

Update on the Future Hospital Programme

About this section

This part of the Future Hospital Journal is where you will find regular overview updates on progress made by the Future Hospital Programme of the Royal College of Physicians, together with its partners, in realising the vision of the Future Hospital Commission.

We very much welcome your feedback. If you have any comments, or would like to be involved in the work of the Programme, please contact futurehospital@rcplondon.ac.uk.

Since the full team came into post in May 2014, the Future Hospital Programme has been moving at pace in its aim to develop and implement the RCP vision for the future of medical care in hospital and community settings.¹

Future hospital development sites

Last month, we launched our four development sites. We are very proud to be partnering organisations already committed to the vision of the future hospital and seeking innovative ways to improve care for their patients. Over the next year and beyond, the RCP will be working closely with the following organisations as they design, deliver and evaluate new models of care for their local communities (Fig 1):

- **Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board** – led by Dr Olwen Williams, the team aims to improve access to care for frail elderly patients in rural Wales. The objectives are to respond to chronic health needs, including end-of-life care, by bringing access to specialist care into easy reach of those living at considerable distance from secondary (or tertiary) care centres, principally through telemedicine.



1. Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
2. Mid Yorkshire Hospitals
3. Royal Blackburn Hospital
4. Worthing Hospital

Fig 1. Future hospital development sites.

- **Mid Yorkshire Hospitals** – Dr Dinesh Nagi will lead the team aiming to develop an older people assessment service/unit as a part of acute care hub, supporting older patients with fragility syndrome. They aim to transform the ‘front door’ experience for older patients.
- **Royal Blackburn Hospital** – Dr John Dean and his team aim to deliver better quality and more effective services for frail elderly patients using integrated community teams working in localities and neighbourhoods, in partnership with primary, community, social and mental health care services.
- **Worthing Hospital** – Dr Roger Duckitt has developed a project that brings together the three admission streams for Acute Medical, Surgical and Medicine for the Elderly patients into a single clinical area – the Emergency Floor. The project aims to standardise the pathways, streamline care and achieve an efficient and safe process for all patients while minimising the number of transfers of care and ensuring that all time in hospital is optimally utilised to achieve best outcomes.

The *Future Hospital Journal* will in future feature updates, case studies, and original research from the sites as we support them to disseminate their work.

Other key programme developments and appointments

We are delighted that Dr Anne Dornhorst FRCP (consultant diabetologist and former member of the RCP Council) has agreed to lead a future hospital review of integrated care. Anne

will spend time with individuals and organisations managing integrated pathways for diabetes care to capture the details of the model and how it is improving patient care. We are very interested in the diversity of approaches and the innovation being led by physicians and GPs to integrate services and believe that there should be a strong professional voice in this policy and political agenda. We are working closely with RCGP to develop a united view across the professions.

The future hospital team will soon be joined by a Wolfson clinical fellow. Thanks to a generous grant from the Wolfson Foundation, we are leading work to improve the transition of care for young adults and adolescents from paediatric to adult care services. We aim to raise awareness of the clinical and social needs of this patient group and improve the quality of care they receive.

This work strengthens our growing remit on patient-centred care and adds to the work of Dr Nick Lewis-Barned on shared decision-making. Nick’s work has been brought into the Future Hospital Programme as the values promoted by shared decision-making and partnership working with patients are central to the programme. Nick has to date worked with specialists from gastroenterology, palliative medicine, renal medicine and respiratory medicine, bringing them together with patient representatives to explore the concepts and practice of shared decision-making. Over the next year, we will be supporting Nick to take this a step further to realise the implementation of shared decision-making within specialities, services and hospitals.

Box 1. The future hospital in parliament: key mentions since September 2013

Lord Hunt of Kings Heath – Ageing: Public Services and Demographic Change Committee Report, 17 October 2013:

The noble Lord, Lord Crisp, talked about the workforce in health and social care. How right he was. I would just say to him that the recent Royal College of Physicians’ report on the future hospital did not just look at new ways of running hospitals, reflecting that most people in hospital will be older, but said that we should move away from specialisation and that the way forward was for general physicians to treat the patient as a whole, with many comorbidities. It is really exciting that a royal college is leading that kind of movement. We need to work on that.

