



07 April 2020

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NR7 0WG

George Freeman
Member of Parliament for Mid Norfolk

<<sent via email>>

Dear George Freeman

From Friday of this week, Dr Anoop Dhesi, Chair of NHS Norfolk and Waveney CCG, and I hope to join your regular weekly teleconferences with Norfolk County Council. In this way we can keep you informed in a timely and frequent way about how we are responding to COVID-19 locally.

I am aware, though, that with the fast-paced nature of events, many local representatives have raised questions around PPE and other key issues. On behalf of my fellow Chief Executives in NHS Trusts in Norfolk and Waveney I hope the following briefing is helpful.

PPE - the current situation, expected deliveries, public campaign to manufacture

Supplies have not met demand, which is not surprising, although the main NHS Trusts, including our hospitals, are currently reporting adequate stock. Due to the nature of their work acute hospitals are supplied by the NHS Supply Chain and carry significant stock.

Difficulties remain in GP practices and some areas of social care which are not supplied by NHS Supply Chain, and we share their unease. We estimate that a quarter of practices currently hold less than five days' supply of stock. To help mitigate this there have been a number of cases where larger NHS Trusts have been able to offer mutual aid to by releasing their own stock. For example, in the last week the NNUH has kindly supported a number of practices in central Norfolk and in the Great Yarmouth and Waveney area who were running low on stock.

GP practices, care homes and other providers of services that have an urgent requirement for PPE can contact the National Supply Disruption Response (NSDR) 24/7 helpline. So far practices are advising us these routes are not yielding adequate supply.

Should you have further questions about GP practices please do not hesitate to approach the CCG in the first instance, as we are doing all we can to lighten their load at an extraordinarily busy time. We were expecting a stock of PPE including masks, gloves, aprons and cleaning equipment to arrive in Norfolk and Suffolk today (Tuesday 7th), from DHSC and MHCLG, primarily for social care. We have been advised today that the Norfolk delivery will be delayed and made in part-shipments.

Offers to make visors or other protection from many local academic institutions or businesses are being co-ordinated by the Norfolk Resilience Forum. The NRF and Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) have been working 'behind the scenes' to source as much PPE as possible from local supplies. The time has now come to raise the volume of this and I am glad to say that on Wednesday we expect the NRF to

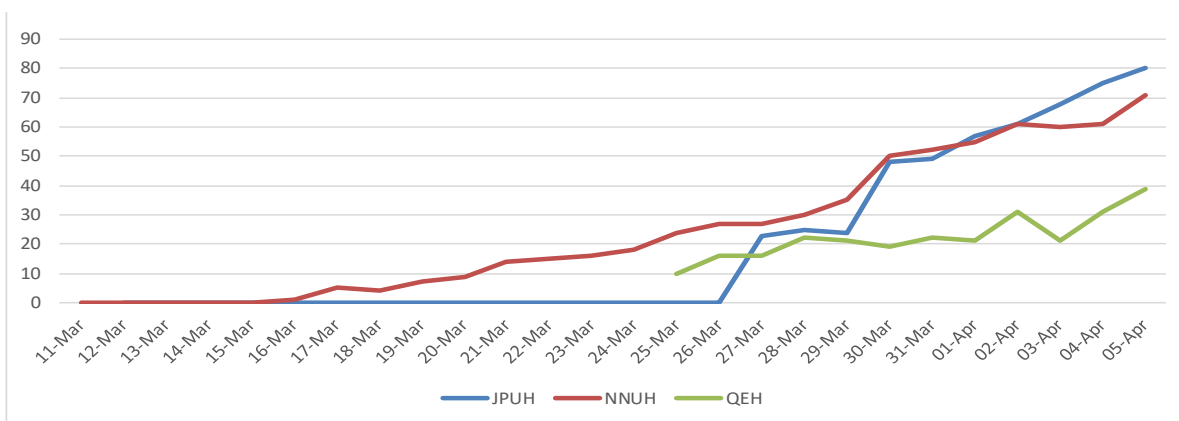
launch a public campaign encouraging businesses to come forward with suitable stock or offers to manufacture. We will then coordinate stock locally, aimed at the smaller providers like care homes and GP practices. Anything you can do to magnify this campaign will be welcome.

