



St George's University Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust



Millbrook
HEALTHCARE



Surrey Heartlands
Clinical Commissioning Group

Planned changes to wheelchair services

Overview and frequently asked questions

April 2022

About this pack

- Following on from our recent letter, this pack aims to:
 - **update you on some planned changes to local wheelchair services** – *what's happening and why, when changes will happen, and what these changes mean for you*
 - **provide more information on some areas, including answers to some common questions**
- As a Clinical Commissioning Group, we are responsible for planning and buying local services – so we will be leading this project – but we are working very closely with the team at Queen Mary's Hospital and our Millbrook colleagues on these planned changes.

What's changing and why?

- In July 2020 we launched a new NHS wheelchair service across Surrey and North East Hampshire.
- This service, run by Millbrook Healthcare Group, provides a fully integrated service.
- The service was designed with service users, and aims to bring together all the different aspects of the wheelchair service into one integrated service so clients can get all the equipment and support they need in one place.
- When the service went live in summer 2020 people living across Surrey Heartlands transferred across to the new service – the exception to this was clients living in the Spelthorne area, who have remained under the care of the Roehampton service (part of St George's).
- Due to the complexities of moving from a number of different providers into the new integrated service, we were unable to transfer these clients across at the same time so we agreed this would happen at a later date.
- With the integrated service now operating across Surrey and North East Hampshire, we are now looking to make this planned change.

What will this change mean for me?

- This change means that your care would transfer from the team at Queen Mary's Hospital, Roehampton (part of St George's Hospital Trust) to the new Surrey and North East Hampshire integrated service, run by Millbrook Healthcare.
- This means in future your care, equipment and support would all be provided through the new integrated service.
- You will continue to get the care and support you need - it will just be from a different organisation in the future.

When will this change happen?

- **We are planning to make this change from 1 July 2022** so if you are currently under the care of the team at Queen Mary's Hospital your care would transfer across to the new Millbrook service from this date.
- We had originally expected to make this change sooner. However, due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, we needed to wait.
- Now we are moving forward, and the national focus has moved to 'living with Covid', we now feel it's the right time to make this change.
- We are already working towards the 1 July date, and have a detailed programme plan that we are working through, and we feel this gives us plenty of time to ensure a smooth transition to the new service.

Responding to some of your questions

(incorporating questions from our engagement
event on 31 March)

Why does my care need to change?

- We understand some of you will have been under the care of the Roehampton team for some time.
- When the six former CCGs procured the new Surrey and North East Hampshire integrated wheelchair service, the intention was to have a single service covering Surrey, that responded to feedback from clients and helped improve co-ordination and communication, resulting in more joined up care.
- The intention was always to bring all Surrey residents into the new service and that's why we're now looking to make this change.
- As the organisation responsible for planning and meeting local health needs, we want to ensure everyone has access to the same level of care so we now want to deliver on the commitment we made and bring all our residents into the integrated service as planned.

How have you engaged service users?

- We engaged with people living in Surrey and North East Hampshire who use wheelchair services as part of our original procurement process – and we used the feedback we receive to design the new integrated service.
- In April 2019 the six Surrey CCGs (Surrey Downs, Guildford and Waverley, North West Surrey, Surrey Heath, East Surrey CCG and North East Hampshire and Farnham CCGs) hosted an engagement event in Dorking.
- The aim was to seek the views of service users, carers, their families, other local groups and providers, on their experiences of the current wheelchair services and to get their feedback on opportunities for improvements so we could use this feedback to shape the new service.
- Around 100 people attended including service users, parents and carers, as well as representatives from a range of organisations including Surrey Coalition, Surrey County Council and Action for Carers.

Key themes from the feedback

Through the event and other feedback we heard the following key themes. Where possible, we incorporated this feedback into the design of the new service.

- Support for a co-ordinated wheelchair repair and maintenance service to ensure that a joined-up and timely service is provided
- A desire to have modern IT/systems to facilitate better communication with clients
- Good customer service and access to advice during 8.30am and 5pm
- Out of hours emergency repair service operating 7 days per week and until 11pm
- Fully equipped clinical facilities to enable our clinical colleagues to carry out full posture and mobility assessment
- Home visits for people who require them

Were Spelthorne clients involved in this engagement?

- We advertised our engagement programme widely across Surrey, including to people living in the Spelthorne area as we were looking to introduce a new service for the whole of Surrey.
- We worked closely with the wheelchair services operating at the time and they helped us communicate and engage with service users. They also shared details of the engagement event directly with clients to help us ensure we reached the clients, families and carers that were using wheelchair services.
- We also worked with the Surrey Coalition, who helped shape the service specification and our co-design work.

