

# Working together

Summary  
of Phase Two  
Updated Draft  
Case for Change  
September  
2021

to improve hospital services in  
South Tyneside and Sunderland



**An update** on plans to improve surgical services



**NHS partners working together:**

South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust  
South Tyneside, Sunderland and County Durham  
Clinical Commissioning Groups



## Introduction

This document provides a summary update on Phase Two of the Path to Excellence programme. It explains why we want to make changes to surgical services. It also explains why services cannot stay as they are. We are planning to hold a public consultation later in the year. This is when we will share proposals for the future of surgical services. All of the previous 'Draft Case for Change' documents are all available at [www.pathtoexcellence.org.uk/publications](http://www.pathtoexcellence.org.uk/publications)

## Background to Phase Two

Our ambition is simple. We want to create outstanding hospital services for the future. We also need to prepare for the ever increasing demand for health and care services. We want everyone to get the best care possible. Our patients deserve no less. Since 2017, our staff have been developing ideas for Phase Two of the programme.





# A reminder – why is change needed?

The impact of COVID-19 has made the need to change more, not less, urgent than ever before.

## Workforce

NHS staff are under a lot of pressure. This has increased even more during the pandemic. Staff health and wellbeing is now even more of a concern. We can improve this if we change hospital services.

## Quality improvement

We deliver great care but it could be even better. Some services do not meet the highest standards of quality and safety. We must take action to improve this.

## Future demand

The pressure on staff links directly to the growing pressure on the whole NHS. As more people live longer, demand on our services will grow even more. That is why we must keep looking to the future to plan ahead.

## Financial

Our hospital services cost more than the funding we have. If we changed how we deliver services, we could better maximise staff time and expertise. This would also help attract more permanent staff. Quality of care would also improve.

# Surgical services

When we talk about ‘surgery’ or ‘surgical services’, this covers two main areas:



## Trauma and orthopaedics

This type of surgery is to do with bones, joints and muscles.



## General surgery

This type of surgery covers many other parts of the body.





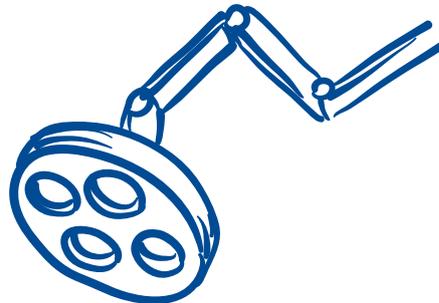
## Summary of 'working ideas'

In our 'working ideas', the majority of planned operations would take place at South Tyneside District Hospital. Emergency operations and some planned operations would take place at Sunderland Royal Hospital. This would mean:

South Tyneside	Sunderland
Emergency surgery and planned operations	
 Planned day case and inpatient operations.	 All emergency and some planned operations.

- Patients who need an emergency operation would have this at Sunderland Royal Hospital.
- Most patients who need a 'planned' operation would have this at South Tyneside District Hospital.
- Some patients would continue to have their planned operations at Sunderland Royal Hospital.
- Both hospitals would continue to run 24/7 adult Emergency Departments (A&E) services just as they do now.
- Outpatient care and diagnostic tests and scans would continue on both hospital sites just as they do now.
- Patients would only need to attend the specific hospital for the surgical procedure. Other tests and appointments would take place locally, just as they do now.





## Why we are focusing on surgery?

We have been talking about our 'working ideas' for surgery for a very long time. Our surgical teams want to move forward and deliver the best possible care for patients.

The pandemic has increased the pressure on surgical services. We do not want patients to have any further delays or cancellations. **We do not want to delay our plans any further. Making changes to these services would help us recover from COVID-19.**





## Why is it better to do emergency operations at one hospital and planned operations at the other?

By organising surgery like this, it would be much better for patients and staff.

It is a tried and tested model and there is lots of national evidence. Many other parts of the NHS have already done it with great success. We are now one of the only parts of the region that doesn't do this already. Some of the main benefits include:



**Patients would have their operation carried out by a surgeon who is an expert in the field.**



**It would mean we can maximise the use of theatre lists to do more operations.**



**It would give us the best chance of reducing waiting lists.**



**There would be less cancellations or delays to operations.**



**We would better control the spread of infection.**



**We would have more capacity to meet demand during busy times of surge.**



## Minimising the need to travel

We know that local access to services is very important. People don't want to travel further unless they have to. We remain committed to minimising the travel impact of any future changes.

Our 'working ideas' do mean that some patients would need to travel to a different hospital for their surgery. But all other appointments would still take place locally. Only the surgical procedure may take place in a different hospital. Everything else would continue just as it is now.

We are undertaking a detailed travel and transport assessment. This will help us understand how any changes might impact patients.

We are also actively exploring what cost effective solutions we could potentially put in place for patients and families.



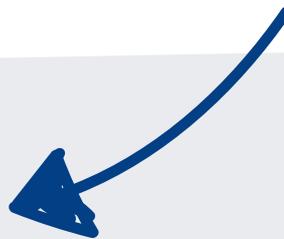
## Next steps

We are at the final stages of work before starting a public consultation later this year. We will let people know before this is due to start. We would only progress ideas that are realistic and are genuine proposals for change. This doesn't include keeping things as they are. We are open to ideas on how we can solve these problems - please see the back page for how to get involved.





## How to get involved



There are lots of ways to get involved and give your views. The best way to find out what is going on is to look at our dedicated website. This includes up-to-date documents, links to surveys and details of up and coming events. We also widely promote activities through the media, online and via key partners and stakeholder groups. You can contact us any time via:



[www.pathtoexcellence.org.uk](http://www.pathtoexcellence.org.uk)



[nhs.excellence@nhs.net](mailto:nhs.excellence@nhs.net)



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# Get

# involved

**We need  
your views  
please get involved**



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