

BRIEFING FOR OCCG KEY STAKEHOLDERS:

SUE RYDER NETTLEBED HOSPICE

EMBARGOED UNTIL 4PM MONDAY 13 JANUARY 2020.

The Sue Ryder South Oxfordshire Palliative Care Hub is planning to close its hospice inpatient unit at Nettlebed at the end of March 2020, while continuing its specialist palliative hospice at home service in the South Oxfordshire community.

Sue Ryder has entered a process of formal consultation with affected staff over the proposal to close its inpatient unit after a thorough assessment of a number of factors, including changing service requests and numbers of patients cared for and costs.

The South Oxfordshire Palliative Care Hub's Hospice at Home service, now in its second year, has so far supported 539 patients. In a recent survey of the general public, more than 70 per cent of respondents said that they would prefer to die at home and Sue Ryder continues to see demand increase for its Hospice at Home service in South Oxfordshire.

As members of the local community increasingly choose to be cared for at home, there has been a steady decline in the number of patients being referred to the inpatient unit, which led to the charity halving the number of inpatient beds it operates in April 2019.

The numbers of people coming into the inpatient unit has continued to decrease since April 2019, with an average of four people being cared for at any one time – normally an equal mix of patients from South Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire. After careful investigation with referral partners, the charity feels assured that the decline in patient numbers is due to a decrease in hospice based demand.

The charity's intention to close the Nettlebed site has been well documented for some time – it is important to note that over the past year, Oxford Health FT and Oxfordshire CCG have worked hard to develop alternative options for Sue Ryder, however it has not been possible to progress these further. During the charity's search for an alternative location for its inpatient unit, some clear patient trends for a

home service model became apparent.

Sue Ryder knows that inpatient care in a hospice setting remains the right choice for some patients and to ensure that need is met for the local community; the charity will continue to work closely with other local providers who are already delivering inpatient care.

Should a need arise for inpatient beds that cannot be supported within the county, Sue Ryder will look to offer beds at the Sue Ryder Duchess of Kent Hospice in Reading.

Sue Ryder remains reliant on the generous fundraising support and from the local South Oxfordshire community and the charity looks forward to continuing to work in partnership with Oxfordshire CCG to ensure the delivery of excellent palliative care in South Oxfordshire.