

University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust statement on Temporary closure of the Children's Ward at the Royal Lancaster Infirmary

TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF CHILDREN'S WARD AT THE ROYAL LANCASTER INFIRMARY

Following a positive test result of staff within the hospital and in line with government guidance, 38 members of staff from the Paediatrics (Children's) department at the Royal Lancaster Infirmary (RLI) are now self-isolating at home. As a result, paediatric inpatients at the Royal Lancaster Infirmary will be transferred to Furness General Hospital.

Colleagues have continued to go above and beyond to keep the department open this week, and it is in the best interest of patients and colleagues that we put some further temporary measures in place. This is not an outbreak. We want to ensure patient and staff safety.

From 2pm today, Wednesday 17 June, we will continue to assess any children that arrive at the RLI, they will then be treated in the A&E department, discharged or transferred to Furness General Hospital for further care. North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) will be diverting direct to the most appropriate hospital.

Also, from 3pm on Thursday 18 June the children's inpatient ward at the RLI will temporarily close and any in-patients will also be transferred to Furness General Hospital in Barrow for ongoing care.

We will continue to work with staff, patients and their families to ensure patients continue to get the best care possible and will keep the situation under review. We envisage that this will be a temporary measure till 23 of June when we will review the situation with an intention to reopen.

I want to reassure everyone that we do not make such decisions lightly and are only doing so to keep people safe and there is no risk to patients and the regional team is aware.

The safety of patients and staff is our utmost priority and we are following national Public Health England guidance regarding personal protective equipment (PPE), social distancing, and correct hand hygiene. We are encouraging all of our staff to be extra vigilant with infection control practices and have produced clear guidance on working safely during COVID-19.

Aaron Cummins

Chief Executive