garstang Clinic.

Mr Ajay Nigam, Consultant ENT Surgeon and Director of Surgical Division said: "This is about extending choice for patients and giving them access to NHS clinics close to their homes. Not everyone wants to travel to a large hospital for their outpatient appointment so this gives them the opportunity to access the same services and technology locally. This will mean less travelling time and easy parking for patients".

Clinics will run Monday-Saturday and GPs can refer directly to Garstang Clinic through the Choose and Book system.



Mr Andrew Keith, ENT Consultant, demonstrates the machine at the launch of the service

Launch of New 'Balance' Clinic

A NEW service is available at Clifton Hospital for patients with dizziness and balance problems.

A state-of-the-art Computerised Dynamic Posturography system which is used both for assessment and rehabilitation has been purchased through Charitable Funds.

The service, which is run by a multi-disciplinary team including a consultant ENT surgeon, hearing therapist and physiotherapist, is the only one of its kind in the North West.

Mr Ajay Nigam, Consultant ENT Surgeon, said: "Dizziness accounts for a considerable proportion of all GP and hospital appointments. With this system, it is possible to improve symptoms in more than 80 per cent of patients seen in the clinic."

Patients with dizziness and balance problems should be referred to the ENT department in the first instance for appropriate tests and investigations.

We Want Your Views

AS a Foundation Trust, and in line with our commitment to continuous improvement, we are keen to ensure that we are responsive to the needs and expectations of our patients and our primary care colleagues.

The Trust has recently been seeking the views of our patients and members to determine the level of awareness regarding the Choice agenda; to assess how patients currently access information about choosing a hospital; and to find out what is important to patients when making the choice of secondary care provider.

We now wish to engage with our primary care colleagues to understand:

- Your preferred source of information when advising a patient about choosing a hospital
- The source of information you would direct patients to use when choosing a hospital
- The issues that are most important to you when advising patients about their choice of hospital
- Your views on the Trust's current provision of services

We would be very grateful if you would spend a few minutes to complete the enclosed survey and return to us using the Freepost envelope provided. If several GPs in your practice wish to participate in this survey, please feel free to photocopy the enclosed form and return all completed surveys in the same Freepost envelope.

Alternatively, please visit our internet site www.bfwh.nhs.uk/gp/ where an electronic version is available for you to complete online.

Feedback on your views, as well as the findings of our survey of patients and members, will be included in a future edition of this newsletter.