

Rural Services Network Health and Care Seminar 26 May 2021

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Chief Executive

Dorset County Hospital

- Main provider of acute hospital services
- Population of around 250,000, serving Weymouth and Portland, West Dorset, North Dorset and Purbeck
- Providing Renal services for patients throughout Dorset and South Somerset, a population of 850,000
- Multidisciplinary working across multiple sites
- Dorset Integrated Care Service (ICS)

Population Demographics

- 46% Dorset of population are living in rural areas
- High level of deprivation
- Increasing elderly population, reducing working age population
- 29% of Dorset's population are 65 years and over, projected increase of 34% by 2029
- Life expectancy
 - Males: 81 years
 - Females: 84 years

Key Challenges of Rural Communities

Population Demographics

- Greater proportion of elderly people than those based in urban areas
- Greater frailty and complex comorbidities
- High deprivation

Geographical

- Widely dispersed across rural areas
- Hard to reach areas
- Isolated
- Small communities
- Lengthier travel times to reach hospitals with weak transport links

Digital

- 'Digital exclusion'
- Broadband connectivity

Workforce

- There are often pre-conceived ideas of what rural providers are about
- Recruitment and retention due to rurality, leading to expensive locum and agency staff
- Sickness absence can have a greater disruption due to small teams
- Required to grow own staff and look for different ways of working and delivering services
- Providers competing from the same pool of staff

Finance

- Cost pressures not covered in current funding models
- 'Structural deficits' – having to deliver the same level of quality whilst undertaking small activity numbers
- Increased locum and agency spend
- Productivity challenges working in rural areas/multiple sites (community hospitals)



INTEGRITY | RESPECT | TEAMWORK | EXCELLENCE



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Our Role

- Anchor Institution
- Social Value Commitments:
 - Maximise Local Investment
 - Increase Local Employment
 - Recognised as a Good Employer
 - Champion Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
 - Greener and Sustainable
 - Promote Civic Partnerships
- Health Inequalities
- Wider Context – Integrated Care Systems

Outstanding care for people in ways which matter to them



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Questions?

Outstanding care for people in ways which matter to them