Other issues - workload, capacity, support to patients from General Practices

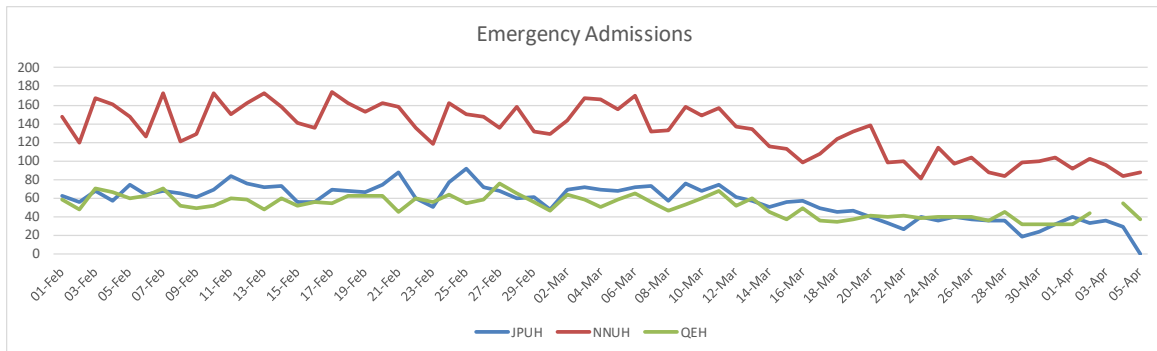
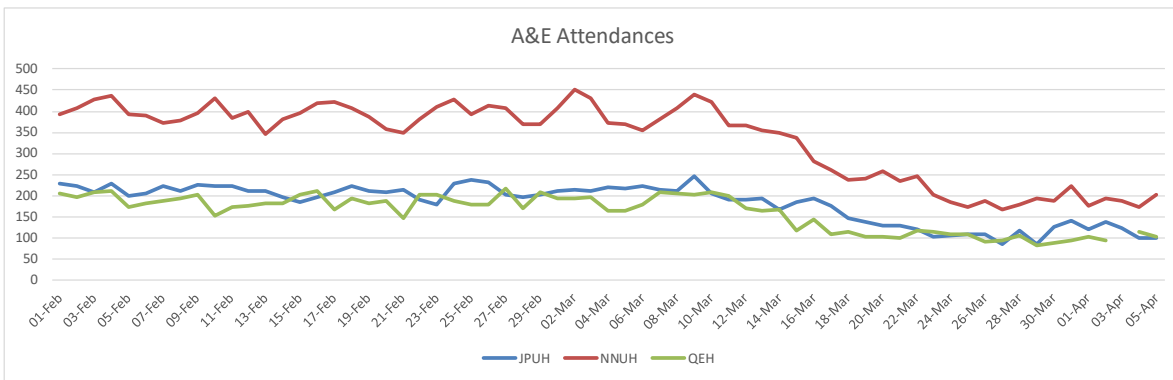
You may wish to know about some other key points which are now emerging:

- NSFT is setting up a 24/7 crisis phone line for patients and a system to ensure that patients can be seen away from A&E or moved from A&E at the earliest possible opportunity. It is also offering video consultations this month to make sure service users continue to receive support for their mental health during the pandemic.
- It is vital that our GP practices continue their work to keep as many people safely at home as possible. They are rising to the challenge and I pay tribute to our GP staff in this. This week:
 - All GP practice main sites will be open on Good Friday and Bank Holiday Monday
 - We shall be rolling out designated surgeries or other facilities where people with COVID-19 who need a face to face appointment (following phone or digital triage) can be safely seen, away from non-COVID-19 patients.
 - We are writing individually to 32,000 people across Norfolk and Waveney who have either received a national letter or been identified by their GP as 'high risk'. They will receive a guide to effective shielding plus an invitation to send their local Primary Care Network daily updates on their health. If a patient's daily update on their health causes a concern, the practice can intervene. If they do not send an update they will be phoned (by CCG staff) to check they remain well and their update entered into the system for clinical review. This will be done using a 'risk stratification' tool called ECLIPSE, which has been pioneered in West Norfolk and is thought to be a unique approach to helping some of our most vulnerable patients.
- By working together, the 'system' has discharged as many people as possible to free acute hospital bed stock. Normal bed occupancy is 95%, but currently occupancy across the three hospitals in Norfolk and Waveney is 60%.

The graph below indicates the number of patients with Covid-19 in general and acute beds over recent days.



Emergency admissions and 'walk-ins' to the Emergency Departments have fallen dramatically as the graphs below shows:



- We have sourced further community capacity. Published guidance is that no-one should stay in hospital once they are deemed medically optimised to leave. To enable us to create space in our hospitals we have sourced 175 additional beds in the community (as of last Friday).

We are working to secure further beds within community hospitals, care homes, hotels and student accommodation. Caring for people in venues like these reduces the time that care staff spend driving and increases the time they spend looking after people. So we are looking at supporting more people in these venues, including some people who under normal circumstances would be supported at home, because it would enable us to provide the best support to people with the resources that we have. We are currently looking at the staffing and equipment requirements for this option.

- Testing to help staff return to work is well underway, as you know, at Norwich Community Hospital and in Beccles. NHS England and Improvement is co-ordinating additional 'regional' testing centres. The first, in Stansted, opens this week and we expect the second to be opened in Norwich next week, location to be advised.

I look forward to answering any questions you may have if you are joining the teleconference on Friday, although if you wish to discuss anything beforehand please contact my PA amara.cunningham@nhs.net who will be pleased to book a call when it is convenient for you.

Yours sincerely

Melanie Craig
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Executive Lead, Norfolk and Waveney STP