



**healthwatch**  
York

**Closure of Archways:  
Changes to intermediate  
care services in York**

**September 2016**

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## **Closure of Archways:**

### Changes to intermediate care services in York

#### **Introduction**

Archways is a 22-bed Community Unit in York, named after former Lord Mayor and charity volunteer Jack Archer. It was designed to help stop people going into hospital, and to help them leave hospital earlier. People are admitted directly from home, from the Emergency Department or following a hospital stay.

The focus of the unit is to assess what a person needs to be independent, and then support them with treatment and rehabilitation. Most people return to their home with the average length of stay being three to four weeks.

The hospital treats adults over the age of 18 who have a Selby or York GP.

On August 17<sup>th</sup> it was announced that Archways would close. From 31 December 2016 services currently delivered from Archways Intermediate Care Unit will be provided through the York Community Response Team.

## Why is Healthwatch York looking at the closure of Archways?

Following the publicity in The Press about the closure of Archways Healthwatch York has received 19 phone calls and e mails from members of the public. All were against the closure, most expressed their anxiety and concern and asked why there had been no consultation.

This report summarises the feedback received:

- People are concerned about the impact the closure will have on hospital waiting times/shortage of beds/'bed blocking'. They fear it may lead to more re-admissions to hospital
- Concern was expressed that care in peoples' own homes is not always practical, for example if they need hoists, IV drips etc. or cannot use the stairs to get to the bathroom
- Particular concern was expressed for people who live alone and would not be able to prepare food, wash/dress, use the toilet without assistance
- Concern was expressed about how people would manage overnight. Currently the Community Response team finish at 8pm
- People commented on the excellent care they had received at Archways and how good all the staff were

## **What we did to find out more**

Following the announcement of planned closure on 17<sup>th</sup> August, Healthwatch York issued a statement on its website asking for feedback, both positive and negative. We added this statement to our Facebook page and our twitter feed, encouraging people to get in touch.

The Press amended its story online to invite people to contact Healthwatch York or York Older People's Assembly with their concerns and opinions.

## **What we found out**

Thirteen of the 19 respondents had direct experience of care at Archways either having been patients themselves, or through a close relative or friend and two had been involved professionally (total of 68% of respondents). Another respondent had hoped it would be available on her discharge from hospital; five expressed general concern from their knowledge of provision in York.

The key areas of concern can be summarised under the following headings.

### **Importance of Archways as a 'bridge' between hospital and home**

- Available to all ages
- Some patients virtually immobile on admission, though reason for hospitalisation resolved
- Recovery plans drawn up on admission over 24 hours by multi-disciplinary team
- Availability of instant 24-hour staff help at every stage of recovery
- Specialist care (e.g. physiotherapy) available which may be missing from hospital wards

### **Importance of Archways as a 'bridge' between home and hospital**

- May be referred for rehabilitation to avoid acute hospital admission if unable to cope independently

## **Quality of care at Archways**

- Excellent staff care, nourishment aids recovery
- En suite rooms promote dignity
- Close, caring monitoring of progress towards full pre-discharge assessment
- Encouragement to be independent

## **Archways Promotes independence and sense of well being**

- Rehabilitative care allays people's anxieties about coping at home
- Lying in hospital bed (e.g. waiting for mealtime) means patients don't get experience trying to manage

## **Discharge straight home is not desirable or feasible**

- Impossible to arrange adequate care at home after discharge
- Needs for specialist equipment – hoists, drips not at home
- Mobility problems: can't use stairs, can't get to toilet
- Community response team not 24- hour cover
- Ongoing multi-disciplinary assessment not available

## **Closure will affect older people most**

- Need longer rehabilitation period and help with range of practical issues
- Scepticism/anxiety about proposed 'full patient management team'

## **Single householders most affected if need help**

- Washing
- Using toilet
- Dressing
- preparing food

## **Negative impact of closure on hospital**

- People discharged too early with insufficient care may need to be readmitted
- Shortage of available beds/bed blocking will extend waiting times for admission

## Conclusion

The health and care system must change to meet the challenges of the future. York Hospital believe changes like those proposed at Archways are part of the journey to meet these challenges. However, this journey of change demands a shift in culture. This requires health, care, independent and voluntary sector bodies to work together with patients, families, carers and the public as a whole to redesign services fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. People are concerned about the impact of changes. We need to begin a conversation about how we make the most of the resources we have to meet the growing demand.

We understand this, and want to support the system to face the challenges ahead.

## Recommendations

Recommendation	Recommended to
For future service changes, plans for consultation and engagement with the public / other agencies to be developed at the earliest stage	Health & Wellbeing Board
Commit to co-design and co-production (in line with the Social Care Institute of Excellence definition)	Health & Wellbeing Board
Consider the feedback received to date	Scrutiny committee

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## York CVS

Healthwatch York is a project at York CVS. York CVS works with voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations in York. York CVS aims to help these groups do their best for their communities, and people who take part in their activities or use their services.

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## This report

This report is available to download from the Healthwatch York website: [www.healthwatchyork.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchyork.co.uk)

Paper copies are available from the Healthwatch York office  
If you would like this report in any other format, please contact the Healthwatch York office