

Providing High Quality Cancer Services in the East of England

Plans for a specialist surgical centre for urology cancer in Essex

Introduction

This document sets out the NHS England plan for a single specialist surgical centre for people with urology cancer living in Essex. Best practice guidance shows that such a centre will help to save more lives in the future.

Urological cancers cover a range of tumours with different presentations including prostate cancer, bladder cancer, kidney cancer, testicular and penile cancer.

NHS England is working towards further improving both one- and five-year survival rates for urological cancers. To help achieve this, a review of services has already led to the development of three specialised urological cancer surgery centres in the East of England. These are based at Addenbrooke's Hospital in Cambridge, the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital in Norwich, and the Lister Hospital in Stevenage.

Clinical evidence demonstrates that a small number of patients in Essex, around 150 a year, would also benefit from the services of a specialist surgical centre. This would be for particularly complex surgery for prostate, bladder and kidney cancers, carried out using open or keyhole surgery. Such procedures are currently undertaken at either Colchester or Southend Hospitals.

This is complex surgery requiring the right skills and facilities to provide patients with the best possible care. This is best achieved at larger specialist centres where the expert team will deal with sufficient numbers of patients to maximise clinical expertise, leading to improved outcomes. The specialised surgical service cannot be provided at both Southend and Colchester in the future, because there will not be sufficient numbers of patients to maintain the expertise required.

Specialised care for testicular and penile cancer already takes place in specialised centres outside of the county and these arrangements will continue.

All major hospitals in Essex currently provide cancer and urology services, and perform a range of urological cancer surgery. None of this local care will change. GPs and other health professionals will continue to refer patients with suspected urological cancer to their local hospital for investigation, diagnosis, and local treatment; ensuring most urological cancer care will continue to be provided locally.

What will this mean for patients and their families?

For most people with urology cancer, care will continue to be provided locally. However, for patients who are assessed and will benefit from specialised surgery, this will take place at a single specialised centre in Essex.

Some people may prefer to choose to be treated at another recognised specialist centre. In the east of England these are located in Addenbrooke's Hospital in Cambridge, the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital in Norwich, and the Lister Hospital in Stevenage. There are also some specialist centres in London.

Where surgery is identified as the best treatment option, only the surgery and immediate follow-up will take place at the specialist surgical centre. Other care will remain at the local hospital.

As now, every patient will have a named care co-ordinator who will support them through their treatment, ensuring that as much of it as possible is delivered locally. This will include services such as outpatient appointments and oncology care, including chemotherapy. Brachytherapy and radiotherapy will continue to be available as now.

These changes are expected to result in more lives saved, as every patient who has the potential to benefit from surgery will be considered with input from the specialist surgical team.

Information events

NHS England has planned some information events about these changes and the process we are required to go through; these events are being held on;

Monday 22nd February

11am -1pm Laindon Library 5-7 New Century Road, Basildon SS15 6AG
2pm-4pm Brentwood Library New Road, Brentwood, CM14 4BP

These events are drop in events and there is no need to book, you are very welcome to come along to learn more about this project.

These events are designed to give you information about this project and explain the process. As we go through this process there will be opportunities for you to comment on the service proposals. Specific further public engagement events will be held later in the year when we will be looking for your views and comments about this service.

Note

This information sheet is deliberately brief. Further information about the background to this project and details of the work to date is available and can be obtained from pam.evans@nhs.net