

1.	Question from Councillor Iain Dobie
	Do you believe it best for the county's ED consultants to be located at a single centre of excellence at Gloucestershire Royal A&E?
	Response
	<p>We recognise that there will be a range of views.</p> <p>We want to be clear that no decisions have been made about the level of care or range of services to be provided at Cheltenham General or Gloucestershire Royal Hospitals in the future.</p> <p>The current engagement is an opportunity for people to have their say on how best to deliver outstanding specialist hospital care in the future, including the nature of local A&E services.</p> <p>One idea for discussion is to create a Centre of Excellence for Emergency Care in Gloucestershire treating critical life and limb threatening conditions. It would be one way of ensuring scarce specialist staff, expertise and facilities were always on hand to get the right treatment started whatever time of the day or night and support survival and recovery.</p> <p>We say very clearly in the <i>Fit for the Future</i> booklet that we see both Cheltenham General and Gloucestershire Royal hospitals continuing to provide a range of same day, walk in, urgent care services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for local patients. Whatever form that ultimately takes, the majority of patients who need urgent hospital care, would continue to access services as they do now.</p> <p>We have a comprehensive engagement process in place to listen to views, consider suggestions and to develop potential solutions. This includes the booklet and survey, drop in events, workshops, a public engagement hearing, a citizens' jury and a solutions appraisal exercise in public.</p>
2.	Question from Councillor Willingham
	The "Fit for the future" engagement document fails to mention the "Joint Core Strategy" or to reference any regional spatial planning documents. If the NHS Trust had looked at these, they would see that Cheltenham, is a growing town. A future looking document that doesn't recognise the proposed population growth of one of the major urban areas it covers seems unfit for the future, would you agree?
	Response
	<p>We are aware that Cheltenham is a growing town and that it is important to consider relevant planning documents and future growth forecasts when developing potential solutions.</p> <p>We have an innovative engagement structure in place to support these conversations and deliberations. This includes an engagement hearing in public, a citizens' jury and a solutions appraisal exercise in public.</p> <p>We have made it very clear that no plans have been drawn up to close A&E in Cheltenham and no decisions have been made about the level of care or range of services to be provided at Cheltenham General or Gloucestershire Royal Hospitals in the future.</p> <p>Whatever the outcome of the current engagement and any future public consultation, the majority of patients who need urgent hospital care, would continue to access services as they do now at the two hospital sites.</p>

3.	Question from Councillor Willingham
	<p>On 26th August, 1st September and 2nd September the NHS Trust announced on Social Media that “Our hospitals are really busy today”. It is currently summer, and if A&E is currently experiencing difficulties, one might question how the hospitals will cope this winter. Are our hospitals ready to cope with the increased demand that is likely to occur this winter?</p>
	Response
	<p>There are often fluctuations in demand at our two A&E departments, whatever the season.</p> <p>We always have robust winter plans in place right across the health and social care community and this year will be no different.</p> <p>We significantly increase resources to minimise waits for assessment by senior members of the medical team when patients arrive at hospital and to ensure the patient’s journey through departments and hospitals is timely and well-co-ordinated.</p> <p>We have also identified a number of initiatives that are intended to reduce overall demand within the Emergency Departments and working with care partners, reduce delays for people ready to leave hospital.</p> <p>Over the last two Winters, Gloucestershire has been one of the best performing areas in terms of waiting times, despite the increase in seasonal demand.</p> <p>There has been some public commentary that if there were future changes to A&E services, then Gloucestershire Royal Hospital would be unable to cope.</p> <p>We have made it very clear that no plans have been drawn up to close A&E in Cheltenham and no decisions have been made about the level of care or range of services to be provided at Cheltenham General or Gloucestershire Royal Hospitals in the future.</p> <p>Whatever the outcome of the current engagement and any future public consultation, the majority of patients who need urgent hospital care, would continue to access services as they do now at the two hospital sites.</p>
4.	Question from Councillor Willingham
	<p>Many people are concerned about the threat of the closure or further downgrading of A&E at Cheltenham General Hospital. The current downgraded service is already unfit for a growing town like Cheltenham. Will you give a commitment that you will restore 24/7 A&E provision at Cheltenham General Hospital?</p>
	Response
	<p>We have made it very clear that no plans have been drawn up to close A&E in Cheltenham and no decisions have been made about the level of care or range of services to be provided at Cheltenham General or Gloucestershire Royal Hospitals in the future.</p> <p>The current engagement is an opportunity for people to have their say on how best to deliver outstanding specialist hospital care in the future, including the nature of local A&E services.</p>

Whatever the eventual outcome, it's important that we can provide truly leading edge care for people with critical life and limb threatening emergencies, comparable to the best in England – maximising the chances of survival and recovery.

As you will be aware, current A&E services see patients with a broad range of needs.

We say very clearly in the *Fit for the Future* booklet that we see both Cheltenham General and Gloucestershire Royal hospitals continuing to provide a range of same day, walk in, urgent care services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for local patients. Whatever form that ultimately takes, the majority of patients who need urgent hospital care, would continue to access services as they do now.

We have a comprehensive engagement process in place to listen to views, consider suggestions and to develop potential solutions. This includes the booklet and survey, drop in events, workshops, an engagement hearing in public, a citizens' jury and a solutions appraisal exercise in public.

The public and staff would be consulted on any significant changes proposed that followed on from the engagement period.