

The following statement and Q&A have been jointly written by the All Hallows Healthcare Trust and the health and social care commissioners, Norfolk County Council, Suffolk County Council, Great Yarmouth and Waveney CCG and South Norfolk CCG.

Statement:

This is a statement made on behalf of All Hallows Healthcare Trust and the health and social care commissioners. We hope it will clarify the current position, explain what will happen now and hopefully address any concerns you may have.

Firstly, it may be useful to outline the situation about the possible closure and transfer of services of All Hallows Healthcare Trust.

The All Hallows Healthcare Trust is an independent trust and operates services under a board of trustees. Health and care commissioners are responsible for buying services that meet the needs of the community. In respect of All Hallows, the Great Yarmouth and Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and the South Norfolk CCG buy the health care services and Norfolk and Suffolk county councils buy the social care elements. All Hallows also provides services to those who pay for their own care.

Following the announcement of the likely closure of All Hallows, we are working hard to ensure that those currently receiving care will continue to do so with another provider.

The decision to close the trust will be solely made by the board of trustees. There is currently a 45-day staff consultation period, but no date at this stage when the transfer of care will happen.

We understand that this is a worrying time for everyone involved but want to offer our reassurance that the current level of care will continue, wherever possible, until alternative care provision is found.

The likely closure of the trust has come about because of its financial position and the fact that current reserves were running out.

As we would expect, there have been lots of questions in the community about what happens now. These questions include what will happen to those who currently receive care and also the impact on staff who are affected. We will do our best to answer these in full here.

Since the announcement made by All Hallows on Wednesday, March 20th, more than 10 providers have expressed an interest in providing services.

This interest ranges from a desire to take on the entire health and care package currently provided by All Hallows, or a selection of services. These options are now being explored by All Hallows, who will have the final decision, with assistance from the health and care commissioners.

It our intention, that wherever possible, services will transfer to another provider with little or no disruption to those who currently receive care.

It is also our desire that staff will continue to work in the care sector. The impact on staff will be a key factor in any discussions with new providers as we work to ensure continuity of care.

We will continue to update everyone regularly. We thank you for your patience at this time – we appreciate that it is an unsettling period. Please be assured that we are working hard to find the best solution.

Question and Answer:

1. The reasons for AHHT's difficulties leading to the possible closure of the hospital

The board of trustees at the All Hallows Healthcare Trust said that it is now impossible to balance income and costs on an ongoing basis. It could not see a way to remain open as reserves were running out.

2. The attempts made, so far, to avoid closure

Working with All Hallows, a team of people from the health and social care commissioners carried out a business review of All Hallows at the beginning of this year. A number of recommendations were made to the trust.

There are a number of options currently being explored to avoid the closure of services. It is our intention that, wherever possible, services will transfer to another health and care provider.

3. The assertions that services provided to date by AHHT will continue "under different management."

Since the likely closure announcement made by All Hallows, more than 10 new providers have expressed an interest in providing services. These options are now being explored by All Hallows, with assistance from the health and care commissioners. It is our intention that, where ever possible, services will transfer to another provider with no or minimum disruption to those who currently receive care.

4. What will happen next

All Hallows and commissioners will continue to have discussions with potential providers. This will be led by All Hallows, who have the final decision. If providers express an interest in taking over one or more services, they will carry out the detailed process of due diligence before deciding if they wish to proceed. Once this has been carried out, commissioners will oversee this transfer.

We do not have a time frame for this at this stage. Following the announcement on Wednesday, March 20th, staff were given a 45-day consultation after which a decision by the board of trustees will be given.

In the meantime, our priority is to those who currently receive care with All Hallows. We would like to reassure people that we are doing all we can to ensure that the current level of care will continue - now and throughout the transfer period.

It is also important to add here that the impact on staff at All Hallows will also be a key factor as we consider all options for service continuity.

5. What could still be done to rescue All Hallows Hospital - the patients, the staff, the building and the services

As outlined above, we are doing all we can to ensure that services are transferred and that staff continue to work in the local care sector.

The Community of All Hallows Trust, who own the buildings, are in discussions with providers about the future use of premises.

6. How the strength of feeling in the community can best be harnessed.

We fully respect and understand the strength of feeling in the community. All Hallows has been a valued and important part of the community for many generations. We are determined in our endeavours to ensure the same high quality of care continues and we would like to thank everyone for their patience and understanding at this time.

7. Any other useful contributions.