

Keep Our St Helier Hospital *

<http://koshh.org>

11/01/2016 - KOSHH statement on the "internal incident" at the Epsom & St Helier Trust on Friday the 6th of January.

KOSHH are not in the least bit surprised to learn that our local hospitals (Epsom Hospital and St Helier Hospital) have struggled to keep up with demand of late, during the manufactured crisis currently affecting vast swathes of England's health service.

Indeed the problems which we are now hearing about are precisely what we at KOSHH have been warning about for some years now, and we should stress that it gives us absolutely no pleasure to again have been proved right on this matter.

Nor are we surprised, that the wonderful, committed and hardworking staff at Epsom & St Helier Hospitals managed to cope as well as possible with the increased demand, in spite of the unsustainable pressure and unrealistic cuts, which have been imposed upon them.

STP Threat

What this incident does demonstrate however, is that the people of South West London, certainly cannot afford lose any of our acute hospital sites, or see any further reduction in capacity. Unfortunately, health bosses in the South West London area, under a scheme called a "Sustainability and Transformation Plan" (STP), are calling for exactly that - A reduction in the number of acute sites from the current 5 sites (Kingston Hospital, St George's Hospital, Croydon Hospital, Epsom Hospital and St Helier Hospital), down to 4 or even only 3 Acute sites, with St Helier likely to be at the top of the shortlist for the cuts.

Epsom & St Helier hospitals currently serve a population of some 500,000 people, and according to the Trust's own research, between now and 2025, this number is set to rise to 650,000 people. We already have far fewer hospital beds per thousand people than the national average, which itself is already much lower than most of the developed world.

Imagine how much harder it would be for surviving hospitals in South West London to be able to cope with demand, if one or two of the existing hospitals were to be lost to the cuts demanded by the Sustainability and Transformation Plan for our area?

We urge everyone to find out more about the threat posed by the STP for our area, and write to your local MP, local councillors, and GPs. All of whom can influence the outcome of this dangerous plan.

KOSHH are holding a public meeting to discuss this threat, and the wider threat to our health service, at 7:30pm on the 16th of February, in Morden Baptist Church, Crown Lane, Morden (near Morden Tube), and we would urge everyone to attend to find out more.

Founder of the NHS, Aneurin Bevan said, that "the NHS would last as long as there were folk left with the faith to fight for it" - we have that faith, and we need everyone's help to fight for it.

ENDS