Jeremy Hunt MP, secretary of state for health – speech at Guy’s and St Thomas’ hospital, ‘Treating patients as people’, 23 January 2014:

With sensible flexibilities, the concept must surely be to ingrain continuity of care as one of our key priorities for each and every NHS patient, exactly as the Royal College of Physicians recommended in their excellent Future Hospital Commission.

Jamie Reed MP – Care Bill debate, 28 January 2014:

If a shortfall in the number of required workers manifests itself, the secretary of state will be as culpable as the non-departmental body for which he is responsible. Given the lack of requirement for long-term planning in the Bill, there appears to be the potential that a problem could be stored up for years to come. Indeed, reports are beginning to appear stating that that is the case, such as that from the Future Hospital Commission of the Royal College of Physicians.

Jamie Reed MP – Care Bill debate, 30 January 2014:

*We are clear about the need to accommodate changes in the health service where those changes would lead to better clinical outcomes. There can be no question about that. The King’s Fund was right to call for ‘fundamental change in the way that the NHS as a whole thinks about the role and priorities of the Acute General Hospital and how it is run.’ In that regard, I point colleagues towards the Future Hospital Commission, which the Royal College of Physicians established, and its report, *Future hospital: caring for medical patients*. Its report stated: ‘The need for change is clear. The time has come to take action. Those working in the NHS have a responsibility to lead this change, supported by the organisations that represent them and empowered by national policy-makers. Organisations and professionals involved in health and social care – including doctors, nurses, politicians, hospitals and national bodies – must be prepared to make difficult decisions and implement radical change where this will improve patient care.’*

Sir Tony Baldry MP – Francis Report debate, 5 March 2014:

We need to recognise that hospitals are changing. In that regard, I very much welcome the work of the Royal College of Physicians through its Future Hospital Commission – an initiative that has not received anything like the publicity and debate that it merits.

At our Strategic Advisory Group in July, we were joined by leaders from across the health professional and policy community. The discussion was excellent and the Future Hospital Programme is benefitting from the resulting relationships being formed with national organisations. We continue to be encouraged and motivated by the levels of support for the vision of the future hospital and working with other organisations helps move us closer to making it a reality.

The Future Hospital and the political landscape

Work at a national level continues, with the RCP recently launching a series of key recommendations for parliamentarians ahead of the 2015 general election, building on the influence the idea of the future hospital has already had in Westminster over the past year (Box 1). The RCP 'manifesto' reaffirms the key message from Future Hospital Programme that the hospital is more than a building. The document sets out how hospitals are an integral part of the community, delivering expert care that reaches far beyond traditional boundaries.

The Conservatives, Labour and Liberal Democrats have all indicated that they see community-based care offering a solution to increasing demand. We believe that secondary care services have a crucial role in improving the care that patients receive wherever they are and in promoting health and well-being by supporting people to lead healthier lives.

The RCP's manifesto includes policy recommendations on funding, data, training, research, public health and more. The aim is to ensure that the next government supports a model of care that promotes health and well-being, values patient experience, and is coordinated around patients' medical and support needs.

Engaging with the future hospital

As well as working with stakeholders across the NHS and all the political parties, we recognise the importance of engaging the wider public with the work of the Future Hospital Programme. Our success in this direction was recognised in June, with the RCP winning the Chartered Institute of Public Relations' prestigious annual award for Best Public Sector Campaign.

Continuing to work with the fellows and members of the RCP and their colleagues in hospitals across the country is vital to realising the vision of the future hospital and we hope that you will make contact with the team (see contact details in 'About this section' at the top of this article). We believe that the difference of this improvement programme is professional leadership and partnerships with patients. We hope you can get involved. ■

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References

- 1 Future Hospital Commission. *Future hospital: caring for medical patients*. A report from the Future Hospital Commission to the Royal College of Physicians. London: Royal College of Physicians, 2013. Available online at www.rcplondon.ac.uk/sites/default/files/future-hospital-commission-report.pdf.

www.rcplondon.ac.uk/shop

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