

## **Reconfiguration of services sparks 'Big Change' at Pilgrim hospital**

Over the past few months work has been ongoing at Pilgrim hospital as part of a major reconfiguration of our urgent, emergency and ambulatory care services.

The 'Big Change' project kicked off in earnest earlier this summer as a response to the ever growing demand the hospital is seeing on its A&E department and to help safeguard its planned surgical activities, to prevent cancelled operations.

This has involved major improvements to parts of the hospital tower block, in addition to creating a new integrated assessment unit (IAU) on the ground floor, to house the current ambulatory emergency care (AEC) and surgical admissions units (SAU).

Alongside this will sit the new aptly named 12-bed orthopaedic (Nye) Bevan ward, as a nod to this year's NHS 70 celebrations, which will also include a trauma assessment unit.

The third floor will become a new 52-bed integrated medical unit (IMU) for a maximum stay of 72 hours, while the fifth floor will house a new 54-bed integrated surgical unit (ISU) for general, vascular and urology surgery.

A new stroke unit will be situated on the eighth floor, in the currently empty and fully refurbished ward 8B, with the orthopaedic trauma ward finally settling up on the ninth floor as the final phase of the project.

The entire Big Change programme is a reconfiguration of some of our current services with the aim of improving the patient experience and journey through the hospital, in addition to alleviating pressure on the front door ensuring patients do not experience long waits in our emergency departments.

It will also create more opportunities for different staff specialties including more consultant physicians, nurses, occupational therapists and pharmacy posts.

The new IAU will allow patients to be seen and assessed quicker than ever before, with all teams working together to ensure the most appropriate treatment is delivered as soon as possible. It will also feature new point of care (POC) testing equipment, ultrasound machines and patient trolleys and recliners.

New patient pathways supported by standard operating procedures, have been fully tested, with Bevan ward the first to go live at the end of September.

The IAC will become operational in early October, with the third and fifth floors coming online soon after, before winter 2018.

This £1.8 million capital investment project is a major improvement for services at Pilgrim, which will see an overall increase of four hospital beds.

It's part of the Trust's ambition to transform the hospital into a centre of excellence for planned surgery as part of its 2021 strategy and the improvement of patient flow through Pilgrim is expected to deliver more than £1m in income.