



## **CROUCH VALE MEDICAL CENTRE, SOUTH WOODHAM FERRERS – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

The purpose of this FAQ is for the town's three GP practices to share with their patients information about their move to the new Crouch Vale Medical Centre in late 2019, what that involves and how it will work. The questions and answers below have been updated to reflect feedback at the drop-in event on Saturday 13 July at Champions Manor Hall.

You can download electronic copies of this document from the practices' websites:

[www.greenwoodsurgery.co.uk/](http://www.greenwoodsurgery.co.uk/)

[www.brickfieldssurgery.co.uk/](http://www.brickfieldssurgery.co.uk/)

[www.kingswaysurgery.net/](http://www.kingswaysurgery.net/)

### **1. Why did the South Woodham Ferrers GP practices decide to move?**

The current premises of the three practices are no longer fit for purpose. There can be real benefits from sharing a space with other healthcare organisations, especially as the town's population grows. The GP partners at all three practices decided this move would provide them with more appropriate premises to offer their patients the best care for the future.

### **2. What is the planned opening date for the medical centre?**

The external building works are complete and the internal fit-out will be completed very shortly, so we are expecting the practices to relocate and open in early autumn 2019. We expect to announce our opening date during August.

### **3. How long will the move take? Will medical services be disrupted?**

All three surgeries plan to move over a single weekend, so there should be no disruption to GP-led services for people living in South Woodham. Nevertheless, there is a contingency plan in case unexpected problems arise, and GP out-of-hours services will still be available during the move. Extended Access to GP-led services, currently provided every Saturday at Greenwood Surgery, is likely to be suspended on the weekend of the move.

### **4. Who is equipping the surgery?**

The three practices are equipping the new centre with office furniture and medical equipment taken from our own buildings and purchasing new equipment where

needed. As part of the move, there is going to be new IT equipment for the practices to ensure the facility has the latest technology to support efficient working.

**5. Will all current medical services on offer by the three current surgeries be offered at the new surgery?**

Yes, services will remain the same. Opportunities for improvements through closer cooperation and through other medical and community services also being based in the building should arise, however. There is a list of these services in the answer to question 25.

**6. What will happen to the “The Practice” and South Woodham Ferrers Clinic?**

The national body called [NHS Property Services](#) is responsible for the buildings where the Clinic and the former New Surgery (“The Practice”) are based and will determine how they are used in due course.

**7. Will there be a medical facility in the town centre?**

There are currently no plans for a town-centre healthcare facility – the future of the SWF Clinic and the GP surgeries there will be decided by their owners. However, the pharmacists who work in the town’s three pharmacies – including two in the town centre – are trained clinicians who can advise you on minor ailments as well as medication use. They can also signpost you to other NHS services if you are not sure what care you need.

**8. What is the view of the existing pharmacists?**

Local pharmacists have been broadly supportive of the scheme in local discussions.

**9. Will the Sainsbury’s superstore include a pharmacy? How will I fill a prescription?**

There is no current application for a dispensing licence for the Sainsbury’s store. The store does potentially have space to house a pharmacy should it wish to add one in the future, but it would be subject to all the legal applications for a licence with national NHS bodies. Patients can fill prescriptions at the existing town pharmacies.

**10. Will I have to come to the new medical centre to drop off my request for a repeat prescription?**

You can ask any of the town’s pharmacies to manage your repeat prescription. That way, you do not have to drop off a request each time. Each practice has online and telephone arrangements in place that offer you a way to request repeat prescriptions.

**11. What will the new facility be called?**

The three practices’ doctors chose Crouch Vale Medical Centre from a shortlist put forward by local residents following the public meeting on 9 January 2019.

**12. Will the practices remain separate? Is it better for them to merge?**

The practices will retain their individual identities though they already work closely together in the locality. They are discussing how they can make the best use of the shared facility and resources over time.

**13. Will there be separate receptions? Can I still see my own practice receptionist?**

There will be a single reception area on the ground floor welcoming patients from all three practices, with clear instructions on how patients from individual practice can check in on arrival, with a 'virtual reception' for community health and care services on the first floor. Reception staff will still be employed by their own practice.

**14. How will the phones be handled?**

A telephone system is being installed that will enable you to ring your own practice directly.

**15. Whose appointment booking protocols will be used? Will there be any extra appointments or clinical staff?**

All three practices will use their individual booking protocols. Local and national NHS schemes may help bring more clinical staff to the medical centre over time.

