

Report of	Director of Performance and Quality
Paper prepared by	Kath Senior – Director of Performance and Quality Ann Marriott / Debbie Burgess – Medical Business Unit
Subject/Title	Temporary Closure of Tatton Ward
Background papers (if relevant)	N/A
Purpose of Paper	To inform the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the rationale for the temporary closure of 18 beds at Knutsford Community Hospital and the associated management plan
Action/Decision required	Agreement on approach and shared understanding of actions to mitigate clinical risk
Identify NHSLA and CQC Standards to which this report relates:	<p><u>CQC Standards</u></p> <p>Suitability of staffing Outcome 13 - Sufficient numbers of suitably qualified, skilled and experienced persons employed for the purposes of carrying on the regulated activity.</p> <p>Quality and management O16 Assessing and monitoring of the quality of service provision to identify and manage risks relating to the health, welfare and safety of service users</p> <p><u>NHS LA</u> Standard 1 - effective governance & risk management</p>
Link to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Trust's Strategic Direction ➤ Corporate Objectives 	<p><u>Patients</u></p> <p>To continuously improve quality, safety and the patient experience.</p>
Resource impact	
Abbreviations	<p>CQC – Care Quality Commission ECT – East Cheshire NHS Trust PBC – Practice Based Commissioning EMB – Executive Management Board</p>

Temporary Closure of Tatton Ward

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To inform the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the temporary closure of 18 beds on the Tatton Ward, Knutsford Community Hospital, with effect from Monday 6 September.
- 1.2. To explain the rationale for closing the beds and describe the range of options considered prior to closure.
- 1.3. To describe the process for managing the impact of bed closure
- 1.4. To provide assurance on the process for reviewing bed and staffing status

2. Context

East Cheshire NHS Trust provides Intermediate Care Based Bed services for the local health community across 3 sites:

- Tatton Ward at Knutsford Community Hospital has 18 intermediate care beds
- Aston Ward at Congleton War Memorial Hospital has 28 intermediate care beds
- Ward 11 at the Macclesfield site has a further 10 intermediate care beds.

In recent months, there have been persistent problems in recruiting middle grade doctors and this has seriously depleted the medical staffing rota. This has been compounded by a consultant staff vacancy. Efforts to secure locum staffing have been unsuccessful. Whilst the elderly care consultant and other medical staff have strived to provide an extended medical staff presence at both Knutsford and Congleton sites, this is not sustainable, even in the short term. An alternative way of providing inpatient care is urgently required that enables safe and sustainable staffing levels in the short term. This will allow a review of current staffing levels, recruitment, skill mix, utilisation and case mix, to be undertaken in collaboration with local GPs, commissioners, social services and other agencies.

The Macclesfield site has had 15 beds closed on an acute medical ward for the last 3 months and this has enabled essential maintenance work to be undertaken. The level of demand for acute beds is currently such that there is no requirement to re-open these 15 acute beds.

3. Options

- 1) Close Aston Ward at Congleton War Memorial Hospital

The Aston Ward has 28 Intermediate Care beds and this level of reduction would place a significant amount of pressure on remaining beds in the health community.

- 2) Close an acute ward on the main hospital site and redeploy staff to Knutsford

There are already 15 beds closed on the Macclesfield site and the medical staff rotas are still unable to provide a safe level of medical staffing across the 3 sites. This option does not ease the pressure on medical staffing rotas.

- 3) Close beds at Tatton Ward, Knutsford

The Tatton Ward has 18 beds which could be re-provided on the Macclesfield site by converting the acute beds which are currently closed.

In the short term, this is the preferred option.

4. Approach

- 4.1. The Tatton Ward will be closed to admissions for 4 months and medical staff will be deployed across the 2 remaining sites. This allows time to review staff rotas, skill mix, bed occupancy and utilisation. It is estimated that this will take 3-4 months. In addition, nursing and clinical support staff from Tatton Ward will be re-deployed to appropriate ward areas at Macclesfield and Congleton, dependent on skills and experience. An acute rehabilitation team will be established to mitigate potential impact of a change of use of beds on ward 10. This will ensure patients receive appropriate nursing care, therapy and clinical treatment, and maintain the focus on effective and timely patient discharge. Length of stay will be closely monitored.

These arrangements will be reviewed weekly by the senior management team. If the issues can be resolved within 4 months the beds will be re-opened.

5. Risks

- 5.1. **The timing of the closure**
If there is a peak in admissions during the early winter period there may be a shortfall in bed capacity and this may delay patient admission and discharge processes. The trust has appropriate policies and procedures in place to support the management of escalating bed pressures and will continue to work closely with partners in primary and social care to prevent delays in admission and discharge processes.
- 5.2. **Inability to recruit medical staffing in the medium term**
If continued recruitment fails then this will impact on the timing of the decision to re-open the beds. The trust regularly reviews skill mix and staffing levels in all acute areas and will continue to advertise middle grade vacancies. A new consultant will commence in post in November.

6. Communication

- 6.1. Clear, consistent and appropriate communication with key stakeholders is essential.

The following groups have been briefed:

- Staff on Tatton and Aston
- East Cheshire Trust staff
- Cheshire East Council
- Cheshire East Community Health, specifically the intermediate care service
- Patients at Aston, including relatives and carers
- Member of Parliament for Knutsford
- League of Friends for Tatton
- General Practitioners and PBC leads
- General public and media

7. Summary

- 7.1. In summary, this is a temporary transfer of service provision to mitigate clinical risk associated with a shortfall on medical staff rotas. The care provided to all patients must be clinically safe and sustainable and it has been agreed that the temporary closure of Tatton Ward is the preferred option in the short term.

This situation will be reviewed by the Executive Management Board (EMB) on a regular basis and in consultation with key stakeholders.