

**Report for:** Plymouth Health and Adults Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Report Topic:** Car Parking Improvements at Derriford Hospital

**Report date:** For 9 November 2011

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## 1. Introduction

Car parking is a fundamental part of the patient and public's care pathway. Difficulty in parking and finding the entrance to the hospital is stressful for patients and members of the public and can have a profoundly negative effect on their experience at the start of their visit.

Feedback from our patients and LINK (Appendix A) tells us that they find it difficult to find somewhere to park on the Derriford site. We are determined to change the way car parking is managed to make it easier and better for our patients, members of the public and visitors to the Derriford site. At the same time, we have to meet the needs of our staff.

Since March 2011, we have been working with expert external car parking contractors to design and implement plans to make these improvements. A member or members of this Committee were invited to join this process in February 2011.

Through this competitive process, we are looking to radically improve and change the way the traffic and car parking is managed on the site. The proposed solution will have evolved through many hours of discussion, involving members of staff from across the organisation, the public and patient representatives including LINK.

At the time of writing, the final solution has not yet been determined but there are some key principles and enhancements that will form part of the final solution, regardless of the chosen contractor. The preferred solution and expert contractor will be decided in November 2011, following a final evaluation process in which members of staff, patients, the public and governors will be involved before being presented to the Trust Board. The new contract will start in January 2012 and the improvements will begin to happen.

## 2. Current Situation

The current system is not working because:

- Patients tell us that the signage is not good enough
- Patients tell us there are not enough spaces for the public, particularly at peak times
- Patients tell us having to pay before they go into the hospital is stressful and they don't always have the right money on them
- Accessing change for paying or help when needed is not easy for patients
- Parking attendants are not visible
- There are not enough disabled parking bays of adequate size.

- The public have to drive in a 'route' to find a parking space (through A to B through B to C) as they are not signposted to an appropriate car park with spaces. This is not acceptable
- The site is very congested and parking is not controlled
- There are safety issues with cars (mainly staff) parked across loading bays and within areas that should be kept free for deliveries
- The 45 minutes free parking, introduced in good faith to aid with drop-offs and pick-ups, is being heavily abused. This is borne out by an average of £10,786 reduction in income per month since this was introduced. This is a total of £129,432 per annum at a time when activity and visitors to the site have increased.
- A significant number of staff are parking in spaces which are designated for patients and the public

### **3. Changes to Improve Parking for Patients and the Public**

- Our car parking charges, that mirror the City Council rates, will not increase but will be held at the current rates for the next few years.
- Changes to the traffic flows on entering Derriford Hospital site and accessing car parks will result in improved quality of service. It will be easier to get to a car park as not all the traffic will be going in the same direction.
- Our patients and members of the public will be directed to a car park with spaces upon entering the Derriford Hospital site. The use of visible and electronic signage indicating where spaces are available will mean less time spent driving around looking for spaces.
- Improved entrances, exit and traffic flows around most of the car parks will make it quicker and easier to find a parking space and safer as there will be less crossing of traffic flows.
- Some car parking areas on site will be re-designated as public to give more parking spaces for patients, closer to the services they are going to visit.
- Staff will be prevented from parking in public car parks which will release at least an additional 120 spaces for patient use.
- Increased use of Trust owned park and ride sites by staff, including the allocated spaces at the George Junction Park and Ride site, ensuring more on site spaces reserved for patient use. This will also enable the Trust to meet its Green Travel Plan commitments by reducing the number of single occupancy car journeys made to the Hospital and reduce on site traffic congestion.
- An increase in the number of disabled spaces will mean all blue badge holders will be able to access disabled spaces in the future. An increase in the size of disabled parking bays will mean that there will be enough room to ensure disabled members of staff, patients and members of the public are able to get out of their car and into the hospital safely.
- The introduction of new barriers and pay on exit within public car parks will help to provide a less stressful experience for patients and the public as they will not need to think about payment until they are leaving. They will not need to think about having the correct change for payment on them and it will also make it quicker for patients and the public to get to wherever they need to go within the hospital.

- Visible car parking office and access to immediate assistance, if required.
- Newly painted white lines and road markings will ensure that patients and the public are safe whilst accessing our services.
- Not having cars parked in access, loading or delivery areas will make for a safer site.
- Improved drop off areas will mean that less people will need to use the car parks for a very short stay.
- A reduction in the free parking period, to allow drop off and pick up, from 45 minutes to 15 minutes will enable improvements to be made and public and staff car parking charges to be frozen at their current rate.