**16. Will I still have my named GP or regular nurse?**

Yes – you will still be registered with your own practice and can see your own GP, nurse or healthcare assistant in line with current arrangements.

**17. Are all the staff from each of the surgeries being redeployed**

The staff will be moving with their own practices to the new premises – and they will continue to work for their existing practices.

**18. How is staff morale?**

Good – the staff are excited about the move.

**19. Some patients have expressed serious concerns about accessing the new surgery. Has an agreement with local bus companies been reached regarding bus services? (See also question 30)**

From 1 September 2019, First Bus will be operating a new "South Woodham Ferrers Zone" allowing residents to buy a "Zonal Ticket" at £2.50 for adults or £1.50 for children that will bring a half-hourly or hourly service between 8am and 7pm Monday to Saturday to all stops in the Zone (including the new development) except for Marsh Farm. These services will be extensions of the current 36, 36a, 94 and 94a services.

Bus pass holders can continue to use their pass as usual. Discussions with First around an NHS staff discount and a bus information board inside the medical centre

continue. The local NHS also plans to talk to the Dengie DaRT operator and is reviewing footpath access.

**20. Have plans progressed regarding a shuttle bus?**

As modern buses have good disabled access, it is better to make use of existing bus operators' services and First Bus has made changes to its service noted in the answer to question 19 to serve the development including the new medical centre.

**21. Will there be a pedestrian crossing from the Hullbridge Road side across the very busy A132 (Burnham Road)?**

A crossing is currently being installed and adjustments to the nearby roundabout also being completed over the summer will allow better access to the site for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists alike.

**22. Will there be enough parking?**

There will be 38 dedicated parking spaces for staff and patients – more than the surgeries currently have. Sainsbury's are also working with the NHS to ensure the rest of the site's car park can be used as effectively as possible for both medical centre and superstore users. There is likely to be a three-hour waiting limit across the car park to deter commuters from using the car park.

The medical centre has a dedicated drop-off point and ambulance bay.

**23. Will the level of funding remain the same at the new surgery?**

All practices will retain their current level of funding. The move does not change their contractual or funding arrangements with the NHS.

**24. Will the move have any implications for the community nurses, health visitors, and midwives?**

The Community Nursing and Integrated Care Team and other NHS services offered by [Provide Community Interest Company](#) (CIC) will be based in the new building (see question 25).

Health Visitors will continue to work out of their current premises in Maldon as Essex County Council is responsible for this service now (and Virgin Care currently holds the contract).

**25. Will the move have implications for the existing SWF Clinic in Merchant Street? Will there be any voluntary group services at Crouch Vale?**

Most services currently based in the Clinic will be moving. The following NHS services, all from [Provide CIC](#), are moving to Crouch Vale Medical Centre:

- Sexual Health Service
- Physiotherapy
- Children's Speech and Language Therapy

- Audiology
- Assessments for autism
- Mid Essex ENT (ear, nose and throat) Service
- District Nursing / Integrated Care Team (ICT)

In addition, all current Clinic tenants other than Provide have been offered space in the new medical centre. These are:

- Phlebotomy (blood services) from [Mid Essex Hospital Trust](#) (MEHT)
- MEHT orthoptist – currently third Thursday of every month
- MEHT Eye Clinic – currently every Monday morning
- MEHT – Gynaecology and Obstetrics currently first and third Tuesday morning of every month
- [Essex Partnership University Trust](#) Learning Disabilities Team – currently third, fourth and fifth Wednesday afternoons of each month
- Community Learning Disability LD Team
- [Mid Essex Health in Mind](#) (IAPT) counselling service
- Essex Ultrasound – currently Mondays
- Hearing Help – currently third Tuesday of every month
- Age UK Toenail Cutting Service
- Type 2 Diabetes Support Group – fourth Wednesday afternoon every month

**26. Will there be economies of scale brought about by sharing back office support (rather than having three of everything) in the expectation that this will release resources to deliver additional healthcare services?**

Yes. This will be on a small scale initially. The practices hope to be able to share some of the reception duties as well as secretarial support.

**27. What scope will there be for additional healthcare services to be introduced at the new medical centre?**

All three practices are working with NHS Mid Essex Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) with a view to exploring additional NHS services that could be provided in the future in line with the NHS [Long Term Plan](#). The CCG has received a number of suggestions from residents for services they would like to see at Crouch Vale and these will be considered.

Unfortunately, it may not be practical to implement some suggestions due to the availability of NHS staff or other logistical reasons.