How will my information be shared?

- Your care will automatically transfer over to Millbrook as the new service provider.
- Before this happens your information and medical records will need to be transferred from Queen Mary's Hospital, Roehampton (part of St George's University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust) to Millbrook Healthcare Group.
- This is to ensure the continuity of your care and will enable Millbrook, as the new service provider, to have all the information they need, including your medical notes and information about your care and equipment needs.

To get ready for the change of service, your information will be transferred across from 19th April 2022.

- Your information will be treated confidentially, in exactly the same way as it is now. If you have any questions or concerns about this, or wish to opt out of having your data transferred, please contact the Queen Mary's Hospital wheelchair service team before 19th April 2022 to discuss this further – or we are happy to take questions on this in our Q&A session, which we will be moving onto shortly.

Who are Millbrook Healthcare?

- Millbrook Healthcare is an independent organisation that specialises in providing community equipment, wheelchairs and assistive technology to the NHS and local authorities to support people to live independently.
- We have a great deal of experience working with the NHS and provide services to clients under an NHS contract so all services remain free to clients, as they are now.
- Millbrook Healthcare was announced as the successful provider of the new integrated service, following a competitive procurement process.
- We have been providing the new Surrey and North East Hampshire integrated wheelchair service across Surrey Heartlands since July 2020.

What does the new service offer?

- One of the key themes we heard loud and clear from the previous engagement was that the previous Surrey wheelchair service was very fragmented, with many different organisations providing different parts of the service.
- This made it confusing for clients, making it difficult to know who to contact when, and meant the service was very disjointed for people using the services, with different organisations not communicating with each other.
- In response, **the NHS worked with service users to create a new service specification that is more joined up and more streamlined**, with all elements of the service now provided by Millbrook as the new provider.
- Under the new integrated service, assessments, wheelchair repairs and maintenance, delivery and collection, specialist seating and ongoing support are all provided by the same organisation through a single point of access.

Will I still get the same level of care?

- The Millbrook service will provide a fully integrated wheelchair, seating and repair service and is commissioned to meet a detailed service specification developed by the CCG (in partnership with service users) to ensure key requirements around quality, waiting times and other areas are all met.
- As part of the service the Millbrook team link in with professionals within the community and in hospitals, adopting a partnership and collaborative approach, with the service user, and their needs, at the centre. The team work, and liaise with, hospital, community and education physios and occupational therapists to look at an individual's clinical and wider needs and work closely with other services, and other health and care professionals.
- Millbrook also has its own specialist seating service called Consoler to meet client's needs in relation to the creation of specialist and personal seating requirements.

Where would I go for my appointments in future?

- Under the new service, appointments are held at our purpose-built service locations in Woking (at the Kingsway Business Park, Forsyth Road) or Redhill (at the IO Centre, Salbrook Road Industrial Estate)
- Both locations have accessible parking and are well equipped with plinths, pressure assessment equipment, weighing scales, hoists and other facilities.
- If you are eligible for Non-Emergency Patient Transport, Millbrook Healthcare can provide you with the details.
- Some appointments would also be carried out at home if there is a specific clinical need, and video assessments are commonly held, where possible and appropriate.



What if I need urgent help?

- The Millbrook team work to a detailed service specification which sets out the level of service and standards of care that need to be provided as part of their contract. This includes timescales for response times.
- As part of the contract, the service will prioritise clinically urgent requests to ensure service users get the help they need.
- Urgent referrals will be triaged within two working days and these requests will be responded to within 10 working days. If a client needs to be seen urgently they will be given a priority slot to ensure they are seen quickly.

I have an electric wheelchair. Will I still get an annual review?

- Yes. Pre-planned maintenance forms part of the service and takes place annually at the service users home at a convenient day and time. This is carried out by an engineer and ensures electric chairs are regularly reviewed and checked.
- Clients who have a manual chair can contact the service at any time if they are experiencing any issues or if they feel their chair needs to be checked.

Next steps

- We hope you found this information helpful.
- In terms of next steps, we will continue to work closely with the Roehampton team and Millbrook colleagues to ensure a smooth transition to the new service.
- Your care will remain with St George's until 30th June so if you need any help or support, please continue to contact the Roehampton team up until this date.
- From the week starting 20th June Millbrook Healthcare will be in touch to provide all the information you need, including how to contact the new service – until then please continue to contact the Roehampton team, as you do now.