



Community Health Partnerships

Strategic Estate Planning & Developments

Supporting a strategic approach to the planning, use and disposal of the primary healthcare and community estate to drive savings, efficiencies and service improvements.

Case Study: Migration & integration of acute services in Colchester, enables operational savings and service improvements

Building / Location:

Colchester Primary Care Centre, South East

Organisations Involved:

- Colchester Hospital University NHS Foundation Trust
- Community Health Partnerships
- NHS North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group
- NHS Property Services
- Realise Health Ltd
- Department of Health

Expected Benefits:

- Recurrent/annual system savings of circa £2m
- Better utilisation of assets releasing capital and revenue savings
- Improved patient services and staff environment
- Provision of 100+ housing units on Essex County Hospital site
- Significant reduction in void space

The challenge:

Colchester Hospital University NHS Foundation Trust has committed to closing Essex County Hospital (ECH), a hospital with buildings dating from 1820 to 1960, with extensive backlog maintenance challenges of around £15m. No longer suitable for the delivery of modern healthcare, the hospital is in a residential area, on a small site of 1.7ha with limited scope for redevelopment.

As part of the Trust's long-term plans to close the site, the transfer of services including radiotherapy and oncology to Colchester General Hospital (CGH) was completed in 2014. However, a number of outpatient and ambulatory care services at ECH, including breast care, ophthalmology, ENT, audiology, nuclear medicine and hospital dental specialties, still required new accommodation.

The opportunity:

Adjacent to Colchester General Hospital, and just two miles from the ECH site, is the Colchester Primary Care Centre (PCC) - a three-storey building of almost 7,700m² which opened in 2006 under the Public Private Partnership (LIFT) programme.

Community Health Partnerships (CHP), head tenant of the Primary Care Centre, working with the North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group, was aware that a combination of under-utilisation and vacant space was leading to significant void costs to the local health economy in excess of £1m per annum.

The solution:

As a solution to this inefficiency and in response to the need to relocate some of the remaining services from Essex County Hospital, it was proposed that the Trust take over occupation of the 1st floor at the Primary Care Centre.

This proposal will result in:

- A reduction of void space at the Primary Care Centre - improving patient access to acute and primary care through service integration across the two adjacent sites
- The disposal of the land at the ECH site – releasing prime space for the development of 100+ housing units and realising significant capital funds which will be reinvested locally in schemes including at Colchester General Hospital.



Above: Essex County Hospital



Above: Colchester Primary Care Centre



Since the inception of the project the benefits of basing more services at the PCC have become clear, especially in enabling better clinical adjacencies and patient pathways for care on both the CGH and PCC sites. Consequently, since the initial specification, the project has now grown to include redevelopment of the PCC second floor to be used for clinical services, displacing administrative and support services, which will be accommodated in cheaper, non-clinical premises nearby.

Unlocking the challenges:

Colchester Hospital University NHS Foundation Trust continues to work with the North East Essex CCG, CHP and the Department of Health to develop a proposition which delivers substantial system-wide benefits, whilst also being aligned with the objectives of the individual organisations through the transfer of services to Colchester PCC, Colchester General Hospital and other community settings.

The Trust applied to the Department of Health's Growth & Efficiency Fund, which helps NHS organisations accelerate land sales as part of the Government's housing strategy. Approved funding included a loan for £4m to enable the capital works required to relocate the Trust's services.

Using Colchester Primary Care Centre to accommodate some of the services displaced from Essex County Hospital will require some existing occupiers to relocate within the building. These relocations, and the need to accommodate many more patient visits per day, will require additional refurbishment works to ensure all the occupiers continue to have fit-for-purpose space and that the patient experience remains positive. Minimal disruption to existing occupiers is a key objective of the project team.

Expected benefits and service improvements:

- Improved patient services, specifically provision of an integrated Ophthalmology service and ENT/Audiology services delivered out of modern purpose designed clinical space.
 - Disposal receipts of Essex County Hospital.
 - Recurrent/annual system savings of circa £2m.
 - Significant reduction in void space from current level of 15%.
 - Better utilisation of assets releasing capital and revenue savings.
 - Identification of innovative routes of funding to ensure affordability.
 - Provision of 100+ housing units on Essex County Hospital site.
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Implementation:

The redevelopment is being implemented in phases, with the final transition of services to Colchester Primary Care Centre anticipated by the summer of 2018. The project is currently expected to be completed as follows:

Action	From
Initial scheme design	July 2016
Planning permission and initial affordability check	November 2016
Detailed design and sign-off	September 2017
Refurbishment works commence at Primary Care Centre	October 2017
Works complete	June 2018
Transition of services from Essex County Hospital	July 2018
Release of Essex County Hospital site for housing	August 2018