**28. How will the Extended Access to GP-led services at evenings, weekends and bank holidays work when the practices move?**

An Extended Access hub offering Saturday appointments in South Woodham Ferrers between 8am and 2pm opened earlier this year and will move to the new medical centre when it opens. You can book these Saturday appointments in person at the medical centre or by telephoning its reception. As noted in the answer to question 3, the service is expected to be suspended for the Saturday of the practices' move.

**29. How do the practices want the patient groups, patient representatives and other residents to be involved and what scope is there for their input?**

Local patient groups have been involved in compiling suggestions for additional services in the new premises, and our Patient Participation Groups have volunteered to help patients find their way around the new building once it opens.

**30. Why doesn't the bus take us closer to the new building**

Unfortunately, it proved impractical to install a bus stop within the new development, but the local NHS is talking to Essex Highways about a new formal crossing from the far side of Burnham Road to the medical centre, in place of the traffic island. This will make crossing the road safer and the medical centre more accessible.

**31. What resources and arrangements will be deployed to address the serious concerns which have been expressed by patients about the accessibility and location of the new health centre?**

Along with the bus changes noted in the answer to question 19, there are disabled parking spaces in the site's car park. A pedestrian crossing is also being installed and patients eligible for the NHS non-emergency patient transport service or home visits will still be able to access these services.

Chelmsford Community Transport may also be able to help – see <http://chelmsfordct.org/> for details. It should be noted highway improvements are the responsibility of Essex Highways (on behalf of Essex County Council) and improvements to the roads around the medical centre site are in line with planning obligations.

In addition, a number of improvements are being made to footpaths, bus routes and parking to ensure you can access the site on Burnham Road, which is 1 mile away (20 minutes' walk at a normal pace) from the current town centre.

**32. How will the local NHS monitor how easy it is for people to use the new centre? Will there be air quality monitoring? How will that monitoring be reviewed and acted on?**

The practices and other NHS services in the new centre will be seeking patient feedback through the national 'NHS Friends and Family' test as well as through a suggestion box and contact details for NHS Mid Essex CCG's Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). Other ways to seek feedback from patients are being explored.

A post-project review will also be undertaken by the CCG and NHS England 12 months after occupation of the site, and the findings (including the raw data) will be shared with patient representatives prior to publication.

There are no plans to monitor air quality – all required regulations around environmental impact for the development have been met.

**33. Have health and safety been considered in locating a petrol station near the medical centre site and around possible effects of local air quality, mobile phone signals from the nearby mast and fast-moving traffic? Was there a risk assessment before planning permission was granted?**

The site plans were approved by Chelmsford City Council in line with its usual checks and procedures. The design, construction and operation of the petrol station have been through in conjunction with Local Planning Authorities and Petroleum Officers, as with similar facilities at other Sainsbury's stores. There is very little difference to a petrol station being collocated to a medical centre.

The mobile telephone mast near the new development meets the same legal standards as those close to other buildings around the country. There is a new crossing and roundabout layout to maximise road safety around the new site and air quality has not been raised as a potential concern during any stage of the planning process.

**34. Were residents consulted on the plans for the new development? Will the practices and wider NHS pay attention to the feedback from residents in the survey results published online and in the SWF Focus in July 2019?**

There was a robust consultation in 2014 including a two-and-a-half-day public exhibition to which all SWF households were invited by post and a survey about the development received 930 responses of which 65.8% (930 responses) supported all or some of the development.

The NHS had no involvement with the recent survey whose results were published in July 2019 and we are concerned that it might create false expectations among residents. The practices have to move into Crouch Vale Medical Centre as the current surgery premises are no longer fit for purpose.

Services currently based in the SWF Clinic have all been invited to move to Crouch Vale Medical Centre as noted in the answer to question 23 to offer more joined-up care for local patients.

**For further information on the highways and transport plan for South Woodham Ferrers please follow [this link](#) (if you have an electronic version of the FAQ) or visit <http://bit.ly/32paE8Q>. Please see document reference SOCG20B – “Statement of Common Ground with Site Promoters of SWF”.**

**Useful contacts:**

- Essex Highways – phone 0345 603 7631, textphone: 0345 758 5592 (Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5pm)
- Chelmsford City Council Planning – phone 01245 606826
- NHS England – phone 0300 311 22 33 or email [england.contactus@nhs.net](mailto:england.contactus@nhs.net)
- Healthwatch Essex Information Line – phone 0300 500 1895 or email [enquiries@healthwatchessex.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchessex.org.uk)